

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF EMPLOYEE GENDER AND ABSENTEEISM

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(ABSTRACT)

Absenteeism is a costly and pervasive problem to business and society. Differences in levels of absenteeism between men and women have been found in both national data and in individual studies; however, it is unclear why gender influences absenteeism rates.

Differential effects from gender on the relationship between absenteeism rates and both personal and attitudinal factors of employees were studied. Specific variables examined were age, number of dependents, distance to work, role conflict, job involvement, job satisfaction and central life interests. Job level and working conditions were held constant so that gender effects on absenteeism were isolated from other factors.

An employee's age and attitude toward pay were the only factors found to exhibit a gender-related differential impact on absenteeism. It was found that both men's and women's frequency of absenteeism is best explained by motivational factors to attend work. Duration of absenteeism was best explained by motivational factors for men, while both

motivational and ability to attend factors were useful in predicting days absent for women.

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I. INTRODUCTION

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Absenteeism is a costly problem in both the public and private sectors. In 1978, Steers and Rhodes estimated that absenteeism was costing approximately 26.4 billion dollars to our national economy annually. By 1980, over 89 million working hours were being lost each week (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1982). Although more recent statistics are not available, it is doubtful that costs have decreased substantially. Realistically, higher wages and benefits have probably increased this figure in recent years.

At the organizational level, most managers readily recognize and record dollars spent on pay for sick, personal and civic leave when assessing the cost of absenteeism to their firm. There are, however, hidden costs which are often not recorded, such as, disruption to production or service caused by absent, or fatigued employees; waste and poor quality work; and temporary replacement costs (Hedges, 1977).

Because absenteeism is so costly to society, researchers have attempted to identify the factors that cause, or are related

to absenteeism so that appropriate solutions can be developed. Both demographic and attitudinal characteristics of employees have been studied.

However, the literature has reported many mixed results throughout the years. Job satisfaction and personal characteristics, such as age and family size, are found to be related to absenteeism in some studies, but not related in others. According to Steers and Rhodes (1978), these inconsistent findings may be explained by other unidentified factors. Scott and Mabes (1984) have identified gender as one such modifier.

Gender is a timely factor for study due to the changing nature of the U.S. workforce. In 1940, only 27.4% of adult women were employed while in 1982 this percentage had risen to 52.1% (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1984).

Throughout the years, it has been thought that men and women participated in the workforce for different reasons. In the past, men were the primary breadwinners while most women were homemakers. No one reason for working was predominant among the relatively few women who worked. Single or widowed women usually worked to provide for their families, while married women usually worked in service occupations such as teaching and nursing for personal reasons.

Increase in the number of single family households, the rise of the feminist movement, civil rights legislation, the Equal Pay Act, and inflation have all had an effect on changing the nature of the relationship between women and their jobs. Not only are more women working, they also are holding more diverse jobs; some which were previously held only by men.

While U.S. law demands that all men and women be treated equally at work, it must be recognized that men and women are not necessarily alike in their motivation and commitment to work. In fact, identifying those areas where gender differences exist may help businesses develop policies that are more fair and equal for all workers.

Attendance is one way in which women differ from men at work. In 1980, the incidence rate of absenteeism for women was 7.9 contrasted to 5.0 for men (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1982). This rate measures the percent of workers absent compared to the number of workers employed in the U.S. labor force. Hedges (1973) postulated that this aggregate rate difference could be explained in part by factors which are frequently associated with gender. For example, lower paying and less skilled jobs in which women are more likely to be employed are associated with high rates of absence (Hedges, 1973). She believed that as job and personal characteristics of men and women became similar, i.e. when they worked in the same jobs, and had similar amounts of education and experience,

that their patterns of absenteeism would be the same. In support of this notion, Hedges (1973) found that when job level was held constant, the gender differences in absence rates narrowed.

Leigh (1983), however, found that fundamental differences still existed in absence rates based on gender even when factors such as job level, education and experience were held constant. An example of one such difference was that only womens' absenteeism rose in relation to the increase in young children in the household. Women not only have higher rates of absenteeism than do men, there may be fundamental differences in the reasons for their absences.

For these reasons, it seems desirable to examine how gender specifically influences absenteeism. Factors that affect absenteeism differently for men and women need to be identified.

PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This study examines both job-related and personal characteristics of men and women as they relate to absenteeism. Factors which give rise to absenteeism will be uniquely

identified for men and women. From these findings, a model of absenteeism based on gender is developed.

Studying gender-related differences is significant to both researchers and managers for several reasons. This is the first study to specifically analyze gender differences in absenteeism for a single job level. Furthermore, the vast majority of these subjects have similar educational training and are subject to basically the same working conditions. Past research has used individuals in different job levels and under varied working conditions. Because of the lack of control in such methodologies, it is difficult to separate the effects of gender on absenteeism from the effects of job level or working conditions.

In addition, this study will propose a multivariate model for the explanation of absenteeism. Previous research often identified that men and women differed in their rates of absenteeism; however, these studies seldom examined single and multiple factors that related to this difference.

Knowledge gained from this research can be useful in solving basic productivity problems created by absenteeism. Management will be able to refocus their absenteeism control strategies to more effectively and intelligently deal with the diverse workforce of today.

SUMMARY

This chapter has identified that absenteeism is a costly and pervasive problem to business and society. Differences in levels of absenteeism between men and women have been found in both national data and in individual studies; however, it is unclear how gender influences absenteeism rates. This study focuses on factors which exhibit gender-related differential impact on absenteeism.

In the next chapter, previous research on factors relating to absenteeism and gender is examined. Specifically, job and employee related factors are focused upon. Based on the literature, relationships are hypothesized.

Chapter Three discusses the methodology used in the study. The research site, measures of variables and data analysis methods are described.

Findings from the study are reported in Chapter Four. Statistical analyses of these hypotheses also are presented.

Finally, the results from hypotheses testing are discussed in Chapter Five. Practical implications, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are given.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The definition and measurement of absenteeism initially is presented. Theories which explain how gender influences employee absenteeism are discussed in terms of empirical research which has been conducted. Based on research and theory, hypotheses are developed for testing.

DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENT OF ABSENTEEISM

Clearly, one of the most difficult steps in studying absenteeism is defining and measuring absenteeism. While the term absenteeism is usually accepted as meaning absence from work or duty, many investigators also infer negative connotations, i.e. that the behavior is habitual, or undesirable. Some researchers view absenteeism as being totally unrelated to those absences due to legitimate illnesses or injuries.

Researchers have not reached any real consensus on the definition. Instead, each defines it based on that part of the phenomena they are researching or on how absenteeism has been recorded by the organization being studied. Absence from work is not simple defined by whether the worker was present or not. Most measures exclude vacations, holidays and days spent on jury duty.

Two specific measures, the frequency and the duration of absence, are often used to monitor absenteeism in organizations. Subsequently, these two measures also are used in absenteeism research. Frequency is measured by a count of the number of occurrences of absenteeism regardless of the number of days a person is absent. This measure is largely determined by short term absences (Chadwick-Jones, Brown, Nicholson and Sheppard, 1971). It is believed that most single day or short term absences are voluntary, or relate to discretionary reasons for absence (Gibson, 1962). On the other hand, duration, which is measured by the absolute number of days a person is absent, tends to better reflect long term absences, or those caused by serious illnesses or injury. Duration is an insensitive indicator of voluntary absence (Chadwick-Jones, et al., 1971).

ABSENTEEISM AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Previous absenteeism research has examined numerous personal characteristics as they relate to work attendance. These include age, race, health, education, and job tenure. Although these variables have been found to relate to absenteeism, only those which are thought to bear on gender-related differences are examined here. These include age, family size and distance to work.

AGE: Research into the relationship between age and absenteeism have shown mixed results. Schenet (1945) and Naylor and Vincent (1959) reported that no relationship existed. Isambert-Jamati (1960), Johns (1978), Spencer and Steers (1980), and Watson, (1981) found a negative relationship. Unfortunately, none of these studies specifically reported findings based on sex.

Reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (1982) showed that when aggregate data was broken down by gender, men and women tended to exhibit different rates of absenteeism in different age groups. In 1980, men from 16 to 19 years of age had the highest incidence of absenteeism. This rate decreased as men aged, reaching a low for those in the 25-34 age group. Rates fluctuated through middle age but increased in the oldest age group, those age 55 and up. While women

in the 16-19 age group also exhibited the highest incidence of absenteeism, the rates in the other groups were very dissimilar from those of men. Women had their next highest rates in the 25-34 age group and had their lowest rates between 35-44 and over 55. The variation found in these previous studies indicates that a nonlinear or curvilinear relationship may exist between age and absenteeism for both men and women.

Taylor (1981) observed from these national statistics that male-female absenteeism rates differed by the greatest amount for those aged 25 to 44. He hypothesized this is partially due to increased family responsibilities for this age group of women. Isambert-Jamati (1960) also believed that family responsibilities influenced the effect of age on absenteeism. Her overall findings showed that women's absenteeism decreased as age increased, which coincides with declining responsibility for childrearing.

As a result, it is hypothesized that:

H1: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN AGE AND GENDER, SUCH THAT MEN WILL HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY LESS ABSENTEEISM THAN WOMEN DURING THEIR YOUNG ADULT YEARS, BUT WILL HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN LATER YEARS.

NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS: Another personal characteristic believed to be related to absenteeism is the number of dependents in the household. While it is acknowledged that raising of children is becoming more of a shared responsibility for couples, women are still more likely to stay home to care for children who become sick. Few men are known to take a lengthy amount of time off after the birth of their child. Aged parents who live in the home and require special care also have been included as dependents in this study. The special needs that aged adults have when they are ill or injured may cause some employees to stay home from work to care for their parents.

Two previous studies of family size, a closely related measure, and absenteeism found a positive relationship (Naylor and Vincent, 1959; Garrison and Muchinsky, 1977) for women. In the one study where no significant relationship (Johns, 1978) was found, the sample was composed of both men and women.

Additional support for the existence of a positive relationship between the number of a woman's dependents and absenteeism is found in a study on temporal effects on absenteeism. Markham, Dansereau and Alutto (1982) found a significant interaction on absenteeism between sex and season of the year but not between sex and year. In this study, women's absenteeism rates matched men's rates during all

seasons except the winter. They suggested that the difference may be due to more women staying home to care for the family during winter when the greatest number of children's illnesses occur.

This is circumstantial evidence that women are more likely to be absent due to family care responsibilities. When children or aged adults are sick, it appears the wife takes time off from work to stay with them, not the husband. Since divorced women are more likely to have custody of children than divorced men, this still holds true.

H2: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN THE GENDER OF THE EMPLOYEE AND HIS/HER NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS EXCLUDING SPOUSE SUCH THAT A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP TO ABSENTEEISM WILL BE FOUND FOR WOMEN BUT NOT FOR MEN.

