

## Probable causes of absenteeism, tardiness and under time of employees in selected higher education institutions (HEI): Implications to their job performance

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine the causes and extent of absenteeism, tardiness and undertime of employees in selected Higher Education Institutions (HEI).

The Descriptive Correlative Approach was utilized in the study in obtaining the data and other necessary information. The author uses the questionnaire, observation, documentary analysis, and informal interview guide as an instrument to gather such data. Thirty (30) respondents are utilized in the study. This is conducted during the period 2016-2017.

Result shows that there is no significant relationship between the factors that may cause absenteeism, tardiness undertime of employees and the extent of the aforementioned factors that influence the respondents in terms of personal/family/home factors, management/administrators, work atmosphere, human relations and school policies, however; there is a significant relationship in terms of career perspective.

**Keywords:** causes of absenteeism, tardiness and undertime, extent of absenteeism, tardiness and undertime, absenteeism, tardiness/late, undertime

### Introduction

One of the problems being encountered by the school at present is the performance of their staff in terms of their absences, late or even undertime that really affects their flow of work. Absenteeism, tardiness and undertime cannot be avoided by the teaching and non-teaching staff due to other circumstances like personal and family matters, relationship with their colleague, career perspective innovations, work atmosphere ambiance and school regulations. These problems will affect their performance and as such it ruins not only the image of the school but also the performance of the employees and students. According to (Castillo & Mallillin 2016) <sup>[3]</sup> in their study, entitled, the student's satisfaction on the performance of the FFS Faculty members, concluded that there is a need to improve the performance of the lecturers inside the classroom in terms of presentation, interaction and development of critical and analytical thinking of the students. This emphasized that performance of the students will be affected inside the classroom when the lecturers are absent, late or undertime. The significant implications to lecturers provide useful hints and their teaching output as perceived by the students who are recipients of the teachers' professional competency.

There are many factors that influence the decisions and behavior of workers/employees towards their career path. While internships and co-ops are great opportunities of gaining first-hand knowledge of interesting job fields, the behavior of men and women toward what they do for a living is often the best indicator of satisfaction and success. Given the rising concerns about staff retention and performance to the increased importance attached to individuals' career adaptability and explored how career adaptability relates to employees' satisfaction with factors that organizations regard important for their retention and performance. This explained the participants' level of satisfaction with their experiences of the career

opportunities, work-life balance, training and development opportunities and characteristics of the jobs offered by the company or school. (Coetzee & Stoltz 2015) <sup>[1]</sup>.

Regardless of their chosen career path, successful people share many common traits. Whether their ideas are revolutionalising the business world or their conviction is raising global awareness of a worthy cause, they seem to have a lot in common.

They're passionate about their work. They set manageable goals and work every day to reach them. They're motivated. And they're not afraid to dream. But most of this time, this condition does not last for a long time. Low productivity, mediocre performance, absenteeism, tardiness, and undertime of employees cause problems to organizational leaders and planners. Perfectionism is a prevalent personality disposition that may affect all domains of life. Work is an important domain of life for many people. Yet, perfectionism at work and how perfectionism affects employees' health and well-being is still limited. Perfectionism has three key aspects of peoples' working lives that are closely associated with employees' health and well-being: work engagement, workaholism and job burnout. Differentiating between perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns are as follows: (a) perfectionistic strivings show positive relationships with work engagement, whereas perfectionistic concerns show no relationships or negative relationships, (b) perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns both show positive relationships with workaholism and (c) perfectionistic strivings show negative relationships with burnout, whereas perfectionistic concerns show positive relationships. Perfectionism, work engagement, workaholism and job burnout must be balanced to avoid problems that might occur among the employees. (Stoeber & Damian 2016) <sup>[12]</sup>.

