



JOB DEMANDS AND WORK ABSENTEE TENDENCY IN PRODUCTION EMPLOYEES

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Abstract:

Implementing employees is a central part of work activities in a company. Employee presence is a determining factor because the nature of the work that takes place is related to production results. Employees who are in a work environment are required to carry out their duties. The demands of the tasks that must be carried out sometimes cause pressure for employees, and in an effort to overcome this pressure, employees do it in several ways, including by not attending work. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between task demands and the tendency for employee absence from work. The subjects of this study were 380 operator employees, 191 of whom were used as research samples. The data collection method used the Absenteeism Tendency Scale and the Task Demand Scale. From the results of the bivariate correlation, the correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) = 0.586 with $p = 0.000$ was obtained, and it can be concluded that the higher the task demands, the higher the tendency for employee absence from work.

Keywords: task demands, absenteeism tendency, employees

1. Introduction

Employees, as the most important factor and company assets, are expected to show good work attendance because they play a big role in achieving company targets. The presence of employees in the workplace, especially implementing employees, shows the ability, readiness and capacity of employees to produce as a form of employee contribution to meet company targets.

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However, employee attendance at work does not always match what the company expects. Nevertheless, recent studies have developed an understanding of the impact of absenteeism. For example, research by Pignata and Winefield (2021) highlights how workplace injustice can affect employee well-being and increase absenteeism rates. In his recent research, Johns (2023) expands this perspective by incorporating social and relational factors, as well as a multilevel approach, to understand the complexity of absenteeism behavior. The first explanation is due to job dissatisfaction and low employee commitment to the company, and the lack of employee commitment to avoid absenteeism as a form of protest or response to work or the work environment. The second explanation is that absenteeism occurs because employees feel stressed by their working conditions. Employees are unable to cope with working conditions, so they experience pressure, which then causes symptoms of stress and psychosomatic health problems.

Absence from work is broadly divided into three categories, namely, absence from work due to illness and permission, absence from work due to taking leave and finally absence from work without explanation or better known as absenteeism from work.

One of the factors associated with a person's job is task demands. Task demand factors include several things, including individual job design (autonomy, task diversity, level of automation), working conditions, and physical work layout that has been set up in such a way that it suits the job. In completing work tasks, employees often experience difficulties, which then cause stress.

There are several characteristics of task demands that can cause stress for employees, including: too much or too little work; pressing deadlines; very rapid company development; changes in procedures and policies; lack of information received; lack of relevant support and advice; lack of objectivity; receiving higher responsibilities; being required to work beyond their expertise or abilities. Employees who are unable to adjust to stressful situations then display avoidance behavior by not coming to work. This method is considered to be able to reduce stress so that, after employees are absent for a while, when they return to work, they will return to work in good condition and display excellent abilities.

Mc Shane (2024) argues that the tendency for absenteeism can be caused by several things, one of which is task demands. This situation arises because the work done by employees is sometimes not in accordance with their abilities, such as showing little expertise and showing less employee involvement.

The problem that can be raised in this study is: "Is there a relationship between task demands and the tendency for absenteeism among production employees?". Meanwhile, the aim of the research is to test the significance of the relationship between task demands and the tendency for absenteeism among production employees.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Tendencies in Work Absence

The tendency of absenteeism is defined as a desire or urge that a person has to be absent when scheduled to work. A similar definition is also expressed by Johns (2024), who states that there are two explanations for the emergence of the tendency of absenteeism. The first explanation is due to job dissatisfaction and low employee commitment to the company, and the lack of employee commitment to avoid absenteeism as a form of protest or response to work or the work environment. The second explanation is that absenteeism arises because employees feel stressed by their working conditions.

Absenteeism is said to be a disruptive and unproductive short-term event. Absenteeism is usually related to unforeseen circumstances and can last for one day or more.

Absenteeism behavior is influenced by factors from within and outside the individual. Factors from within the individual, such as low moral awareness of employees regarding absenteeism behavior that has been done, use of illegal substances, low physical and mental health, work pressure, impatience at work, low work ethic and personal problems. At the same time, factors from outside the individual are transportation problems, relationship conditions in the work environment and low organizational attention to absenteeism problems. All of the above directly and indirectly affect employee work patterns. The decision to attend or not to work is a personal decision of the individual themselves.

2.2 Job Demands

Task demands are expectations or workloads that must be completed by a person in carrying out their role or function in an organization, whether in the context of education, government, or the professional world of work. Task demands include a number of aspects such as responsibility, implementation time, competence, and quality of work results. The higher the level of complexity of a job, the greater the task demands imposed on the individual concerned.