DISTANCE TO WORK: The last demographic characteristic which is of concern is the distance the employee lives in relation to work. Transportation problems effect an employee's ability to get to work. Isambert-Jamati (1960) found there was a positive relationship between distance to work and absenteeism for women but not for men. She theorized that when the second car was not running, women were more likely to sacrifice work attendance than men.

Another explanation for this involved temporal effects on absenteeism. The Markham, Dansereau and Alutto (1982) findings showed women's absenteeism rates differed from men's during the winter months. Although they hypothesized that the women in their sample may stay home to take care of sick children more during these months, women also were thought to be less confident than men in their ability to get to work when driving conditions are hazardous.

Based on this research, it is hypothesized that:

H3: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN DISTANCE TO WORK AND GENDER SUCH THAT A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP TO ABSENTEEISM WILL BE FOUND FOR WOMEN BUT NOT FOR MEN.

ABSENTEEISM AND ATTITUDES

Employee attitudes also have been found to be related to absenteeism. Attitudes thought to have a gender-related differential impact on absenteeism include role conflict, job satisfaction, central life interest, and job involvement.

ROLE CONFLICT: When employees face conflict between expected behaviors as an employee and as a family or community member,

they make decisions concerning the importance of each role. Those who believe home or community roles are more important may stay home from work, or be absent, as a resolution to that conflict. Significantly higher levels of role conflict between Professional vs. Self roles were found for couples with children than for non-parent couples (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979).

In addition, it is believed that women have higher levels of role conflict between job and children since women have been socialized to spend more time caring for children. When a child from a dual career family is ill, women are more likely to remain home with them. When she stays home, her perception of role conflict increases.

Men, on the other hand, may perceive role conflict but defer to the woman in child care obligations. Therefore, his role conflict does not necessarily relate to his absenteeism.

H4: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN ROLE CONFLICT AND GENDER SUCH THAT A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP TO ABSENTEEISM WILL BE FOUND FOR WOMEN BUT NOT FOR MEN.

JOB SATISFACTION: Gender also may be an important modifier in the relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction. Evidence of such a relationship would support pain-avoidance and motivational models of absenteeism which imply if work

is painful or unstimulating, employees avoid work. However, the findings from previous research on the relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction has not been convincing.

Several studies found no significant relationships between absenteeism and satisfaction (Ilgen and Hollenback, 1977; Cheloha and Farr, 1980). Other studies found significant negative correlations between various measures of satisfaction and absenteeism (Waters and Roach, 1971; Newman, 1974; Nicholson, Wall and Lischeron, 1977; Johns, 1978; Bardo and Ross, 1982; Scott and Mabas, 1984). However, the relationship found in these studies was usually not unqualified. In the Bardo and Ross study, only employee satisfaction with the supervisor was significantly correlated with absenteeism even though several other dimensions of satisfaction were studied.

Scott and Mabas (1984) found gender-related differences in this relationship. They found significant correlations between absenteeism and all dimensions of satisfaction for men. However for women, they only found one significant relationship which was between absenteeism and satisfaction with pay. Metzner and Mann (1953) reported similar mixed findings. For women, no relationships were identified; however, for men, absenteeism was negatively related to attitudes toward supervision, the work group, wages and promotions, and overall satisfaction. Evidence that a relationship exists is

much stronger for men than for women. From this, it is hypothesized that:

H5: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION AND GENDER SUCH THAT A NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIP TO ABSENTEEISM WILL BE FOUND FOR MEN BUT NOT FOR WOMEN.

CENTRALITY OF LIFE: Gender also may affect absenteeism to the extent that men and women hold work central to their life to different degrees. The construct of work centrality was developed by Dubin (1956) who asserted that people tend to have a central life interest, or a place where they prefer to act out their life. He classified central life interests of people into three groups: work centered, non-work centered, and non-centered. Those who are work centered choose work as a preferred locale for some behavior when there was an equal likelihood that the behavior could take place elsewhere. For example, they prefer to spend a day off with coworkers rather than with in-laws. Non-work centered people are those whose families or other organizations represent the focal point of their actions. Non-centered people show no particular preference for places or people with whom they would rather spend their time.

Although no previous studies focused on the existence of a relationship between work centrality and absenteeism, Dubin, Champoux and Porter (1975) found that individuals who are

work centered also tend to express high job commitment. Since Steers (1977) reported the existence of an inverse relationship between job commitment and absenteeism, it follows that work-centered employees have high job commitment and therefore low absenteeism rates. However, for non-work centered or non-centered employees who have low job commitment, rates of absenteeism may be higher than for work-centered workers.

Employees who are work centered may be less likely to let factors such as sick children or minor illnesses keep them from attending work. On the other hand, those who are not work centered would be more likely to accept their own absence as necessary when extraneous factors intervened. Montagna (1977) noted that women are not as strongly socialized to give priorities to their occupations as men are. For this reason, women may not be as likely to be work-centered as men.

Evidence of a relationship between central life interest and absenteeism supports the notion that absenteeism is affected by motivation to attend work. However, for most women whose reasons for absence are beyond their control such as when their children are sick, little leave time is left over for discretionary absence. For this reason, it is hypothesized that:

H6: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN CENTRAL LIFE INTERESTS AND GENDER SUCH THAT CENTRAL LIFE INTEREST IS RELATED TO ABSENTEEISM FOR MEN BUT NOT FOR WOMEN.

JOB INVOLVEMENT: Job involvement is a similar construct to central life interests. While work centrality deals with where an individual prefers to carry out their activities, job involvement refers to the belief an individual has in the value of a specific job's goals and objectives.

Two studies found a strong relationship between job involvement and absence frequency (Breugh, 1981; Cheloha and Farr, 1980). In both cases, as job involvement increased, frequency of absence decreased. Cheloha and Farr (1980) also found a negative relationship between the number of days absent and absenteeism.

It is thought that if one believes that their job is highly important then they will tend to be highly absorbed by work activities even though they may to dislike certain aspects of their job. They may tend to be absent less since they believe it is unlikely that anyone could adequately take their place.

Once again, it is believed that the ability to attend work is a much more important factor for women. Those women who frequently are unable to attend work, usually do not have any

leave left for discretionary or motivational reasons for absence. For this reason, it is thought that job involvement is not related to women's absence.

H7: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN JOB INVOLVEMENT AND GENDER SUCH THAT JOB INVOLVEMENT IS NEGATIVELY RELATED TO ABSENTEEISM FOR MEN BUT NOT FOR WOMEN.

A MULTIVARIATE EXPLANATION OF ABSENTEEISM

The previous discussion implied that the relationship between a personal characteristic or attitude and absenteeism is a simple one. Gender may modify the relationship between the two.

However, by looking at only individual attitudinal variables and their ability to predict absenteeism, an overly simplistic view of employee behavior is obtained. Instead, multivariate analysis reveals more realistic information about the causes of absenteeism. It is thought that not only do individual variables have different effects on men and women, but that entirely different combinations of variables are necessary to predict absenteeism for men compared to women.

In their model, Steers and Rhodes (1978) suggested that employee attendance is influenced by two factors: motivation to attend and ability to attend. Motivation, which is largely influenced by satisfaction with the job and internal and external pressures to attend, only becomes an influence if one actually has the ability to attend. If as hypothesized in this thesis, women are more likely to be absent due to factors relating to their ability to get to work, such as the presence of sick children or problems with the second car they would not have an organizationally acceptable level of leave left to take for discretionary absences. Men, on the other hand, are not absent for these reasons so instead have the luxury of being absent because they are dissatisfied with or unmotivated by their jobs.

It is hypothesized then, that:

H8: DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS OF VARIABLES WILL BE FOUND FOR EXPLAINING THE VARIATION IN ABSENTEEISM FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

SUMMARY

This chapter has presented a review of the absenteeism literature as it relates to possible differences between men and

women. It is thought that women's absences relate more to factors influencing their ability to attend work, while men's absences relate more to motivational factors to attend. Specific variables have been discussed and relevant hypotheses have been formulated.

III. METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will report characteristics of the population studied and how the data were collected. In addition, it will discuss the various measures used in the study and the analytical methods used to test the hypotheses.

THE POPULATION

This research was conducted in all of the junior and senior high schools in a county school system. The site was selected because there were substantial numbers of both men and women in comparable jobs within the school system.

The site was composed of 5 high schools and 5 junior high schools. The smallest school employed 24 teachers while the largest school employed 88 teachers. The average number of teachers in each school was 60. The school district was located in an urban area in the mid-Atlantic region of the

United States. Total population in the SMSA as reported in the 1980 Census was approximately 224,000.

The population consisted of 539 professionals who were teachers, librarians and guidance counselors working in senior and junior high schools in the county. The average employee was 40 years old and had twelve years of tenure in the county system. One hundred fifty two employees were men (28.2%) and 387 were women (71.8%). Detailed absenteeism records were kept in the county office and complete access to this information was provided.

PILOT SURVEY

A pilot survey was administered during the development of the questionnaire. Five teachers completed the survey. Since the survey took significantly longer to complete than the school administration had approved, the decision was made to reduce the number of items in the central life interest scale. Other items throughout the survey were reworded in an effort to clear up misunderstandings that these teachers had.

DATA COLLECTION

In order to obtain the necessary information for this study, two sources of information were used. The first was the personnel records in the business office of the county school system. A copy of the form supplied to the county business office for recording absenteeism information is shown in Appendix A. The second source of information was a survey administered to all teachers, librarians, and guidance counselors. This survey is included as Appendix B.

Biographical information and absenteeism data were obtained from the county business office. A form for coding the data was developed by the researchers and the data were coded by staff from the school district personnel department. Employees were surveyed in May, 1984 over a one week period. This survey was administered during faculty meetings which occurred before and after school. Participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire during these meetings. Administration of the survey was conducted by graduate students who were available to answer questions. Those employees who had other duties and were not able to complete the survey at the time were given a stamped self-addressed envelope in which to return the questionnaire. For all employees who were absent, a survey and envelope were left with the school principal.

The survey forms asked employees to put their social security number on the form to allow information to be matched up with personnel records. Confidentiality of individual responses was assured. Some employees still did not cooperate and left off this identification number. Since sex, year of birth, job title and tenure information had been asked on both the survey and the record obtained from the school system, it was possible to match a limited number of those surveys that did not have a social security number on them. In all, 539 surveys were administered. 444 were filled out and returned during the administration of the questionnaire, and 22 were filled out and mailed in later. This amounted to a 86% return rate. Three hundred and forty of these surveys have been matched with corresponding absenteeism data from employee records. Complete data was available for 63% of the teachers, librarians and guidance counselors employed by the school system.