Absenteeism, tardiness and undertime are often related to job

satisfaction. It makes sense that employees who do not like their job are absent, late or leave the office more often. The reason for this is almost as varied and fanciful as the excuses given in court for traffic violations. The impact of these three conditions on the operation of organization/institution, however; can be significant. The teacher, secretary, custodian, bus driver or cafeteria worker who is absent, late or goes home early impairs the work of the organizations and interferes with the daily routine of other staff members. The cost is poor performance, work delay, frustration and work imbalance is high even when the employees/workers concerned are not paid. If these conditions are not addressed in due time, they will further contribute to the low morale, high turnover rate, inefficiency of work and higher benefit costs. Aside from the costly scheduled wrecking effects is the ineffective employee performance. Performance as a manageable human resource phenomenon and hence with prescriptive ends in mind is perhaps most useful point to view. It is a process-based work system. An employee provides work inputs in the form of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes. It applies through effort and related forms of work behavior and produces certain quantity of products or services of a certain quality within a certain period of time. Strictly speaking, inputs in the form of knowledge, skills and competencies are not tantamount to performance but have to do with employee potentials to perform. (Shields et al. 2015) [11]. In obtaining efficiency and output in work, employees should not get absent, late, or undertime. The expectation of the company to the employee is to obtain high output, establish close relationship, good smooth flow of work, and work together to achieve its objectives. It is the duty of the employees to perform their task well and their foremost concern is the welfare of the company and their families in the future. Such concern then will be doubted if the employees are always absent, tardy and undertime.

Much has been said and written about the global competition of the company in the country, the wages, products and benefits. For this, employees are the most important factor in the success and failure of the company. Controlling absenteeism, tardiness or undertime requires proper study and efficient management. When the employee is absent, late, or undertime and his/her attendance record begin to look questionable, the management must discover the reason, give possible solution to the problem by counseling, interviewing and giving reprimand letter.

### Statement of the Problem

1. How may the profile of the respondents be described in the terms of
  - 1.1 gender,
  - 1.2 age,
  - 1.3 civil status,
  - 1.4 highest educational attainment,
  - 1.5 position rank,
  - 1.6 number of dependents,
  - 1.8 length of service in the college?
2. What are the factors that may cause absenteeism, tardiness and undertime of employees along the area of
  - 2.1 personal/family home factor
  - 2.2 management/administrator
  - 2.3 career perspective
  - 2.4 work atmosphere
  - 2.5 human relations
  - 2.6 company policies

3. To what extent do the aforementioned factors influence the respondents' in terms of their absenteeism, tardiness and undertime?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the factors that may cause absenteeism, tardiness undertime of employees and extent of the aforementioned factors that influence the respondents?

### Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the factors that may cause absenteeism, tardiness undertime of employees and the extent of the aforementioned factors that influence the respondents in terms of personal/family/home factors, management/administrators, work atmosphere, human relations and school policies, however; there is a significant relationship in terms of career perspective.

### Research Design

The Descriptive Correlative Approach was utilized in the study in obtaining the data and other necessary information. The researcher used the questionnaire, observation, documentary analysis, and informal interview guide was an instrument to gather such data. A descriptive correlational method refers to a type of study in which information is collected without making any changes to the study subject. This means that the experimenter cannot directly interact with the environment in which he/she is studying in a way that would cause any changes related to the experiment. These types of studies are also sometimes known as observational studies. All descriptive correlational method studies have the same basic property of avoiding any direct changes in the environment of the study. However, there are a number of different types of descriptive correlational methods that each perform research in a slightly different way. Some scientists and researchers prefer to meet with a group of people one time and ask them questions. This is called a cross-sectional study, and as long as the scientists do not change the behavior of the people they are interacting with, it is a descriptive correlational study. Some researchers prefer to keep track of people over time. This is called a longitudinal study. In these cases, behavior must remain unchanged, but the subjects are often brought back in for further questions. Descriptive studies generally use surveys or other methods of data collection that rely on existing records. (What is descriptive correlational method, 2017).

### Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study are the selected teaching and non-teaching staff of the Higher Education Institutions employees in the different colleges and universities of the Sultanate of Oman. Thirty (30) respondents are utilized in the study. This is conducted during the period 2016-2017.