In the world of education, especially for educators, job demands include the obligation to carry out learning, continuous professional development, and involvement in school and community activities. Teachers, for example, are not only required to teach, but also to design learning, conduct evaluations, conduct classroom action research, and provide guidance to students. Although the model was developed several decades ago, its relevance remains today. Recent research still refers to the Beehr and Newman framework to analyze work stress in various contexts. For example, a study by Adi *et al.* (2022) developed and validated the Indonesian version of the New Brief Job Stress Questionnaire to screen for work stress among office workers. This instrument adopts a multidimensional approach that is in line with the Beehr and Newman model.

These factors include individual job design (autonomy, task variety, level of automation), working conditions and physical work layout. If these task demands are felt to be excessive, it will become a disturbance and can increase anxiety and stress for

employees. Maulina and Wicaksono (2021) stated that task demands are one of the four main categories of organizational demands and stressors; a person's task demands are influenced by their physical and work environment. Pressure can arise due to conflict, frustration and threats. These situations or conditions have different effects on each employee. Employees will then experience disruption in completing work tasks, which, of course, is not only detrimental to themselves but also to the company that employs them.

There are several factors of task demands that can cause stress on employees, as stated by Jacop *et al.* (2023), namely:

- a) Risk in work, namely the risk that exists in the work that is in the work itself, becomes an important thing and is widely felt through individual experience;
- b) Work routine, namely, a work routine that creates too few work demands on individuals in displaying expertise or using knowledge and experience;
- c) Future work, namely, a situation where an employee imagines and wants a satisfying job in the future;
- d) Organizational demands, namely a situation where there is rapid growth in the economic service sector, the importance of customer service and a focus on service quality means that many employees now directly deal with users of goods;
- e) Work with too heavy a load. Working with too heavy a load is pressure that is shown in two ways. First, quantitative load, the load that comes from employees who face many tasks with limited time to complete them. Second, qualitative load is when employees feel that they cannot do the job due to a lack of expertise, knowledge, ability, or skills in the job.

According to Orianhoi and Ginting (2023), there are three components of job demands, namely:

- a) shift work/night work;
- b) workload; and
- c) exposure to risks and dangers.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that employees are faced with a set of task demands that must be carried out, and this often causes health disorders, stress due to work and readiness to face the risks and dangers caused by work. Task demands become a source of stress if employees cannot adjust to work conditions.

2.3 Employee

Production employees are workers who are at the forefront of the operational process of a manufacturing or industrial company. They are responsible for operating machines, assembling products, supervising the production process, and ensuring that production results are in accordance with established quality standards. Their role is crucial because it is directly related to the company's output.

In carrying out their duties, production employees are faced with various physical and mental task demands. These demands include high workloads, daily production targets, long working hours, overtime, and pressure to achieve efficiency and quality

simultaneously. In addition, noisy, hot, and sometimes dangerous working environments are also external factors that affect work comfort and health.

The high demands of the task can cause work stress, fatigue, and even boredom, which can ultimately lead to the tendency of absenteeism. This absence can be voluntary (caused by demotivation, stress, or boredom) or involuntary (due to illness, work accidents, or other emergency conditions).

High absenteeism in the production sector can have a direct impact on the smooth running of the production process, decreasing productivity, and increasing operational costs due to the need for replacement workers or overtime for other employees. Therefore, it is important for companies to understand the relationship between task demands and absenteeism tendencies in order to design more humane work policies that support employee welfare.

3. Research Methods

The variables whose data were collected in this study are:

3.1 Dependent Variable

Absenteeism tendency is the desire or drive that a person has to be absent from work at the time of work schedule, which is determined by the total score of the factors of the absenteeism tendency scale, consisting of unpleasant experience factors, adjustment to work and decision making.

3.2 Independent Variable

Task demands are specific activities that a job has that must be done by an employee, including the design of the employee's job and the activity itself. Operationalized as the total score of aspects of the task demand scale consisting of risk in work, job routine, future work, organizational demands and workload.

Population is the total number of individuals obtained for investigation based on suspected characteristics and have at least the same characteristics (Sutrisno Hadi, 2000:70).

In this study, the population used were the Head Production Department operator employees at PT. Indonesia Epson Industry, aged 18 to 30 years because at that age individuals are still adjusting to their work Naraswati (2023) and have worked for at least one year, because they are considered to have understood the demands of their work. The population used in this study was 380 people.

The sampling technique in this study used the Simple Random Sampling Technique by means of a lottery. Based on the Morgan table, the number of samples in this study was determined to be 191 people.

The data in this study were collected using the Likert scale model method, consisting of five alternative answers, namely Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (S), Neutral (N), Disagree (TS), and Strongly Disagree (STS).

The scale of work absence tendency consists of 44 items, divided into 22 favorable items and 22 unfavorable items. From the item quality test, 38 items were obtained that met the criteria of good items with a correlation coefficient (rit) moving from a value of 0.292 to 0.778, with a p value moving from 0.000 to 0.034 at a significance level of 0.05. The results of the study of valid and failed questions can be seen in the table.