VARIABLE MEASURES

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA: The following demographic data was obtained from county employee records: birthdate, race, social security number, years of experience, job title and job status (full time vs. part time). The specific types of demo-

graphic questions asked in the survey given to employees were birthdate, sex, marital status, number and age of children, presence of dependent adults in the household other than spouse, whether a second job was held, characteristics of a spouse's job, years within the county system (tenure), and distance from home to work.

ABSENTEEISM DATA: Data on the individual's absenteeism record for the last two academic years were obtained from personnel records in the county business office. Since the school system already categorized absences into five types of absenteeism, these categories were initially used in the data collection. The number of absence occurrences and total days absent were recorded in each of the following categories: personal leave, illness leave, professional leave, family illness or death, and vacation leave. An occurrence was defined to be each incidence of absenteeism regardless of the length of time each employee was absent. The total days absent referred to the total number of days absent during the time period. Not all of these categories applied to each of the job titles. Specifically, teachers did not have vacation days. In practice, professional leave days were not recorded either.

JOB SATISFACTION MEASURE: The Cornell Job Description Index (JDI) was used to measure job satisfaction. The JDI was selected for use since it had previously been shown to be con-

sistently related to both duration and frequency measures of absenteeism (Scott and Taylor, 1985).

This index is comprised of six separate scales to measure the following attitudes: toward the job in general, toward the work itself, toward the supervisor, toward workmates, toward pay, and toward promotional opportunities. Each of these scales consisted of either nine or eighteen adjectives. For example, one adjective in the scale regarding pay attitudes was "underpaid." The respondent was to reply Y (for yes) when the adjective or phrase described the aspect about the job, N (for no) when the item did not describe that aspect about their job and ? (question mark) if they could not decide. A yes response was scored as a 3, a ? response as a 1 and a no response as a 0 to produce a continuous variable.

CENTRAL LIFE INTEREST MEASURE: Another set of items were designed to determine whether work was the principle motivation or interest in life as compared to non-work activities such as family or community. A scale developed by Dubin (1956) consists of 32 items which measures four aspects of central life interests. These included: membership in formal organizations, technological aspects of the environment, informal personal relations, and general everyday experiences. Each item was designed to force a respondent to select one of three alternatives for a particular situation. The three alternatives for each item always consisted of a

preference for a work setting, a home/church/community setting, or indifference to the setting. Scoring was designed simply to classify an individual as being "job-oriented," "non-job-oriented," or "flexible focus," not to produce continuous scores.

In order to use the scale within the constraints of the survey, several adaptations had to be made. The first was making changes in the wording to better represent the types of jobs being studied. The second occurred because the pilot study revealed that this portion of the survey took a significant amount of time. Since the county administration had only approved a limited amount of time for the questionnaire, the original version of this scale was revised to include only 20 items. Based on the pilot survey, items were dropped which had prompted criticism or were considered ambiguous. Twenty items were retained which still were evenly balanced between the four previously described subscales.

JOB INVOLVEMENT MEASURE: In an effort to measure Job Involvement, a part of the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire was included. This scale had been originally developed by Lodahl and Kejner (1965). Three statements attempt to measure the degree to which an individual identifies with their job. One statement reads "I live, eat, and breathe my job." Respondents were asked to choose which of the following word or phrase, scored 1 to 7 respectively,

described their feelings concerning the statement: strongly disagree, disagree, slightly disagree, neither agree or disagree, slightly agree, agree, and strongly agree.

JOB CONFLICT MEASURE: The job conflict scale attempted to assess the degree of conflict an individual feels exists between work and spouse, children or community. This scale was developed especially for this study, since an extensive review of the literature did not reveal a suitably short scale that was oriented toward absenteeism research. For this reason, a set of statements was written to try to get a relative measure of this dimension. One such statement was "Conflicts often occur between my job and my responsibilities to my children." Respondents were again asked to choose between seven choices: strongly disagree, disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, agree, strongly agree and not applicable.

REASON FOR ABSENCE MEASURE: The last major section of the questionnaire was intended to determine the real reason for an employee's last two absences. This consisted of a list of the twenty most likely reasons that a person would not attend work. Respondents were asked to indicate which of the twenty reasons given described why they had not attended work during their last absence. Respondents also were asked to identify the reason they had not attended work during their next most recent absence.

ANALYTICAL METHODS

Two statistical techniques were employed in this study. These were factor analysis and regression analysis. An explanation of how and why these techniques were used follows.

FACTOR ANALYSIS: Factor analysis was used to verify the presence of job satisfaction, job involvement and conflict measures. This technique is useful for helping to identify or verify one or more observable variables which tend to measure or explain common variance of an unobservable, or hypothetical variable (SAS Institute Inc., 1982). The results of this procedure are given in Appendix C. In the ensuing analysis, the scales are scored as conceived by the original authors.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS: Hierarchical regression is used to test the first seven hypotheses. This procedure is appropriate since it will test not only for main effects of a continuous and a categorical variable, but also for the significance of their interaction (Cohen and Cohen, 1983). In this procedure, the significance of main effects for gender and another independent variable are first tested. Significance of the interaction of these variables is then tested to determine if the interaction is able to add anything significant to the explanation of absenteeism above and beyond the main effects.

Lastly, stepwise regression analysis will be used in hypothesis 8 to identify what combination of variables are related to absenteeism for men and for women. Regression is a useful procedure for determining what combination of factors explains the most variance.

SUMMARY

This chapter has reported on the various characteristics of the population. Information concerning how data was collected also is discussed. An explanation of the variables measured is given with emphasis on why certain scales were selected. Lastly, a brief discussion of the statistical techniques to be used in testing the hypotheses is presented.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present characteristics of the population and sample used in the study. In addition, it will present findings relevant to each hypotheses and indicate if they were significant. The discussion of these findings, their limitations and their implications will be reserved for the final chapter.

COMPARISON OF POPULATION AND SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

This section will compare descriptive characteristics of the population and sample studied. Population figures represent all of the teachers, librarians and guidance counselors in junior and senior high schools in the county while sample figures refer only to employees from this group who completed the survey. Sample sizes vary due to missing responses.

The population and sample distributions by gender has been presented in Table 1. The absolute number of each sex are shown along with the percentage of either the sample or population respectively in parentheses. Three hundred and eighty seven members are women which is 71.8 percent of the population, while 152 or 28.2 percent are men. In the sample, 316 or 70.37% are women, while 133 or 29.62% are men. A chi square test was used to determine if the sample was representative of the population. Since the calculated value of $\chi^2=15.775$ was greater than the critical value at the $\alpha=.05$ level, it was determined that the sample is not completely representative of the population. Refusal of some subjects to answer the questionnaire may have biased some of the results.

Table 1. Distribution by Gender

<u>Gender</u>	Population (n=539)	Sample (n=449)
Men	152 (28.20%)	133 (29.62%)
Women	387 (71.80%)	316 (70.37%)

Table 2 gives a frequency distribution of the number of days absent for both men and women in the population and the sample. The left hand column lists the number of days recorded absent, while the other columns give the absolute number of people absent by gender followed by the percentage in the population or sample.

Of particular interest is the fact that women in the population and the sample were found to have taken more days off than men. This is not surprising, since this is consistent with other studies (Johns, 1978; Scott and Mabes, 1984). In both groups, very few men are absent for more than twenty days in one year, while slightly greater than five percent of the women are. The population mean number of days taken off by women is 7.11 compared to 4.72 for men. For those in the sample, the mean number of days taken off by women is 7.49 in contrast to 5.22 days for men. A goodness of fit test was used to determine whether the sample was representative of the population in regards to the total number of days absent. χ^2 was found to be 51.864 which was greater than the critical value at the $\alpha=.05$ level. The sample distribution is significantly different than that of the population. Employees who completed the survey appear to be absent more than the total population.

Table 2. Distribution of Days Absent

Number of Days Absent	Population n=539	Sample n=373
<u>MEN (n=152)</u>		
0	15 (9.87%)	7 (6.08%)
.5-5.0	78 (51.31%)	65 (56.52%)
5.5-10.0	46 (30.26%)	35 (30.43%)
10.5-20	11 (7.23%)	7 (6.08%)
20.5-40	1 (.65%)	1 (.86%)
40.5 or more	1 (.65%)	0 (0.00%)
<u>WOMEN (n=387)</u>		
0	27 (6.98%)	18 (6.97%)
.5-5.0	180 (46.51%)	124 (48.06%)
5.5-10	111 (28.28%)	71 (27.51%)
10.5-20	48 (12.40%)	31 (12.01%)
20.5-40	13 (3.35%)	10 (3.87%)
40.5 or more	8 (2.06%)	4 (1.55%)

Table 3 presents a distribution of the frequency of occurrences of absenteeism by gender for the population and the sample. Once again, women exhibit more of such occurrences. Approximately 8 percent more women than men in the population were absent greater than five times during the period studied. In the sample, approximately 9.15 percent more women than men had greater than 5 absence occurrences during that time. Women had an average of 3.91 occurrences of absence while men had 3.22 occurrences of absence in the population. Likewise, in the sample, women averaged 3.96 occurrences compared to 3.21 occurrences for men. Another goodness of fit test was used to test whether the sample distribution of absence occurrences was the same as the population distribution. The resulting χ^2 value of 54.585 was greater than the critical value at the $\alpha=.05$ level which indicated that the sample was significantly different than the population. However, in both the sample and the population, women not only took more days off than men, they also were absent on more occasions than men.

Table 3. Distribution of Absence Occurrence

Number of Occurrences	Population n=539	Sample n=373
<u>MEN (n=152)</u>		
0	15 (9.86%)	7 (6.08%)
1-5	109 (71.71%)	90 (78.26%)
6-10	28 (18.42%)	18 (15.65%)
11 or more	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
<u>WOMEN (n=387)</u>		
0	28 (7.23%)	18 (6.97%)
1-5	255 (65.89%)	176 (68.21%)
6-10	101 (26.09%)	62 (24.03%)
11 or more	3 (.77%)	2 (.77%)

Table 4 gives the distribution of the number of dependents for each employee in the sample by gender. Employee dependents included only the number of children eighteen or younger within the household and any adults incapable of physically caring for themselves. It did not include husbands or wives that might be dependent on their spouse for financial support. This definition was chosen since it was hypothesized that the number of dependents would affect attendance not only in terms of a financial responsibility but also in terms of care in case of sickness. A measurement of such dependency was therefore necessary.

At first glance, it was surprising that men in the sample reported greater numbers of dependents than did women. It had been reasoned that if one considered the population of non-working adults, the distribution of employee dependents for each gender would be approximately the same. If anything, men might have reported smaller numbers of dependents at home since there are probably more men who are divorced and do not have custody of their children. However, women who have large numbers of dependents may have withdrawn completely from the labor pool. Professional women also might average less dependent children than non-professional women since their pursuit of an education and career might have delayed or inhibited the start of a family.

