

GS 221 Work and Society

Problems and conflicts in
industrial work

Part 9

Problems and conflicts in industrial work

➤ Because Sociology concentrates on the applied sides, we see so much emphasis on the industrial problems and conflicts. Some common problems concentrate on the following:

- ◆ Decreasing number of employees
- ◆ Long working hours
- ◆ Work conditions
- ◆ Workers' needs in the industrial organizations

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- Since the problems relating to industrial work are so much, we will deal with **only two important problems**, they are:
 - ❖ **Absenteeism**
 - ❖ **Leaving job**, seeking new jobs in other organizations.
 - These two problems are the most dangerous for the management in industry, because they have effects on the organization structure in the factory, as well as their effects on work efficiency.
 - The conflicts in industry are also important to us in this section.

Absenteeism

- Absenteeism means the absence of the employee from his work for reasons that could be dealt with, or for no reason at all.
- Alexandria University defines absenteeism as, the absence of employee from his work schedule for non acceptable reasons or with no reasons at all.

Consequences of absenteeism

- ☹ Cost in production
- ☹ Low industrial efficiency
- ☹ Effects on team- work
- ☹ Low moral among employees
- ☹ Loosing sense of group
- ☹ Cost to national economy
- ☹ Factory management feels important to hire stand-by employees

Reasons for absenteeism

☾ Internal: related to work itself

- ☾ bad conditions.
- ☾ lack of training to new job.
- ☾ bad procedures.
- ☾ no incentives.
- ☾ not suitable department.

☾ External: Social reason, personal reason & Psychological reasons

- ☾ **Social**: traffic, first day after vacation, first day of getting salary, monthly salary day, family responsibilities.
- ☾ **Personal**: being far from work premise, age, education, not able to assume responsibility, sickness, migration to the city
- ☾ **Psychological reasons**: low adversity quotient.

Industrial management and absenteeism

- Absenteeism is harmful to both the company and to the national economy.
- So many procedures were adopted by industrial organizations to minimize the problem of absenteeism.

Disciplinary procedures in Saudi Arabia:

- Warning after five successive days.
- The employee is issued a written warning if he is absent more than ten successive days.
- Work contract will be terminated, if the employee is absent from work for 20 successive days.

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- ❑ Since absenteeism is a very critical problem for the management and the employee, it should be studied carefully before any decision is taken, because reasons for absenteeism could be attributed to the following points:
 - ▶ Maybe the reason from the management
 - ▶ From the supervisor
 - ▶ Lack of experience
 - ▶ Bad work conditions
 - ▶ Low salary
 - ▶ No incentives

Ways and means to decrease absenteeism:

- Importance of creating team spirit.
- Good training programs for supervisors in human relations approach.
- Establishing competitions games between departments for their punctuality.
- Giving bonuses for the most punctual employees.
- Discovering reasons for some employees absenteeism.
- Good recruitment and selection procedures.
- Creating unit in the factory to deal with absenteeism cases.
- Improving work conditions.
- Good safety and accidents prevention.
- Providing specialists in the factory.

The second major Problem in industry:

Workers seeking jobs else where: quitting job

Reasons of quitting jobs

- Employee can not adjust to work.
- Working over-time could be a factor for quitting job.
- Administrative procedures.
- Nature and conditions of work.
- Wages / salaries.
- Bad supervisors.
- Lack of commitment.
- Lack of communication.
- Employees can not understand the goals and objectives of the company.
- Feeling of alienation/strange.

Problems resulting from quitting jobs:

- Decreasing the number of workers sometimes is positive if this action is taken by the company, because the company can get rid of old employees or nonproductive or problem makers. In addition to this the company could recruit new and more active workers. But sometimes workers want to leave their jobs because of bad work conditions or low pay or bad supervision. At any rate leaving job is a problem that could cause the company to lose its high spirit and teamwork approach.
- If such problem occurs frequently, this means the company should hire other workers as stand by, this is an additional economic burden to the company.