

Presenteeism In Work Life: An Evaluation In Hotel Industry

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Extensive Summary

Introduction

Presenteeism is defined as when an employee shows up for work even though he or she is sick and performs inefficiently. Human factor is the essential part of presenteeism concept (Koçoğlu, 2007). Importance of presenteeism emerges on this point for hotels where the work is labour-intense and human relations play a significant role. An employee who shows up for work while he or she is ill, may affect the co-workers and customers as well. There is big chance that ill employee may infect their co-workers and customers. On the other hand, employees illness may effect his or her psychologically and this situation may effect nature of relationship with customers and may cause dissatisfaction. For hotels, factors like stressful work atmosphere due to intense human relations, long work hours and constantly changing shifts are also considered to be the reasons of presenteeism.

Presenteeism concept

Presenteeism is defined as keep working while sick (Johns, 2010) or an act of keep working while feeling sick and slowdown of productivity due to this (Johns, 2012). Though the concept is named in literature as “sickness presenteeism”, “impaired presenteeism”, or only as “presenteeism”, it is also named as “ nonwork-related presenteeism”, “job-stress-related presenteeism” which mean that employee is healthy and present at work but his or her mind is somewhere else. *Nonwork-related presenteeism* states that employee who attends to nonwork-related activities while he or she is at work (Boylu et al., 2014; D’Abate ve Eddy, 2007; Wan et al., 2014) and *job-stres-related presenteeism* states that when employees fail to dedicate their mental energies due to job stress (Gilbreath ve Karimi, 2012).

Reasons of presenteeism

Hansen and Anderson (2008) defines presenteeism by dividing it into three factors which are job related factors, personal factors and attitudes. According to the authors,

the stress which occur due to time pressure when employee does not come to work, perpetual performance check, thought of other employees would build pressure on the ill employee, flexible work hours cause presenteeism. Additionally, factors like monetary pressure due to wage cut for absence, workaholism, personality (being not able to say no to work-related requests), work ethic (loyalty to organization or working without getting sick leave) may steer an employee to show up for work while he or she is sick or having presenteeism.

Presenteeism at hotels

Hotel work is labour-intensive and service is provided by humans. In this context, success of service quality is related to employee's productivity and productivity depends on physical and mental health of employees. Because, factors like customer satisfaction and service quality which are core elements of an organization's development and competitive power are provided by hotel employees. A quality service can only be provided by efficient employees and efficiency depends on employees physical and mental conditions. Employees who are physically and mentally healthy would be efficient and productive during providing services. Otherwise, all customers would be unsatisfied with service performance (Tukelturk et al., 2014). Hence, it is possible to say that employees' physical and mental conditions reflect on service quality and customer satisfaction and this suggests that organizations need healthy employees. This conditions point that unhealthy employees may directly or indirectly damage organizations.

Hotels serve 365 days and 24 hours. In this context, presenteeism may relapse because employees who suffered from presenteeism before keep working and have no chance to rest. Relapse of illness causes employee to fail to complete the task in hand due to lack of concentration, loss of time, to repeat the work and to slowdown the productivity. Hotel employees can not have enough time to rest due to intensive work during the high season. Because of this situation, it is fair to say that they are more susceptible to illnesses. Besides, employees would keep showing up for work eventhough they suffer from presenteeism because they are afraid to lose their job or to be replaced by other employees.

Results

Presenteeism act which occur when an employee shows up for work while he or she is sick and performs inefficiently is considered as an important problem for organizations. Factors like to be afraid to lose job, wage cut, fear of damaging the relationships with co-workers, work-family conflicts, job loyalty steer employees to show up for work eventhough they are ill.

Shift working and long working hours which dominate the working schedule of the the hotels, may bring together some physical and psychological health issues for the employee. Thus it will be inevitable for these employees to experience presenteeism. Therefore these issues reveal the importance of presenteeism problem which should be prevented by required regulations.