Table 4. Sample Distribution of Employee Dependents

Family Size	Men (n=123) Frequency	Women (n=255) Frequency
0	42 (37.16%)	111 (44.04%)
1	25 (22.12%)	69 (27.38%)
2	34 (30.08%)	57 (22.61%)
3	8 (7.08%)	10 (3.96%)
4	1 (.88%)	5 (1.98%)
5	2 (1.77%)	0 (0.00%)
6	1 (.88%)	0 (0.00%)

Table 5 and Table 6 present descriptive statistics of the sample. Table 5 summarizes those statistics for the complete sample while Table 6 summarizes for men and women separately. N represents the sample size which varies depending on whether individuals responded to specific questions. The first six variables are continuous and include days absent, occurrences of absence, number of hours desired, distance to work, age, and number of employee dependents. The last seven variables represent scales which were compiled using responses from items in the questionnaire. Details on scale construction was presented in Chapter Three.

Several of the mean levels of responses differ significantly for women and men. As discussed earlier, these include the number of days absent ($\alpha=.0082$), and the number of occurrences of absence ($\alpha=.0080$). On the average, men are absent 2.27 days a year less than women. They also tend to have .75 less occurrences of absenteeism in that time span. Another significant difference is that women desire to work 2.78 hours a week less than men ($\alpha=.0035$). Women also tend to be significantly more satisfied with their co-workers than men ($\alpha=.0209$).

Table 5. Sample Statistics for the Population

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Days absent	539	6.85	9.68
Occurrences of absence	539	3.75	2.40
Number of hours desired	446	33.22	10.63
Distance to work	456	9.24	9.23
Age	539	39.83	8.40
Employee Dependents	438	1.01	1.07
Attitude towards work	452	1.82	.47
Attitude towards supervision	449	2.28	.66
Attitude towards co-workers	443	2.36	.62
Attitude towards promotional opportunity	445	.63	.59
Attitude towards pay	446	.93	.73
Attitude towards job in general	447	2.34	.55
Job Involvement	457	4.31	1.18

Table 6. Sample Statistics for Men and Women

MEN	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Days absent	152	5.22	7.14
Occurrences of absence	152	3.21	2.28
Number of hours desired	115	35.84	8.88
Distance to work	115	9.04	8.94
Age	152	39.52	8.35
Employee Dependents	113	1.21	1.22
Attitude towards work	114	1.83	.56
Attitude towards supervision	113	2.31	.64
Attitude towards co-workers	114	2.25	.65
Attitude towards promotional opportunity	114	.65	.65
Attitude towards pay	113	.83	.70
Attitude towards job in general	112	2.29	.61
Job Involvement	115	4.21	1.23
WOMEN			
Days absent	387	7.49	10.45
Occurrences of absence	387	3.96	2.41
Number of hours desired	253	33.06	10.10
Distance to work	262	8.91	8.05
Age	387	39.96	8.42
Employee Dependents	252	.92	1.00
Attitude towards work	261	1.84	.42
Attitude towards supervision	259	2.30	.63
Attitude towards co-workers	256	2.41	.59
Attitude towards promotional opportunity	257	.61	.58
Attitude towards pay	258	.98	.73
Attitude towards job in general	259	2.38	.48
Job Involvement	262	4.45	1.13

Table 7 on page 46 and Table 8 on page 47 show simple correlations between the frequency and the duration measures of absenteeism and personal characteristics of employees and their attitudes. Personal characteristics and attitudinal variables are listed in the left hand column. The next two columns present the correlation statistics for men and women respectively. The top number given for each variable is the degree of correlation while the number in parentheses below represents the level of significance. Those correlations which are significant at the .05 level are marked with an asterisk.

The only factor found to be significantly correlated with either measure of absenteeism for men was job involvement. The number of occurrences of absence for women was found to be significantly related to the number of dependents she had, her perception of role conflict and her job involvement. The number of dependents had a positive influence while role conflict and job involvement had a negative influence. The number of days that a woman was absent related once again to the number of dependents they had and their job involvement. Attitude toward pay also correlated with the duration of absence for women. The number of dependents was positively related, while job involvement was negatively related. Attitude toward pay had a positive influence.

Table 7. Correlates of Absence Occurrences

	CORRELATIONS (SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS)	
	MEN	WOMEN
Employee dependents	.10290 (.2781)	.15573 (.0133)*
Role Conflict	-.03266 (.7290)	.13838 (.0251)*
Job involvement	-.21033 (.0241)*	-.18955 (.0021)*
Age	.14645 (.0718)	-.06274 (.2182)
Distance to work	.12611 (.1793)	.08559 (.1672)
Attitude Toward Work	-.03481 (.7131)	-.06327 (.3086)
Attitude Toward Supervisor	-.03156 (.7400)	-.10853 (.0813)
Attitude Toward Co-Workers	-.03221 (.7337)	-.05611 (.3713)
Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunities	.00040 (.9966)	-.02793 (.6559)
Attitude Toward Pay	-.09393 (.3224)	.03383 (.5885)*
Attitude Toward Job in General	-.01561 (.8702)	-.10343 (.0967)

* significant at the .05 level

Table 8. Correlates of Total Days Absent

	CORRELATIONS (SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS)	
	MEN	WOMEN
Employee dependents	.15179 (.1085)	.15282 (.0152)*
Role Conflict	-.01699 (.8570)	.09922 (.1091)
Job involvement	-.24470 (.0084)*	-.12287 (.0469)*
Age	.10922 (.1804)	-.06321 (.2147)
Distance to work	.07909 (.4008)	.11329 (.0671)
Attitude Toward Work	-.00279 (.9765)	.00131 (.9831)
Attitude Toward Supervisor	-.05962 (.5305)	.00417 (.9468)
Attitude Toward Co-Workers	.01446 (.8786)	-.01599 (.7990)
Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunities	-.08362 (.3764)	.00213 (.9729)
Attitude Toward Pay	-.15100 (.1104)	.21580 (.0005)*
Attitude Toward Job in General	.02797 (.7697)	.05302 (.3955)

* significant at the .05 level

RESULTS OF HYPOTHESES TESTING

The following section presents the findings relevant to the hypotheses concerning how men's and women's absenteeism differs.

The relationships between several personal characteristics, gender and absenteeism were considered in this study. These relationships and their degree of significance will be presented for each hypothesis. Tests of significance were made at the .05 level which is widely used in the social sciences.

H1: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN AGE AND GENDER, SUCH THAT MEN WILL HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY LESS ABSENTEEISM THAN WOMEN DURING THEIR YOUNG ADULT YEARS, BUT WILL HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN LATER YEARS.

Age groups were used to test this hypothesis. Young adults were defined to be those between the ages of 21 and 39 since these years were believed to represent the time when childrearing responsibilities were the greatest. 84 men and 198 women were considered young adults. The middle adult age group was defined to be those between the ages of 40 and 54. These ages were grouped together because it was believed that they represented the years when childrearing responsibilities were diminished but before factors related to old age, such

as increased illness, would play a part. This group was comprised of 153 people, 44 men and 109 women. Older adults, or those past the age of 55, made up the last age group. Only 14 people fell in this category, 5 men and 9 women.

To test this hypothesis, it was first necessary to determine the main effects of gender and age groups by running a regression model using them as independent variables with absenteeism as the dependent variable. Another regression is then run using a model which includes main effects and an interaction. The resulting change in R^2 is tested to determine whether the interaction adds anything significant to the explanation of absenteeism above and beyond the main effects. Analyzing the second regression which includes interaction is necessary even if the main effects are not found to be significant since the existence of an interaction may mask main effects.

As can be seen in Table 9 on page 51, a significant increase ($\alpha=.0358$) in the value of R^2 occurred from the contribution of the interaction between age groups and gender. Therefore, there is a significant interaction between age groups and gender in explaining the number of occurrences of absenteeism. However, Table 10 on page 52 shows that no significant interactive effect was found to impact on the number of days absent. Although a regression approach is used, results have been given in an analysis of variance format. This is due

to the fact that when an independent variable is categorical, the concept of beta weights is meaningless.

Table 9. Gender, Age Groups and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.55	.0542	.0203
Gender	1	7.09	.0081	
Age group	2	.29	.7503	
Error	369			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	5	2.90	.0141	.0379
Gender	1	7.18	.0077	
Age group	2	.29	.7476	
Gender*Age group	2	3.36	.0358	
Error	367			

Table 10. Gender, Age Groups and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.74	.0424	.0218
Gender	1	7.05	.0083	
Age group	2	.59	.5571	
Error	369			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	5	2.32	.0428	.0305
Gender	1	7.08	.0081	
Age group	2	.59	.5560	
Gender*Age group	2	1.66	.1911	
Error	367			

After finding an interactive effect between age groups and gender in the explanation of the number of occurrences of absenteeism, it was still necessary to determine in which age group(s) the differential impact occurred. Regression was used once again to determine in which age group(s) the differences in absenteeism were found. For each of these tests, a subsample is created for each age group. A model that uses only gender in the explanation of absenteeism is then tested.

As seen in Table 11 on page 54, for young adults, or those between the ages of 21 and 39, there was a significant difference in the rate of absenteeism for men and women. The mean level of occurrences of absenteeism for young men, 3.04, was lower than that of 4.01 for young women. No other age group was found to have significantly different absenteeism.

This hypothesis was only partially accepted since no interaction was found to exist between gender, age groups, and the number of days a person was absent.

Table 11. Young Adults, Gender, and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Gender	1	7.61	.0063	.0359
Error	204			

Table 12. Middle Age, Gender, and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Gender	1	2.36	.1267	.0153
Error	151			

Table 13. Older Adults, Gender, and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Gender	1	2.98	.1100	.1988
Error	12			

H2: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN THE GENDER OF THE EMPLOYEE AND HIS/HER NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS EXCLUDING SPOUSE SUCH THAT A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP TO ABSENTEEISM WILL BE FOUND FOR WOMEN BUT NOT FOR MEN.

The same hierarchical regression procedure used previously is employed in the testing of this hypothesis. Although both gender and the number of dependents were found to have a significant impact on absence occurrences and the number of days absent, no significant interactive effect was found. The hypothesis was rejected. Thus, the number of dependents are related to absenteeism for both men and women.

Table 14. Gender, Dependents and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	6.69	.0014	.0359
Gender	1	6.95	.0088	
Employee Dependents	1	6.44	.0116	
Error	359			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	4.64	.0036	.0374
Gender	1	6.94	.0088	
Employee Dependents	1	6.43	.0117	
Gender*Employee Dependents	1	.55	.4573	
Error	358			

Table 15. Gender, Dependents and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	6.97	.0011	.0373
Gender	1	7.08	.0081	
Employee Dependents	1	6.86	.0092	
Error	359			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	5.06	.0021	.0406
Gender	1	7.09	.0081	
Employee Dependents	1	6.43	.0117	
Gender*Employee Dependents	1	1.24	.2666	
Error	358			

H3: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN DISTANCE TO WORK AND GENDER SUCH THAT A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP TO ABSENTEEISM WILL BE FOUND FOR WOMEN BUT NOT FOR MEN.

