

## Influence the Impact of Employee Presenteism Behavior on Work Alienation: An Example of a Public Institution

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### Extensive Summary

#### Introduction

It is seen that employees have great importance in reaching success in job environment, as change rapidly increases day by day. Managers should take into consideration that employees do not only work for their economic expectations, but there are also social aspects of their expectations and needs outside of these expectations (Akıncı, 2002: 2). The success of the manager, whichever area they operate in, depends on the employees' productivity and their work towards organizational goals (Koçel, 2003, Meter, 2005: 1). For this reason, knowing and directing the employees' behaviors and attitudes that are expected by the organization, play an important role in managers' realizing the goals of the organization.

The roots of the concept of work alienation, which is mostly handled in a social and organizational context, extend to the nineteenth century. Work alienation is a process that causes employees, as the most important elements of organizations, to become less sensitive to themselves, colleagues, other people and the environment as a result of the inability or less use of their creativity with the increase of mechanization in production process since the nineteenth century (Shariati, 1992: 42-43). An organization where alienation does not emerge is almost nonexistent, although the way it appears and the levels are different from each other.

Another variable of the study, presenteeism, can be expressed as continuing to work for reasons, such as generally fear of losing job or anxiety about obtaining less, even though the employee is either psychologically or physically sick. An employee who has a presenteeism problem can cause negative consequences for the organization and for himself/herself because he/she is at work uncomfortably and reluctantly and because he/she cannot show the performance required by the job. Studies on presenteeism until today usually have focused on physical discomfort as a source of presenteeism. Psychological disorders can cause individuals to experience presenteeism as well as physical disorders can. Individuals who perceive that the practices are not fair within the organization may tend to have negative feelings and thoughts towards the organization over time. These negative emotions and thoughts can cause employees to

exhibit presenteeism behavior, leading to psychological disorders such as anger, tension, irritability, anxiety, concern, and stress. The inefficient working environment created by presenteeism is of great importance in terms of sustainability of the businesses and the sustainability of the competition power, causing job losses, decline in productivity and performance.

Despite the underrating of the employees by the managers, the physical and mental disorders created by situations such as not being treated fairly, lack of work safety, bad relations at work, lack of management and group support, lack of autonomy at the workplace, and work intensity (physical and psychological), employees may come to work just not to lose their jobs, only to make a living and just to be there. In this case, we can say that the employee will alienate to work over time, because the employee will be only there to be there because the employee will be reluctant, inefficient at work.

### **Method**

The population of this research consists of 473 academic and administrative personnel at Iğdır University. The minimum number of 212 people that can represent this population with a 95% confidence and a 5% margin of error have been identified as the sample. The information about the scales used in this research is given below. SPSS 20 and AMOS 18 statistical programs were used for the analysis of data in the study. Descriptive analyzes, univariate and bivariate analyzes (correlation, *t*-test and ANOVA analyzes) and Cronbach's Alpha analyzes were carried out with the SPSS package program. Confirmatory factor analyzes, Structural Equation Modeling and Intervention analyzes were also carried out with the AMOS software.

In our study, the 6-item Stanford Presenteeism Scale (SPS-6) developed by Koopman et al. (1991) from Stanford University School of Medicine with the support of Mark & Co Inc. and “Work Alienation Scale” developed by Mottaz (1981) consisting three sub dimensions (powerlessness, meaninglessness and self-estrangement) and 21 questions were used.

When the gender distribution of the survey participants is examined; 24,1% of the participants (59 people) are women and 75,9% (186 people) are men. The great majority of participants are married (76.3%-187 people) and only 23.7% (58 people) are single. When the age distribution of participants is examined; half of the sample (50.6% -124 people) are in the 26-35 age group. 32.2% (79 people) of the participants are in the 36-45 age group. The remainder is with a rate of 12,2% (30 people) are in the 46-55 age group, with a rate of 3,3% (8 people) are in the group of 56 years and older, and finally 1,6% (4 persons) are in the age group of 25 years and under respectively.