Results and Analysis

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Indicators		f	%
Gender	Male	10	33
	Female	20	67
Age	25 and below	14	47
	26-30	9	30
	31-35	3	10
	36 and above	4	13
Civil Status	Single	13	43
	Married	15	50
	Live-In	2	7
Educational Attainment	Bachelors' Degree	19	63
	With MA Units/Graduate	6	20
	Doctors Degree/Graduate	5	7
Position /Rank	Teaching	25	83
	Non-Teaching	4	13
	Head	1	3
Number of Dependents	2 and below	13	43
	3-4	9	30
	5 and above	8	27
Length of Service in School	2 years below	12	40
	3-5 years	4	13
	6-8 years	11	37
	9 years and above	3	10

\*30 respondents are being utilized in the study

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the profile of the respondents. As noted in the table, female respondents got a frequency of 20 or 67%. Most of the respondents belong to the age bracket 25 and below with a frequency of 14 or 47%. 15 or 50% are married employees. Profiles educational attainment is bachelors' degree with a

frequency of 19 or 63% among the respondents. Position/Rank got a frequency of 25 or 83% among the respondents who belong to teaching. Most of them have 2 and below number of dependents with a frequency of 13 or 43% and length of service in the company is 6-8 years with a frequency of 11 or 37% among the respondents.

Table 2: Factors that cause Absenteeism, Tardiness and Undertime among the respondents

S. No	Indicators	f	%
<b>Along the Area of Personal/Family/Home Factors:</b>			
1.	Poor health/sickness/by members of the family/ financial difficulties or lost/debts.	21	70
2.	Marital dispute/infidelity.	12	40
3.	Educational activities of children/dependents.	27	90
4.	Vices of a family members.	13	43
5.	Feeling of unworthiness.	15	50
6.	Death of love one/close friend/birth of a baby/pregnancy.	17	47
7.	Involvement in legal system/minor violation of the law	18	60
<b>Along the Area of Management/Administrator</b>			
1.	Poor or weak leadership/lack of skills of the dept. head.	27	90
2.	Favoritism/inconsistency.	23	77
3.	Autocratic rule.	20	67
4.	Lack of support of colleagues.	29	97
5.	Inability to empower/ leniency/lack of disciplinary measures/policies	25	83
6.	Arrogance/authoritative demanding.	24	80
7.	Unapproachable/lack of transparency with policies.	26	87
<b>Along the Area of Career Perspective:</b>			
1.	Lack of hope for promotional career prospect.	24	80
2.	Low performance evaluation/ lack of motivation, low morale.	15	50
3.	Demands for advancement and growth/ professional rivalry/office intrigue.	12	40
4.	Under employment.	14	47
5.	Feeling of incompetence/lack of necessary skills for the job.	13	43
6.	Unrecognized achievements.	21	70
7.	Burn-out/stressed.	13	43
<b>Along the Area of Work Atmosphere</b>			
1.	Poor ventilation/uncomfortable working space/ insufficient utility.	22	73
2.	Dirty, noisy, & stingy work environment.	24	80
3.	Poor facilities.	18	60

4.	Inflexible working hours.	20	67
5.	Inaccessible to work place/ lack technological support.	23	77
6.	Poor garbage disposal.	21	70
7.	to many workloads	26	87
<b>Along the Area of Human Relations</b>			
1.	Lack of support from superior, subordinates, & co-employees.	21	70
2.	Unfriendly atmosphere/ unethical conduct.	22	73
3.	No respect on decisions and opinions of superiors, subordinates, and co-employees.	24	80
4.	Not working as a team.	29	97
5.	Unhealthy competition.	23	77
6.	No harmonious relationship among others/ indifference in views, opinions, with others	27	90
<b>Along the area of School Policies</b>			
1.	1. Overtime pay is tempting.	21	70
2.	Leniency in attendance for those who rendered overtime.	20	67
3.	Highest benefits/salary of overtime pay than regular pay.	25	83
4.	Mandatory overtime.	28	93
5.	Need for additional income.	21	70

\*multiple response

Table 2 presents the frequency and percentage distribution on the factors that cause absenteeism, tardiness and undertime of the respondents. As shown in the table, along the area of personal/family home factors, it revealed that most of the reasons for their absenteeism, late and under time of employees are their educational activities of their children and their dependents, with a frequency of 27 or 90% among the respondents. On the other hand, along the area of management/administration, it shows that there is lack of

support of colleagues, with a frequency of 29 or 97% among the respondents. Moreover, on the area of career perspective, it shows that there is lack of hope for promotional career prospect, with a frequency of 24 or 80% among the respondents. In contrast to the above causes work atmosphere shows that there are too many workloads in the college, with a frequency of 26 or 87% among the respondents. Hence, along the area of school policies, it revealed that there is a mandatory overtime, with a frequency of 28 or 90% among the respondents.