Once again, hierarchical regression was employed. As can be seen in Table 16 on page 59 and Table 17 on page 60 , gender was found to have a main effect on both measures of absenteeism, but distance to work was not found to have a significant effect. The interaction of the two also did not add anything significant to the explanation of absenteeism. The results of these tests did not support the hypothesis.

Table 16. Gender, Distance and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	5.33	.0052	.0279
Gender	1	7.16	.0078	
Distance to work	1	3.49	.0626	
Error	370			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.56	.0145	.0281
Gender	1	7.14	.0079	
Distance to work	1	3.48	.0629	
Gender*Distance to work	1	.05	.8272	
Error	369			

Table 17. Gender, Distance and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	5.46	.0046	.0286
Gender	1	7.12	.0079	
Distance to work	1	3.80	.0520	
Error	370			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.91	.0091	.0308
Gender	1	7.12	.0080	
Distance to work	1	3.80	.0520	
Gender*Distance to work	1	.83	.3643	
Error	369			

H4: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN ROLE CONFLICT AND GENDER SUCH THAT A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP TO ABSENTEEISM WILL BE FOUND FOR WOMEN BUT NOT FOR MEN.

Table 18 on page 62 and Table 19 on page 63 show that gender but not role conflict was found to be significantly related to absenteeism for men and women. In addition, no significant interaction was found to explain anything beyond the main effects of gender. This hypothesis was not supported.

Table 18. Gender, Role Conflict and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	5.01	.0071	.0263
Gender	1	7.15	.0078	
Role Conflict	1	2.87	.0914	
Error	370			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.96	.0085	.0312
Gender	1	7.17	.0078	
Role Conflict	1	2.87	.0910	
Gender*Role Conflict	1	1.86	.1740	
Error	369			

Table 19. Gender, Role Conflict and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	4.65	.0101	.0245
Gender	1	7.09	.0081	
Role Conflict	1	2.21	.1382	
Error	370			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.41	.0177	.0269
Gender	1	7.09	.0081	
Role Conflict	1	2.21	.1382	
Gender*Role Conflict	1	.93	.3364	
Error	369			

H5: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION AND GENDER SUCH THAT A NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIP TO ABSENTEEISM WILL BE FOUND FOR MEN BUT NOT FOR WOMEN.

The following series of tables report the results of regression procedures used to determine if the interaction between gender and any measure of job satisfaction added anything significant over and above the main effects in the explanation of absenteeism. The only significant interactive effect which supports the hypothesis is shown in Table 27 on page 72. The interactive effect between attitude toward pay and gender was found to significantly add to the prediction of the total number of days a person would be absent.

By examining the simple correlations between pay attitudes and days absent given previously in Table 8 on page 47, one can explain how the interactive effect differed for men and women. Women were found to have a positive significant correlation between their pay attitude and the number of days they were absent. For men, no significant correlation was found between the two.

Table 20. Gender, Work Attitude and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	4.93	.0077	.0261
Gender	1	8.40	.0040	
Attitude Toward Work	1	1.46	.2271	
Error	368			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.41	.0176	.0271
Gender	1	8.39	.0040	
Attitude Toward Work	1	1.46	.2274	
Gender*Attitude Toward Work	1	.38	.5388	
Error	367			

Table 21. Gender, Work Attitude and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	3.72	.0252	.0198
Gender	1	7.42	.0067	
Attitude Toward Work	1	.01	.9177	
Error	368			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.47	.0603	.0198
Gender	1	7.40	.0068	
Attitude Toward Work	1	.01	.9178	
Gender*Attitude Toward Work	1	.01	.9421	
Error	367			

Table 22. Gender, Co-Workers and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	5.10	.0065	.0273
Gender	1	9.23	.0026	
Attitude Toward Co-workers	1	.98	.3238	
Error	363			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.43	.0172	.0276
Gender	1	9.21	.0026	
Attitude Toward Co-Workers	1	.97	.3244	
Gender*Attitude Toward Co-workers	1	.11	.7421	
Error	365			

Table 23. Gender, Co-workers and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	3.98	.0196	.0214
Gender	1	7.89	.0052	
Attitude Toward Co-workers	1	.06	.7997	
Error	363			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.67	.0465	.0216
Gender	1	7.87	.0053	
Attitude Toward Co-workers	1	.06	.7999	
Gender*Attitude Toward Co-workers	1	.08	.7778	
Error	365			

Table 24. Gender, Supervisor and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	5.61	.0040	.0297
Gender	1	8.54	.0037	
Attitude Toward Supervisor	1	2.67	.1028	
Error	365			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.91	.0092	.0312
Gender	1	8.52	.0037	
Attitude Toward Supervisor	1	2.67	.1030	
Gender*Attitude Toward Supervisor	1	.53	.4659	
Error	367			

Table 25: Gender, Supervisor and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	3.69	.0260	.0198
Gender	1	7.36	.0070	
Attitude Toward Supervisor	1	.01	.9151	
Error	365			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.48	.0595	.0200
Gender	1	7.34	.0070	
Attitude Toward Supervisor	1	.01	.9152	
Gender*Attitude Toward Supervisor	1	.09	.7587	
Error	364			

Table 26. Gender, Pay and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	4.50	.0118	.0241
Gender	1	8.97	.0029	
Attitude Toward Pay	1	.02	.8797	
Error	364			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.34	.0194	.0268
Gender	1	8.97	.0029	
Attitude Toward Pay	1	.02	.8797	
Gender*Attitude Toward Pay	1	1.02	.3124	
Error	363			

Table 27. Gender, Pay and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	7.93	.0004	.0417
Gender	1	7.57	.0062	
Attitude Toward Pay	1	8.29	.0042	
Error	364			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	8.03	.0001	.0622
Gender	1	7.71	.0058	
Attitude Toward Pay	1	8.44	.0038	
Gender*Attitude Toward Pay	1	7.94	.0051	
Error	363			

Table 28. Gender, Promotions and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	4.46	.0122	.0239
Gender	1	8.73	.0033	
Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunity	1	.20	.6590	
Error	364			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	3.00	.0301	.0242
Gender	1	8.70	.0034	
Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunity	1	.19	.6594	
Gender*Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunity	1	.11	.7397	
Error	363			

Table 29. Gender, Promotions and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	3.88	.0215	.0208
Gender	1	7.67	.0059	
Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunity	1	.09	.7655	
Error	364			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.62	.0500	.0211
Gender	1	7.65	.0060	
Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunity	1	.09	.7658	
Gender*Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunity	1	.11	.7434	
Error	363			

Table 30. Gender, Attitude and Absence Occurrence

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	6.22	.0022	.0330
Gender	1	9.96	.0017	
Attitude Toward Job in General	1	2.49	.1157	
Error	364			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	4.62	.0037	.0367
Gender	1	9.97	.0017	
Attitude Toward Job in General	1	2.49	.1155	
Gender*Attitude Toward Job in General	1	1.38	.2401	
Error	363			

Table 31. Gender, General Attitude and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	4.16	.0163	.0223
Gender	1	7.76	.0056	
Attitude Toward Job in General	1	.57	.4504	
Error	364			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.84	.0371	.0229
Gender	1	7.74	.0057	
Attitude Toward Job in General	1	.57	.4509	
Gender*Attitude Toward Job in General	1	.22	.6417	
Error	363			

H6: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN CENTRAL LIFE INTERESTS AND GENDER SUCH THAT CENTRAL LIFE INTEREST IS RELATED TO ABSENTEEISM FOR MEN BUT NOT FOR WOMEN.

Results of these tests can be seen in Table 32 on page 78 and Table 33 on page 79 . Central life interest was not found to be related to the number of days a person was absent ($\alpha=.2271$) or to their number of absence occurrences ($\alpha=.0891$). Neither was the interaction of gender and central life interests found to add anything significant to the explanation of either measure of absenteeism. The hypothesis was not supported.

Table 32. Gender, Centrality and Absence Occurrences

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.91	.0351	.0424
Gender	1	3.84	.0514	
Central Life Interest	2	2.45	.0891	
Error	197			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	5	1.83	.1068	.0449
Gender	1	3.81	.0523	
Central Life Interests	2	2.43	.0908	
Gender*Central Life Interest	2	.25	.7785	
Error	195			

Table 33. Gender, Centrality and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	2.52	.0583	.0369
Gender	1	4.57	.0338	
Central Life Interests	2	1.49	.2271	
Error	197			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	5	1.72	.1307	.0422
Gender	1	4.55	.0343	
Central Life Interests	2	1.49	.2287	
Gender*Central Life Interest	2	.54	.5840	
Error	195			

H7: THERE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN JOB INVOLVEMENT AND GENDER SUCH THAT JOB INVOLVEMENT IS NEGATIVELY RELATED TO ABSENTEEISM FOR MEN BUT NOT FOR WOMEN.

The results of tests on this hypothesis are shown in Table 34 on page 81 and Table 35 on page 82 . Although both gender and job involvement were found to significantly contribute to the explanation of both measures of absenteeism, their interaction added nothing above and beyond their main effects. The hypothesis was rejected.

Table 34. Gender, Job Involvement and Absence Occurrence

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	11.77	.0001	.0597
Gender	1	7.40	.0068	
Job Involvement	1	16.13	.0001	
Error	370			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	7.84	.0001	.0599
Gender	1	7.39	.0069	
Job Involvement	1	16.09	.0001	
Gender*Job Involvement	1	.04	.8330	
Error	369			

Table 35. Gender, Job Involvement and Days Absent

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	2	7.29	.0008	.0379
Gender	1	7.19	.0077	
Job Involvement	1	7.39	.0069	
Error	370			

SOURCE	DF	F-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Model	3	4.88	.0026	.0381
Gender	1	7.17	.0077	
Job Involvement	1	7.37	.0069	
Gender*Job Involvement	1	.11	.7403	
Error	369			

A MULTIVARIATE EXPLANATION OF ABSENTEEISM

H8: DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS OF VARIABLES WILL BE FOUND FOR EXPLAINING ABSENTEEISM FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

One of the purposes of this study had been to identify multiple factors which could be used to explain absenteeism for men and for women. Regression techniques were used to find what combination of factors would significantly add to the explanation of absenteeism.