The task demand scale consists of 48 statement items, consisting of 24 favorable statements and 24 unfavorable statements. From the item quality test, 45 items were obtained that met the criteria of good items with a correlation coefficient (rit) moving from a value of 0.281 to 0.805, with a p value moving from 0.000 to 0.048 at a significance level of 0.05.

Based on the results of the reliability test on the scale of work absence tendency, the value of $\alpha = 0.9229$ was obtained, and on the scale of task demands the value of $\alpha = 0.9362$ was obtained. According to the reliability rules of Siswoyo *et al.* (2022), a reliability figure between 0.70 and 0.90 is classified as reliable.

The data analysis technique in this study is the statistical analysis technique of Karl Pearson's Product-Moment. By using the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient formula of the SPSS computer program version 11.0 for Windows, the correlation results were obtained $r_{xy} = 0.586$ and $p = 0.000$. This indicates a tendency for a significant relationship between the variable of task demands and the tendency of absenteeism. Thus, H_0 states that there is no relationship between task demands and the tendency of absenteeism in employees of the Head Production Department of PT. Indonesia Epson Industry is rejected, and H_a , which states that there is a relationship between task demands and the tendency of absenteeism in employees of the Head Production Department of PT. Indonesia Epson Industry is accepted. Based on this study, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between task demands and the tendency of absenteeism in employees of the Head Production Department of PT. Indonesia Epson Industry.

4. Discussion

From the results of the data analysis, the correlation between variables (r_{xy}) was obtained as much as 0.586 with $p = 0.000$, which means that there is a significant relationship between task demands and the tendency of absence from work in the Head Production Department operator employees of PT. Indonesia Epson Industry. Employees often experience ups and downs in completing their work demands. This can happen for various reasons, one of which is employee dissatisfaction with work conditions. Low employee task demands compared to their abilities or even too high will cause stress for employees. Task demands that cannot be avoided, then create several alternative ways for employees to avoid tasks temporarily, one of which is by not attending work. This is as stated by Maria Lagou *et al.* (2024), namely that absenteeism is explained as a behavior related to a person's motivation; individuals are faced with making choices regarding the behavior carried out. Very strict work rules that do not provide flexibility for employees

and will cause stress for employees who are unable to adapt, and this has an impact on health and the avoidance of work demands by not being present at work.

The work done by the Head Production Department operator employees of PT. Indonesia Epson Industry is a job that can cause stress. This clearly states that the work that causes stress is work in the assembly line, namely by doing repetitive and monotonous tasks at a constant speed (where employees must adjust, not the task that adjusts the employee). The shorter the work cycle, the greater the pressure experienced by employees. So, the work of assembly line employees who experience less than one minute experience greater depression, health problems and sleep patterns compared to employees whose work cycle is three minutes or more. Repetition without a thinking process of several tasks can cause errors that are completely unaware of by the operator. Based on the results of the categorization of non-normal distribution, the tendency of work absence is included in the high category, with a mean finding of 135.73, as well as task demands, which are in the same category, namely, with a mean finding of 153.85.

From the results of the categories above, it can be seen that the mean group score on the two variables is in the high group. This shows that the higher the demands of the operator's task, the higher the tendency of his/her absence from work.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the data analysis that have been described, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between task demands and the tendency of work absence in Head Production Department operator employees of PT. Indonesia Epson Industry. The results of the correlation coefficient with a positive direction indicate that the greater the task demands experienced by employees, the greater the tendency for work absence.

6. Suggestions

Based on the results of data analysis and conclusions, several suggestions were considered, including the following:

6.1 Theoretical Suggestions

- 1) For further research, it is recommended to complete this research by increasing the number of larger populations.
- 2) It is recommended to examine other factors that influence the tendency of absenteeism but were not studied in this study, such as job satisfaction, employee work involvement and organizational commitment.
- 3) For further researchers who focus on research on the tendency of absenteeism, it is recommended to use better research methods and instruments.

6.2 Practical Suggestions

From the categorization results, it shows that the tendency of absenteeism is in the high category. Based on this study, it is recommended that companies do:

- 1) Provide explanations and information to employees before working regarding several factors of task demands that will be faced by employees, such as risks in work, work routines, future work, organizational demands and workload. This explanation is expected to make employees better understand and be able to adapt to their work tasks, so that employees do not see work as a demand but as a responsibility that is part of the employee themselves and not a pressure from outside so that employees do not experience major obstacles in completing tasks.
- 2) Providing continuous training in the use of work tools so that work difficulties caused by a lack of skills can be eliminated, and to reduce work boredom, it is recommended that companies rotate employees' jobs.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper. All authors have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and agree to its submission. The research was conducted independently, and no external financial or non-financial support influenced the outcomes or interpretations presented in this study.

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