**Table 3:** Extent of Influenced of ATU among the respondents

Scale	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Strongly Agree	Extent of influenced of ATU is very high
3.40-4.19	Agree	Extent of influenced of ATU is high
2.60-3.39	Moderately Agree	Extent of influenced of ATU is minimal
1.80-2.59	Disagree	Extent of influenced of ATU is low
1.00-1.79	Strongly Disagree	Extent of influenced of ATU is very low

  

Indicators	SD	AWM	Interpretation
Personal/Family/Home Factor	2.41	3.50	Agree
Management and Administrator	2.09	3.74	Agree
Career Perspective	2.09	3.74	Agree
Work Atmosphere	1.53	4.37	Agree
Human Relations	1.58	4.31	Agree
School Policies	1.55	4.35	Agree

- Extent of influenced among the respondents in terms of Personal/Family Factors is Agree (AWM=3.50) which means that ATU among them is high.
- Extent of influenced among the respondents in terms of Management and Administration is Agree (AWM=3.74) which means that ATU among them is high.
- Extent of influenced among the respondents in terms of Career Perspective is Agree (AWM=3.74) which means that ATU among them is high also.
- Extent of influenced among the respondents in terms of Work Atmosphere is Agree (AWM=4.37) which means that ATU among them is high.
- Extents of influenced among the respondents in terms of Human Relations is Agree (AWM=4.31) which means that ATU among them is high.
- Extents of influence among the respondents in terms of School Policies is Agree (AWM=4.35) which means that ATU among them is high.

**Table 5:** Significant relationship between the causes and extent of ATU among the respondents

Variable	Computed r-value	Relationships *significant * not significant	Hypotheses *accepted *rejected
<b>Causes/Extent</b>			
Personal/Family/Home Factor	0.026	not significant	accepted
Management/Administrator	0.162	not significant	Accepted
3. Career Perspective	0.368	significant	rejected
4. Work Atmosphere	0.033	not significant	Accepted
5. Human Relations	0.001	not significant	accepted
6. School Policies	0.014	not significant	accepted

Significant at 0.05 level, one-tailed test, df at 28 with critical r-value of 0.361

1. Personal/Family/Home factors is not significant since the computed r value is 0.026 which is lower than critical r value of 0.361, therefore; the hypothesis is accepted.
2. Management/Administrator is not significant since the computed r value is 0.162 which is lower than the r value of 0.361, therefore; the hypothesis is accepted.
3. Career Perspective is significant since the computed value of r is 0.368 which is higher than the r value of 0.361, therefore; the hypothesis is rejected.
4. Work Atmosphere is not significant since the computed r value is 0.033 which is lower than the critical value of 0.361, the hypothesis therefore is accepted.
5. Human relations' is not significant since the computed r value is 0.001 which is lower than the critical r value of 0.361. The hypothesis is accepted.
6. School Policies is not significant since the computed r value is 0.014 which is lower than the critical value of 0.361. The hypothesis is accepted.