The variables used in the regression procedure included the following: age, role conflict, job involvement, amount of hours desired, attitude toward work, attitude toward supervisor, attitude toward co-workers, attitude toward pay, attitude toward promotional opportunity, attitude toward the job in general, number of employee dependents and distance to work. The centrality of life construct was not included because it was not a continuous variable.

Table 36. Regression for Occurrences of Absenteeism

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	BETA	F VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Men (n=115)				
Model		5.88	.0037	.0949
Intercept	2.4691			
Job involvement	-.3858	5.76	.0180	
Age	.0603	6.28	.0136	
Women (n=253)				
Model		10.28	.0001	.0760
Intercept	6.9241			
Job involvement	-.3354	6.38	.0122	
Number of hours desired	-.0452	9.56	.0022	

Table 37. Regression for Days Absent

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	BETA	F VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE	R ²
Men (n=113)				
Model		6.00	.0009	.1416
Intercept	53.1479			
Age	1.0252	5.18	.0248	
Job involvement	-9.0678	9.67	.0024	
Attitude toward pay	-10.3451	4.15	.0441	
Women (n=241)				
Model		8.65	.0001	.1278
Intercept	65.4230			
Number of hours desired	-1.5490	7.24	.0076	
Attitude toward pay	31.9169	16.37	.0001	
Employee dependents	14.3461	6.05	.0146	
Distance to Work	1.4919	4.43	.0364	

It was found that for men, job involvement and age were the only two variables to significantly contribute to the prediction of the number of their occurrences of absence. Job involvement had a negative influence while age had a positive influence. That is, the more involved a man was with his job and the younger he was, the less number of occurrences of absence that he would have.

For women, job involvement, and the amount of work hours desired were the only two variables which significantly added to the prediction of the number of occurrences of absenteeism. Both of these had negative influences. The less a woman is involved with her job and the less number of hours that she wants to work, the higher her number of occurrences of absenteeism will be.

For both men and women then, job involvement is helpful in predicting the frequency of absence. Age is only useful for men and the amount of hours desired is only useful for women.

The total number of days a man is absent was found to be best explained by age, job involvement and his attitude toward pay. Only age was found to have a positive influence while job involvement and attitude toward pay were found to have negative influences.

A woman's total number of days absent was explained best by the amount of hours she wished to work, her attitude toward pay, the number of dependents she had and the distance she lived from work. Of these, only the amount of hours she desired had a negative influence while all of the rest of the variables had a positive influence.

It is interesting to note that one variable, attitude toward pay, was useful in predicting the duration of absence for both men and women. Even then, attitude toward pay had a negative influence on a man's absenteeism while it had a positive influence on a woman's absenteeism.

REASONS FOR ABSENCE:: Participants in the survey also had been asked to indicate the reasons for their last absence and for their next most recent absence. Their responses are shown in Table 38 and Table 39 respectively. The possible responses had been listed in the survey. Several differences are worth noting and support the hypothesis that reasons for men's and women's absences differ.

In explaining their reason for their last absence, women were much more likely to report a major illness than men. Another observation was that men were somewhat more likely to have taken time off due to child care problems than women were. Women, on the other hand, had taken more time off when a child was ill or hurt.

Men were more likely to have taken a day off for sporting or other leisure activities than were women. They were also more likely to have personal business which caused them to be absent than were women.

Examining the reasons given in Table 39 on page 90 for the next most recent absence also yields some interesting points. Women report a markedly higher number of absences for a child being ill or hurt as compared to the number reported by men. The percent of men that reported they were not at work due to personal business had dropped and was much closer to the percent of women.

Lastly, it should be noted that the percent of men that had one absence or less was 6 percent higher than the number of women. This was a significant change since there was only one percentage point difference in the percent of men who had reported no absences compared to the percent of women. Once again, this is in line with the finding that men tend to exhibit less absenteeism than women.

Table 38. Distribution of Last Absence

	Men (n=107) Frequency	Women (n=245) Frequency
a minor illness	39 (40.20%)	100 (40.81%)
a major illness	2 (2.06%)	22 (8.98%)
an accident off the job	0 (0.00%)	2 (.81%)
domestic violence	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
personal business	12 (12.37%)	14 (5.71%)
transportation problems	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
child care problem	3 (3.09%)	2 (.81%)
child ill or hurt	11 (11.34%)	33 (13.46%)
spouse/friend had day off	1 (1.03%)	2 (.81%)
spouse/friend ill or injured	4 (4.12%)	11 (4.49%)
needed break from job	3 (3.09%)	8 (3.26%)
stress/job pressure	3 (3.09%)	6 (2.44%)
dispute with boss	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
sporting or other leisure activity	4 (4.12%)	3 (1.22%)
court appearance	1 (1.03%)	1 (.40%)
looking for another job	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
community service	0 (0.00%)	3 (1.22%)
funeral	6 (6.18%)	11 (4.49%)
in jail	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
other	3 (3.09%)	15 (6.12%)
no absences	5 (5.15%)	12 (4.89%)

Table 39. Distribution of Next Most Recent Absence

	Men (n=107) Frequency	Women (n=248) Frequency
a minor illness	33 (35.87%)	84 (35.74%)
a major illness	3 (3.26%)	12 (5.10%)
an accident off the job	2 (2.17%)	2 (.85%)
domestic violence	1 (1.08%)	0 (0.00%)
personal business	6 (6.52%)	10 (4.25%)
transportation problems	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
child care problem	1 (1.08%)	3 (1.27%)
child ill or hurt	8 (8.69%)	34 (14.46%)
spouse/friend had day off	0 (0.00%)	2 (.85%)
spouse/friend ill or injured	3 (3.26%)	12 (5.10%)
needed break from job	5 (5.43%)	8 (3.40%)
stress/job pressure	1 (1.08%)	8 (3.40%)
dispute with boss	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
sporting or other leisure activity	2 (2.17%)	5 (2.12%)
court appearance	2 (2.17%)	1 (.42%)
looking for another job	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
community service	0 (0.00%)	1 (.42%)
funeral	3 (3.26%)	10 (4.25%)
in jail	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)
other	5 (5.43%)	14 (5.95%)
no absence	18 (18.47%)	29 (12.45%)

SUMMARY

This chapter has presented descriptive statistics of the population and the sample. In addition, the results of hypothesis testing have been described.

V. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize and then discuss the findings from the study. In addition, conclusions and practical implications of the findings will be discussed. Limitations of these conclusions also will be presented along with recommendations for future research.

SUMMARY OF STUDY

The purpose of this study has been to determine if men and women have different reasons for being absent. Conflicting evidence of correlates of absenteeism have been prominent in the research and it was hypothesized that part of the conflict could be due to differences based on gender of the employee (Scott and Mabes, 1984). Personal characteristics and motivational factors which were thought to cause these differences were examined.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The data from this survey supported earlier research which showed that women had significantly higher levels of absenteeism than did men. Although one researcher had hypothesized that this might be due to the prevalence of women in lower skilled and lower paying jobs (Hedges, 1973), this study found this to be true for white collar professionals within one major occupational group.

DIFFERENTIAL IMPACT OF GENDER

Of all the variables tested, only satisfaction with pay and age were found to have gender-related differential impact on absenteeism. This was unexpected in light of the previous research.

Finding that the total number of days a woman is absent increased as satisfaction with pay increased runs contrary to motivational theories of absenteeism which posit that greater satisfaction results in lower absenteeism. It would appear instead that the more satisfied a woman is with her pay, the more she looks to increased leisure time. However, it is

important to note that pay satisfaction is related to the durational measure of absenteeism which is not thought to reflect short term or discretionary absences. Instead, women may be working to help make financial ends meet in the household. Once those needs are met, they may turn their efforts to other roles in the household including motherhood.

Younger women also were found to have significantly higher occurrences of absence than young men. This supported the hypothesis. Younger women were thought to have higher frequencies of absenteeism because factors that would influence their ability to attend would have more impact during these years. Young professional men, on the other hand, may be more concerned with working hard and building a career, and as a result, are absent very little at this point in the lives.

It is an important finding that when the specific ability to attend work factors were tested, no gender-related differential impact was found. This supports the notion that there is little difference in unique correlates of absenteeism for men and women. As the number of dependents in the family increased, both measures of absenteeism increased for males and females. It would seem males are taking responsibility for child care.

It also should be noted that of all the unique variables studied for gender-related differential impact on absenteeism, only the number of dependents and their level of job involvement were able to add anything to the explanation of absenteeism above and beyond gender. The motivational factor, job involvement, seems to be an important factor in absenteeism for both men and women.

THE PREDICTION OF ABSENTEEISM

Although only pay satisfaction and age were found to have a differential impact on absenteeism for men and women, the separate predictive equations for absenteeism were more enlightening.

Motivational factors played the greatest part in explaining occurrences of absenteeism for both men and women. This is not surprising since this frequency measure represents short term absences which are thought to be largely discretionary. Job involvement was negatively correlated with this measure for both men and women. As job involvement decreased, the number of occurrences of absenteeism increased.

However, for men, age also helped to explain variance in their occurrences of absenteeism. Absenteeism increased as age increased. Younger men may have lesser absenteeism because they have high levels of energy and the rewards associated with greater attendance seem more important when they begin their career. As they age, they may no longer be as interested in moving ahead or seeking recognition for their activities. Their need for career fulfillment and job involvement decreases so their frequency of absenteeism rises.

While job involvement also helps to explain a woman's frequency of absence, age does not add anything significant. Instead, the number of hours that a woman wants to work has a significant impact on her absence occurrences. This might indicate that it is not age per se that is related to the difference in absenteeism for young adults. Instead, correlates of age may have played a major part in the finding of such a relationship. The less number of hours that she wants to work, and the less involved she is in her job, the greater her frequency of absence. This implies that discretionary absence for women may result because many woman would really prefer to be working fewer hours than they are. Although many may work full time because they need the added income, they may be taking off as frequently as they can either because they prefer to work less if at all or because they have many other roles they would rather be involved in. Both job involvement and the number of hours that a woman wants to

work would represent motivational reasons to attend work and support the notion that frequency measures of absenteeism represent discretionary kinds of absenteeism rather than major illnesses.

As mentioned before, it is believed that the number of days that a person is absent represents long term absenteeism and is not a particularly good measure of discretionary absence. However, motivational factors to attend work were also found to be related to this duration measure of absenteeism for men. Age and job involvement were once again found to play a part in explaining absenteeism, specifically, the duration of absence for men. A man's attitude toward pay also had a negative impact on his days absent. That is, as his attitude worsened, this measure of absenteeism rose.

Factors which helped to explain the number of days that a woman was absent were both motivational and related to their ability to get to work. These included the number of hours they desired to work, their attitude toward pay, the number of dependents they had excluding spouse and the distance they lived from work. Of these, attitude toward pay and the number of hours they want to work imply motivational reasons for not attending work. That is, the less they wanted to work and the greater their satisfaction with pay, the more they were absent. The distance they lived from work and the number of dependents they had both had a positive influence on their

absenteeism. This combination of ability to attend and motivational factors supports the Steers and Rhodes (1978) model which claims that both types of factors can operate concurrently to influence absenteeism.