The educational status of the sample is bachelor's degree with a majority of 106 people (43,3%). There are 50 people (20.4%) who have completed master's education and 64 people (26.1%) who have completed doctorate education. Only 23 people (9,4%) have an associate's degree. Two of the sample (0.8%) are high school graduates.

In the sample, 125 people (51%) have 4501 TL and above monthly salaries. 23.7 percent have a monthly income of between 2501 TL and 3500 TL. In the sample, the ratio of those having incomes between 1405 TL and 2500 TL is 13.5%. Twenty-nine of the participants (11,8%) have a monthly income of between 3501 TL and 4500 TL.

When the sample is analyzed as the working period, 10 people (4.1%) have worked less than one year. 74 of the participants (30,2%) have a working period of 1-5

years. In the sample, the ratio of those who have worked for a period of 6-10 years is 26.9%. 13.1% of the participants have worked for 11-15 years. The people who have worked the longest are 16 years and over and 63 people (25,7%).

In the distribution of the sample according to the duties at the institution, the majority are working in the administrative unit with 127 people (51.8%). The number of employees in the academic unit is 118 people (48,2%).

### **Conculasion and Discussion**

It was seen that the concept of work alienation, which emerged in the case of disharmony and dissatisfaction mostly in the social and organizational field, exhibited a three-dimensional structure of powerlessness, meaninglessness and self-estrangement as expected as a result of confirmatory factor analysis. When the work alienation levels of the employees were examined, while the average of the employees in the administrative unit was higher than the average of the employees in the academic unit, it was seen that the work alienation levels of the employees in both units were moderate; in the administrative unit (mean = 2.68) and in the academic unit (mean = 2.25). This result was statistically insignificant although the level of work alienation of the administrative unit was higher than the level of work alienation of the academic unit regarding the duty at the institution. The level of work alienation of those who participated in the survey (mean = 2.47) was found to be slightly below the medium level. When the averages regarding the sub-dimensions were examined, the following results were obtained: Powerlessness (mean = 2.82), meaninglessness (mean = 2.18), and self-estrangement (mean = 2.41). Looking at the averages of the sub-dimensions, it was found to be slightly below the medium level in the same way. It is seen that the powerlessness dimension has a higher average than the other two dimensions.

Work alienation is an important issue that can directly affect the performance of both organizations and employees by influencing the productivity of the organizations and employees. Therefore, based on these emerging findings, the necessity of investigating the factors that cause work alienation by the managers, thereby producing solutions that will reduce to lower levels is emerging.

When the levels of presenteeism behavior, which is expressed as coming to work despite the fact that the employees do not feel well, were examined, while the average of the employees in the administrative unit was higher than the average of the employees in the academic unit, it was seen that the levels of presenteeism behavior in both units were moderate; in the administrative unit (mean = 2.56) and in the academic unit (mean = 2.37). This result was statistically significant in terms of the duty at the institution, unlike the other variables. This can be attributed to the fact that eight to five shifts for the administrative staff are compulsory, and that eight to five shifts for academic staff are more flexible in terms of working hours. Based on these findings, we can state that in terms of the success and continuity of the organizations, it is important to determine the individual and organizational factors that lead to presenteeism which causes significant reductions in especially employees' productivity.

In the research, the statistically significant and positive correlations between presenteeism and individuals' work alienation and its sub-dimensions; powerlessness, meaninglessness and self-estrangement were found.

According to these results, as the presenteeism level of the individual, who continues to work despite the physical and psychological discomfort increases, that is presenteeism, the employee feels himself weaker, meaningless and self-alienated, and

thus the work alienation is also increase. In order to reduce the level of work alienation, which may lead to negative consequences for the organization, we can say that the practices of preventing and reducing the presenteeism should be created and the regarding decisions should be made by enabling the measures and practices that improve the physical and mental health of the employees.