### Discussion

This study reveals the different causes and reasons for the absenteeism, tardiness and undertime of selected teaching and non-teaching staffs of Higher Education Institution in the Sultanate of Oman. Most of the respondents are female and still young. They are in the process of adjusting their work environment to the rules and policies of the college and universities to where they are working. Therefore, their reasons for their absenteeism, tardiness and undertime vary on their motives in life. Continuous professional development of teachers play a crucial role in improving learning outcomes in schools when teachers and non-teaching staffs are absent, tardy and undertime themselves in their work. This affects classroom instructional time in basic schools among them. Implying teachers who abandoned classroom instructional time with their students would affect the learning performance of the students in their academics. (Tamanja 2016) <sup>[13]</sup>. This can also be applied to a non-teaching staff, they should not abandoned their work so that the flow of the school operation will not be affected. Hence, absenteeism, tardiness and undertime would really affect the performance of the students particularly on their learning process in their four skills of English. According to (Mallillin et al., 2016) <sup>[3]</sup> they said that attendance and diligent participation in class are crucial to the success of a student specifically in a writing course. It is because writing requires practice through revising, tutoring, collaborating and brainstorming with the tutor and classmates. This paper sought to find the level of respondents' participation through attendance, the level of their writing skill, significant relationship between attendance and writing skill and the predictive power and degree of influence of attendance on writing skills. It also encourages the application of total quality management in teaching academic courses such as in writing. This study is not only be applicable to writing but also to other elements in English such as speaking, reading and listening, this can also be applied to students tardiness and undertime in their classroom performance.

On the factors that cause absenteeism, tardiness and undertime among the respondents, educational activities of children and dependents is very much high in which employees cannot escape because they will support their children and dependents in their educational activities. Hence; their absenteeism, tardiness and undertime is uncontrollable beyond their

expectations. Regular school attendance is foundational to teaching and non-teaching staffs in the college but school absenteeism, tardiness and undertime is a common, serious and highly vexing problem. Conceptualizing problematic absenteeism, tardiness and undertime has led the teaching and non-teaching a considerable confusion and lack of consensus about a pragmatic and coordinated assessment and intervention approach among them. (Kearney 2014) <sup>[8]</sup>.

On the factors that cause absenteeism, tardiness and undertime among the respondents in terms of management administrators, it shows that lack of supports from colleagues is the most critical one of their reasons of their chronic absences, late and even their undertime. According to them, they are not supporting even on their emergency absences because of some personal matters among them. However; they also express their concerns about school personnel may have difficulty in supporting them because of some variety of issues including time constraints, level of expertise required and other administrative support. (Crone, Hawken & Horner 2015).

In terms of career perspective among the respondents, they have a lack of hope for promotional prospect, despite of the many accomplishments they have in addition to their workload, their qualifications as workers and their experiences as teaching and non-teaching staff. They have several workshops and training to their qualifications as individual. This has an effect to their performance even to the extent of their absenteeism, tardiness and undertime among them. Based on the theories of career construction and of social exchange, the joint and interactive effects of perceived organizational career management and career adaptability on indicators of career success among employees and career adaptability played a unique role in predicting on the control for the effects and perceived organizational career management. It was also perceived that organizational career management and career adaptability by career satisfaction. Career adaptability perceived organizational career management and career satisfaction. (Guan, Zhou, Ye, Jiang, & Zhou 2015) <sup>[7]</sup>.

Factors that cause absenteeism, tardiness and undertime on the area of work atmosphere, it revealed that respondents have too many workloads. This has been proven among them. Though, they are given overtime pay for such over load work particularly in their teaching job, still it is not enough for them to do, therefore; their performance is affected to the extent that their attendance is affected. Within the individuals, daily workload negatively predicted daily work performance. Their day-to-day variations in workload influence their performance by creating conflict among them, as well as the role supportive supervisors, line managers and head that play in influencing their work performance. Employees' daily perceived workload positively predicted daily work conflict which in turn negatively predicted daily performance and as such their attendance also affect them. (Goh, Ilies, & Wilson 2015) <sup>[6]</sup>.

Along the area of human relations, it has been observed that employees are not working as a team. There might be competitions and professional rivalry among them since they are from different countries and they have their own styles in their working environment. They might be adjusting to their new environment and their old style and practice in their own country will be carried for sure they will adjust and cope with the new style with the new environment in the college or university to where they are teaching, carrying the same objectives, goals, mission and vision of the college. They still

need to discover their human relations and as a teaching and non-teaching staff, they can adjust with the new work environment. The extent to which teams collectively reflect upon and adapt their working methods and functioning has been an important predictor of team outcomes and notably innovation among them. Developed a level of contingency model team reflexivity, work demands and innovation must be given. The highly reflexive teams will be more innovative than teams low in reflexivity when facing a demanding work environment. Team reflexivity was positively related to team innovation and team reflexivity and work demands interacted such that high levels of both predicted higher levels of team innovation. (Schippers, West, & Dawson 2015) <sup>[10]</sup>.