In conclusion, women still had significantly more absences than men even when controlling for educational level, working conditions, and absenteeism policies. Motivational factors were found to be useful in explaining absenteeism for women as well as men. Ability to attend work factors were only found to be useful in explaining women's absenteeism though. The impact of age and attitude toward pay also had different effects for men as opposed to women.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Obviously, organizations cannot refuse to hire women because of higher absenteeism. Legislative and social pressures have eliminated that alternative. Instead, they should consider methods which attempt to identify techniques to reduce absenteeism which are mutually beneficial to employees and the organization.

For example, hiring more part time employees might allow a better fit between the needs of young mothers and the needs of the organization. Costs could be reduced if this alternative resulted in decreased absenteeism. However, the possibility of increased benefit costs would need to be considered if given to part time employees.

Organizations should also consider providing day care centers or to partially subsidize existing day care centers close to work sites. Child care problems could be reduced and therefore decrease absenteeism.

Lastly, organizations need to periodically review their policies regarding absenteeism. Abuse of absence privileges could be due to policies that condone unlimited use of sick leave due to illness on the part of other family members. Restricting the number of days that can be taken due to other family members' illness should be considered. Of course, adherence to the policy also is necessary.

LIMITATIONS

The primary limitation of this study is that it focuses on a profession which may not be representative of other occupa-

tions. The introduction discussed the notion that women's attitudes towards their jobs are changing. In fact, women are represented in greater numbers in professions where few had ever worked before. This study was conducted in junior and senior high schools where women have always been in the majority. Due to this, the effect of this attitudinal change might not have been represented.

A second limitation which is an inherent problem in all absenteeism research is that the reasons given for absenteeism are not necessarily accurate. Since school board policy varies in regards to compensation depending on the reason for absence, employees may not have been truthful in stating why they were absent. Furthermore, reasons for absence given in the employee survey might also be incorrect due to fear of reprisal on the part of the employee or simply forgetfulness. Since the absenteeism measures used in this study did not rely on specific reasons for absence, this common limitation of absenteeism research has been minimized.

A third limitation is that attitudes were surveyed on only one occasion during the year for which absenteeism data was recorded. Attitudes could have varied greatly throughout the year and the attitudes recorded may not have been representative of the whole year at the time of measurement.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

One finding that had not been hypothesized was that there was a strong relationship between the amount of hours that a woman desired working and her absenteeism. While part-timers in retail industry have been found to have significantly higher levels of of absenteeism than full-timers (Mabes, 1982), the same might not be true for professional occupations. Considering the cost advantages a business might gain from hiring large numbers of part-timers if absenteeism and benefit costs can be reduced, this relationship should be explored. Another consideration would be that productivity might improve if the needs of the employee were better matched by the needs of the organization in regards to the amount of hours worked.

The rise of employer provided day care centers also may provide a fertile opportunity for absenteeism research. Many of these centers have been initiated in the hope that they will decrease absenteeism and turnover among young women. By eliminating one possible cause of absenteeism, these studies could provide more insight into the nature of the relationship between the number of an employee's dependents and absenteeism.

Another recommendation is that more study be done on the centrality of life measure. Most of the respondents in the pilot study complained about the ambiguity of items. Some of these items had been subsequently dropped before the administration of the survey. In addition, other items were dropped because they did not even exhibit face validity. Despite the removal of most of the items that had been complained about, several respondents still left items blank. The lack of responses in conjunction with the unusual method of scoring produced a low number of observations in some of the cells used in analysis. This happened despite the large sample size used in this study. This increased the need for compensation for error and could have precluded the possibility of finding any significance whatsoever.

The measurement of centrality of life would be greatly enhanced if validity and reliability studies were conducted. An effort also should be made to reword the items so they apply to a more widespread working environment. Before using the measure, some items had been reworded to apply to the teaching community instead of business oriented white collar workers. A single set of items would improve the scales reliability.

The construct of role conflict also could use validation studies. No commonly used and validated scale could be identified. The scale used in this study had been developed

for this study and therefore lacked any previous analysis for reliability and validity.

A study on the relationship between role conflict and the actual resolution of that conflict also would be enlightening in regards to its effect on absenteeism. Perception of conflict might not be correlated with relevant behavior patterns at all.

As women continue to move into the work place, it is believed that the construct of role conflict will be useful in other work-related studies. Role conflict could impact on assertiveness in the work place, trust relationships and turnover. Therefore, development of a validated scale could be helpful for future research.

Lastly, it is recommended that future research look at the impact of what workers believe are socially acceptable levels of absenteeism. One of the reasons that women instead of men may take time off to care for their children is that it may still be more acceptable to employers for women rather than men to do so. Employers who assume that women take more time off than men may be actually be encouraging this phenomena to happen.

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APPENDIX A: EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM RECORD

EMPLOYEE RECORD

Employee Label: 06

8/24/54

T 7.0 F 1

Date Employed _____

ABSENCE RECORD

TYPE OF ABSENCE	1982-83		1983-84	
	Occurrences	Days	Occurrences	Days
Personal				
Illness				
Professional Leave				
Family Illness or death				
Vacation				

APPENDIX B: EMPLOYEE SURVEY



A LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITY

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Dear Participant,

As a graduate student at Virginia Tech, I am studying employee attitudes. By participating in the following survey, you will be helping me to complete my education.

More than four hundred people are being asked to complete this questionnaire. I would like to assure you that your answers will be kept confidential. No one at your school or in the county system will ever see your questionnaire or have access to your answers.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the attached envelope as soon as possible.

Thank you for your help,

Betty McClellan
Virginia Tech



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

EMPLOYEE ATTITUDE SURVEY

This survey is designed to obtain information about your attitudes towards your job. For the survey results to be reliable you must follow all instructions carefully.

Please respond to all questions. All your answers will be confidential and no one will have access to your answers. However, we do need your social security number in case we collect additional information in the future.

What is your social security number? |_|_|_|-|_|_|-|_|_|_|_|

In the following section, please put an "X" by the one choice that best reflects your preference among the three choices.

1. I enjoy reading technical articles and books to learn more about
 - only something very special and important
 - my hobby or other interests
 - my job
2. Interruptions bother me most
 - when working on the job
 - when working at home
 - hardly ever
3. I believe that
 - helping people is more important than anything else
 - my career is more important than anything else
 - most things are about equally important
4. In my free time at work, I would rather
 - talk about whatever comes up
 - talk about things I am doing on the job
 - talk about things that are going on in sports or politics
5. I am most interested in
 - things about my job
 - things I usually do around the house or in the community
 - just about everything I do
6. I most enjoy keeping
 - my things around the house in good shape
 - my mind off such things
 - my desk or work area in good shape
7. I prefer to have as friends
 - people I get to know in my work
 - people who share my leisure interests
 - different people according to what they're like
8. Moving ahead on my job
 - is not so important to me that I would give up my spare time
 - is so important to me that I'm willing to spend extra time
 - is not particularly important to me

9. The people I can count on most when I need help are
 the friends I have at work
 the friends I have in the community
 almost any of my friends
10. When I am worried, it is usually about
 how well I am doing in my career
 just little things
 things that happen at home
11. I am happier if I am praised for doing a good job of
 something at work
 something in an organization I belong to
 anything, it doesn't matter very much what
12. If I were sick and had to stay home, I would most hate
 missing a day's work
 missing almost anything I usually do
 missing a meeting of an organization I belong to
13. I hope my children can
 work in the same kind of occupation as mine
 work in any occupation, just so they enjoy their work
 work in a different kind of occupation from mine
14. In my spare time
 I just prefer to relax
 I often think of better ways of doing my work
 I have a thousand things that need doing
15. I sometimes hope that
 I'll get special recognition for doing a good job at work
 I'll get to be a more important member of my club, church or lodge
 such things will not bother me
16. I would donate more money in the case of a collection
 if the requestor was a friend of mine
 for a charitable organization
 for a wedding present or retirement gift for someone at work
17. I would rather take my vacation with
 some friends from work
 my family
 by myself
18. I most like
 talking with friends about things that are happening
 talking about whatever my friends want to talk about
 talking with my friends about my work and what is happening in the school system
19. I think that if I were suddenly to get a much better job
 probably my life would not change much except that I'd live a little better
 probably my life would change and be better in many ways
 I wouldn't know what would happen to my life.
20. I would much rather be a leader
 in any organization, just so it's a good one
 in my club or church
 in my work

FOR EACH STATEMENT

*** CIRCLE THE BEST DESCRIPTION OF HOW YOU FEEL ***

1. When I'm absent from work, it has little affect on the students.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree	not applicable
----------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------	-------	-------------------	-------------------

2. I (my family) would not be able to get by without the income from this job.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree	not applicable
----------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------	-------	-------------------	-------------------

3. Conflicts often occur between my job and community/volunteer activities.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree	not applicable
----------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------	-------	-------------------	-------------------

4. Conflicts often occur between my job and my spouse's job.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree	not applicable
----------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------	-------	-------------------	-------------------

5. Conflicts often occur between my job and my responsibilities to my children.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree	not applicable
----------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------	-------	-------------------	-------------------

6. I am very much personally involved in my work.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

7. I live, eat, and breathe my job.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

8. The most important things which happen to me involve my job.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

*** FILL IN THE BLANKS (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) ***

1. If you could decide, how many hours would you like to work each week?
|___| hours per week

2. About how far do you live from work? |___| miles

3. How many adults live in your home who require special care? |___|

4. How long have you been employed here? |___| years

5. What is your year of birth? |_____|
6. How many children do you have that live in your home that are:
5 years old and younger |_____|
6 to 10 years old |_____|
11 to 18 years old |_____|
7. How many hours a week on average do you spend on job related activities (including time spent on job)? |_____| hours

* * * CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE * * *

1. Do you have a another (second) job elsewhere? |_____| Yes |_____| No
2. What is your marital status?
|_____| single |_____| married |_____| widowed |_____| divorced/separated
3. Choose one of the following:
|_____| I earn most or all of the income at my house.
|_____| My spouse or parent earns most of the income.
|_____| We both earn about the same amount.
4. What is your job? |_____| janitor/custodian |_____| teacher
5. Sex? |_____| man |_____| woman
6. When a non-work activity must be handled during working hours:
|_____| I usually do it.
|_____| My spouse or other family member does it.
|_____| We try to split the responsibility.
|_____| A friend does it.
7. If there were a conflict between important work activities and home responsibilities, I would first take care of
|_____| my home responsibilities.
|_____| my work responsibilities.
8. Is your spouse employed outside the home? |_____| yes |_____| no
If yes: On the average, how many hours a week? |_____|
How many months during the last 12 months? |_____|
9. Does your spouse work approximately the same hours as you do?
|_____| yes |_____| no |_____| not applicable
10. When my children (or elderly people in the home) are ill or off from school and we cannot find someone to take care of them
|_____| I usually stay home with them.
|_____| My spouse usually stays home with them.
|_____| We try to take turns staying home with them.
|_____| I have no children at home
11. Do you plan on continuing to work here next year? |_____| yes |_____| no

Skip this page if you were not absent during the last academic year (1983-1984). People are absent because of something that happens to them or to someone they care about. To help with my research, I must know exactly why you were absent. Your reply will be held in complete confidence. Do not count as absences, vacations time, [REDACTED], military leave, jury duty or personal days that teachers get off.