Factors that cause absenteeism, tardiness and undertime of employees on the area of school policies, it has been noted that most of the respondents agree that overtime is mandatory. For the reason that there is no available lecturer to teach the subject however; this affects the performance of the lecturers and as such they cannot escape with their absenteeism, tardiness and undertime among them. According to them, they are exhausted too much with their work and pressure because of the demands of the college or university. Overtime work or shift work (any shift outside of 7 a.m. to 6 p.m) and long work hours increase the risk for short sleep duration and sleep disturbances. They do not get enough sleep because of this they cannot escape from absenteeism, tardiness and undertime. Long work hours increase the risk for reduced performance on the job, obesity, injuries and a wide range of chronic diseases. In addition, fatigue-related errors could harm employees and also endanger others during their commute to and from work. The key strategy to reduce these risks is making sleep a priority in the employer's systems for organizing work and in their personal life. (Caruso 2014) <sup>[2]</sup>.

On the extent of absenteeism, tardiness and undertime of the respondents, in terms of personal/family home factors, management and administrator, career perspective, work atmosphere, human relations and school policies answer is agree in which that the extent of their absenteeism, tardiness and undertime is high. The reasons for their absenteeism, tardiness and undertime are their attendance to school activities of children. They have to sacrifice their work because of the requirements of their children in their school. Parental involvement has a positive and moderate impact on academic achievement of their children. The parents or families that have high academic expectations for their children, develop and maintain communication with them about school activities and help them to develop and explore their academic performance. (Castro et al. 2015) <sup>[4]</sup>.

On the other hand, respondents say that professional growth is low and bleak, they have inflexible working hours which affect their attendance, lack of support also from their colleague, line managers, subordinates and their co-employees. They are just forced to do the overtime work to have the desire of getting extra money.

### Conclusions

1. Personal factors like gender, age, civil status, educational attainment, and position and rank, number of dependents and length of service in school affect work attitude. Younger employees have just started settling down, and as such, they are on the process of child rearing. New employees are still

adjusting but also looking for better offer or greener pasture. These personal factors affect attendance.

2. Factors that cause absenteeism, tardiness, and undertime of the respondents vary. Employees might be competent and committed but there are other factors that have influence on their work attitude which includes their attendance. Family affairs especially children's needs, educational activities, birth of a new baby in the family, personal health and own capability have a high degree of influence on the schedule of an employee. Likewise, their work environment is proven to be a contributory factor to their attendance. Their confidence to the management and their relationship with their children may inspire or disgust employees.
3. The influence of the different factors on the attendance of employees varies, depending on their priorities and motives. There are employees whose concern is their families, others are their ambition or career perspective and others are their sensitivity to their environment and relationship with their co-workers. The reasons therefore of their absenteeism, tardiness, and undertime depends largely on how they perceive their future. The extent of influence of the aforementioned factors reflect on the extent of their absenteeism, tardiness, and undertime.
4. Result shows that there is no significant relationship between the factors that may cause absenteeism, tardiness undertime of employees and the extent of the aforementioned factors that influence the respondents in terms of personal/family/home factors, management/administrators, work atmosphere, human relations and school policies, however; there is a significant relationship in terms of career perspective.

### Recommendations

1. Profile of the respondents must be given consideration in recruitment, selection, and placement of employees. These should be given weight aside from competence, personality, skills and educational background of the applicants or the candidates for promotion.
2. There must be a program for married employees with growing children. A special schedule should be designed specifically for them to be able to attend to their children's needs.
3. Higher Education Institutions should sponsor program that will develop not only professional growth of employees but also their human relations. These could be done through seminars, workshops, grip sessions, and recreational activities.
4. A thorough study must be continuously done on the causes and extent of absenteeism, tardiness and undertime of employees since it is not significant to personal, home family factors, management and administrator, work atmosphere, human relations and school policies. i.e. effects of absenteeism, tardiness and undertime and the performance of employees who incurred chronic absenteeism, tardiness and undertime.

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