Please read the entire list before choosing the two items that best explain the reasons for your last two absences. Then put a check (✓) in column 1 for the one reason that best describes your most recent absence. In column 2, check the one reason that best describes your next most recent absence. CHECK ONLY 1 ANSWER IN EACH COLUMN.

	1	2
	YOUR LAST	NEXT MOST RECENT
	ABSENCE	ABSENCE
a minor illness	_____	_____
a major illness	_____	_____
an accident off the job	_____	_____
domestic violence	_____	_____
personal business	_____	_____
transportation problems	_____	_____
child care problem	_____	_____
child ill or hurt	_____	_____
spouse/friend had day off	_____	_____
spouse/friend ill or injured	_____	_____
needed break from job	_____	_____
stress/job pressure	_____	_____
dispute with boss	_____	_____
sporting or other leisure activity	_____	_____
court appearance	_____	_____
looking for another job	_____	_____
community services	_____	_____
funeral	_____	_____
in jail	_____	_____
other	_____	_____

Attitude Toward the Work You Do

In this section it is important that you respond to all items on each page before going ahead to the next page.

On this page you should score the following items in regard to the work that you do. You should put "Y" (for yes) beside an item if the item describes that particular aspect of your work, put an "N" (for no) by the item if it does not describe that aspect, or put a "?" if you cannot decide.

- _____ Fascinating
- _____ Routine
- _____ Satisfying
- _____ Boring
- _____ Good
- _____ Creative
- _____ Respected
- _____ Hot
- _____ Pleasant
- _____ Useful
- _____ Tiresome
- _____ Healthful
- _____ Challenging
- _____ On your feet
- _____ Frustrating
- _____ Simple
- _____ Endless
- _____ Gives sense of accomplishment

DO NOT CONTINUE TO THE
NEXT PAGE UNTIL YOU
HAVE RESPONDED TO ALL
ITEMS ON THIS PAGE

Attitude Toward Supervisor

On this page you should score the following items in regard to your supervisor. You should put "Y" (for yes) beside an item if the item describes that particular aspect of your supervisor, put an "N" (for no) by the item if it does not describe that aspect, or put a "?" if you cannot decide.

- _____ Asks my advice
- _____ Hard to please
- _____ Impolite
- _____ Praises good work
- _____ Tactful
- _____ Influential
- _____ Up-to-date
- _____ Doesn't supervise enough
- _____ Quick-tempered
- _____ Tells me where I stand
- _____ Annoying
- _____ Stubborn
- _____ Knows job well
- _____ Bad
- _____ Intelligent
- _____ Leaves me on my own
- _____ Around when needed
- _____ Lazy

DO NOT CONTINUE TO THE
NEXT PAGE UNTIL YOU
HAVE RESPONDED TO ALL
ITEMS ON THIS PAGE

Attitude Toward Workmates

On this page you should score the following items in regard to your workmates. You should put an "Y" (for yes) beside an item if the item describes that particular aspect of your workmates, put an "N" (for no) by the item if it does not describe that aspect, or put a "?" if you cannot decide.

- _____ Stimulating
- _____ Boring
- _____ Slow
- _____ Ambitious
- _____ Stupid
- _____ Responsible
- _____ Fast
- _____ Intelligent
- _____ Easy to make enemies
- _____ Talk too much
- _____ Smart
- _____ Lazy
- _____ Unpleasant
- _____ No privacy
- _____ Active
- _____ Narrow interests
- _____ Loyal
- _____ Hard to meet

DO NOT CONTINUE TO THE
NEXT PAGE UNTIL YOU
HAVE RESPONDED TO ALL
ITEMS ON THIS PAGE

Attitude Toward Promotional Opportunity

In this section, you should score the following items in regard to your promotional opportunities. You should put "Y" (for yes) beside an item if the item describes the particular aspect about your promotional opportunities, put an "N" (for no) by the item if it does not describe that aspect, or put a "?" if you cannot decide.

- _____ Good opportunity for advancement
- _____ Opportunity somewhat limited
- _____ Promotion on ability
- _____ Dead-end job
- _____ Good chance for promotion
- _____ Unfair promotion policy
- _____ Infrequent promotions
- _____ Regular promotions
- _____ Fairly good chance for promotion

Attitude Toward Pay

In this section, you should score the following items in regard to your pay. You should put "Y" (for yes) beside an item if the item describes that particular aspect about your pay, put an "N" (for no) by the item if it does not describe that aspect, or put a "?" if you cannot decide.

- _____ Income adequate for normal expenses
- _____ Satisfactory pay increases
- _____ Barely live on income
- _____ Bad
- _____ Income provides luxuries
- _____ Insecure
- _____ Less than I deserve
- _____ Highly paid
- _____ Underpaid

DO NOT CONTINUE TO THE
NEXT PAGE UNTIL YOU
HAVE RESPONDED TO ALL
ITEMS ON THIS PAGE.

Attitude Toward Your Job in General

Now think of your job in general. You should put "Y" (for yes) beside an item if the item describes your job in general. Put an "N" (for no) by the item if it does not describe your job in general, or put a "?" if you cannot decide.

- _____ Pleasant
- _____ Bad
- _____ Ideal
- _____ Waste of time
- _____ Good
- _____ Undesirable
- _____ Worthwhile
- _____ Worse than most
- _____ Acceptable
- _____ Like to leave
- _____ Better than most
- _____ Disagreeable
- _____ Makes me content
- _____ Inadequate
- _____ Excellent
- _____ Rotten
- _____ Enjoyable
- _____ Poor

Factor Analysis Results of Scalar Measures (Varimax Rotation)

ITEM	FACTOR1	FACTOR2	FACTOR3	FACTOR4	FACTOR5	FACTOR6	FACTOR7	FACTOR8	FACTOR9
General 5	.728	.190	.091	.004	.058	.042	.063	.047	-.035
General 1	.701	.112	.129	.021	.113	.031	.117	-.004	-.080
General 17	.659	.074	.124	.029	.283	.028	.141	.058	-.132
Work 5	.602	.090	.109	-.023	.143	.062	-.051	.037	-.017
General 7	.558	.119	.090	.064	.059	.023	.015	.025	.042
Work 9	.549	.125	.113	.008	.191	-.089	.019	-.080	-.181
Work 10	.509	-.051	.030	-.016	.011	.055	-.077	.006	.012
General 9	.417	.112	.076	.095	-.071	.037	.087	.068	-.038
Co-Workers 8	.258	.686	.146	-.021	-.108	.076	-.058	-.033	.062
Co-Workers 11	.100	.679	.062	.031	-.011	.057	.028	.088	.000
Co-Workers 17	.165	.648	.120	.060	.010	-.030	.032	.006	-.022
Co-Workers 6	.125	.636	.047	-.019	-.084	.008	.020	.030	-.091
Co-Workers 15	.030	.607	.104	.017	.112	-.025	-.082	-.038	-.057
Co-Workers 1	.070	.522	.004	.144	.295	.080	.002	.088	.105
Co-Workers 7	-.019	.513	.089	.022	.312	.030	.073	.071	-.012
Supervisors 13	.171	.069	.717	.076	-.024	.030	.033	.008	.101
Supervisors 7	.154	.097	.681	.079	.036	.009	.062	.048	.108
Supervisors 6	.068	.035	.635	-.049	.075	-.045	-.007	.099	-.037
Supervisors 5	-.011	.044	.622	.005	.097	.001	-.007	.061	-.113
Supervisors 15	.151	.128	.580	.050	.092	.111	.051	-.032	.020
Supervisors 17	.151	.155	.523	.104	-.012	.028	-.012	.220	-.026
Promotions 5	.025	.002	.036	.809	.015	.003	-.022	.035	-.000
Promotions 1	-.001	.013	-.041	.785	.097	-.017	-.010	.044	-.084
Promotions 9	.071	-.030	.026	.761	.014	-.040	.096	.066	-.026
Promotions 8	.009	.062	.067	.521	-.039	.065	.143	-.057	-.044
Promotions 3	.044	.093	.112	.476	.098	.088	.070	-.037	-.048
Work 1	.226	.014	.037	.102	.536	.161	-.010	.041	-.075
General 15	.181	.164	.156	.178	.413	-.044	.190	-.170	-.257
Work 6	.199	.028	.136	-.066	.406	.102	-.103	.092	.039
Work 4	.022	.373	.074	.012	.393	.043	.164	.105	.000
Work 13	.294	.044	.014	.060	.365	.178	-.079	.076	.130
General 3	.054	.106	.061	.119	.305	-.105	.167	-.290	-.269
Job Involvement 2	-.011	.030	.065	.035	.083	.718	-.006	-.009	.013
Job Involvement 3	.072	.074	.054	.066	.015	.610	-.009	-.030	-.129
Job Involvement 1	.117	.017	-.026	.009	.117	.428	-.045	.031	.019
Pay 2	.075	-.060	-.027	.026	.037	-.014	.568	.079	.053
Pay 1	.103	.065	-.032	.042	-.004	.024	.514	.001	.016
Pay 5	.011	.036	.038	.092	-.035	-.036	.448	-.005	.042
Pay 8	-.079	-.035	.083	.039	.045	-.036	.296	-.104	-.120
Supervisors 1	.098	.079	.240	.035	.129	.044	.030	.534	-.023
Supervisors 10	.062	.154	.359	.033	.063	-.045	.028	.475	-.150
Supervisors 4	.110	.107	.456	.060	.053	-.094	-.041	.466	-.083
Work 12	.232	.028	.032	.157	.233	-.199	.085	-.249	-.128
Conflict 2	-.035	.005	.047	-.027	-.039	-.047	.038	-.049	.535
Conflict 3	-.070	-.016	.021	-.069	.044	-.148	-.015	-.077	.452
Conflict 1	-.063	-.012	-.064	-.039	-.032	.191	.025	.052	.297
Variance Explained	3.45	3.08	3.01	2.54	1.54	1.34	1.11	1.08	.96

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the scanned document**