

ABSENTEEISM: MOIBE MUNICIPALITY – PORTUGAL

Amândio Baía

UDI Guarda Polytechnic, Portugal

Célia Ramos

Portugal

Absenteeism is one of the phenomena that most concern organizations insofar as it influences their performance entails costs and contributes to lowering the morale of regular workers. Personal and family issues are pointed out with the main reasons to justify unplanned absenteeism. Employers have tried to determine the validity of absences from work and to offer incentives to mitigate absences. This investigation presents a case study carried out in a local authority, Moibe Municipality, in order to try to understand the causes associated with absenteeism in this institution and to propose measures that help in combating this problem in order to provide the best quality of attendance to the citizens and to reduce operating costs.

Keywords: Absenteeism, Satisfaction, Human Resources.

Introduction

Technological progress in the workplace, coupled with rapid globalization, has transformed the working conditions of many people around the world.

Absenteeism is one of the phenomena that most concern corporate managers because of their implications: costs, declining competitiveness, poor service delivery, deterioration of the working environment, demotivation of workers and a negative impact on the morale of regular workers (Kocakulah, Moreno *et al.*, 2008, Sukumaran and Alamelu, 2014). It is one of the most discussed constructs in studies dedicated to human behavior at work (Halbesleben *et al.*, 2014). In this context, it is recommended that companies try to understand what leads employees to absent themselves from work by properly managing their human resources.

A serious effort will have to be made to reduce the economic, social and personal costs attributed to the absenteeism of the working population, including the public sector, which is the object of study in several countries (Hassan *et al.*, 2014; Paola *et al.*, 2014). In Portugal, it will have to be a strategic fight, for the valorization of our human resources, for the promotion of workers' health, for the reinvention of our workplaces, for the technical and organizational modernization of our companies, for equity and solidarity among the Portuguese (Graça, 2002).

A European study by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA, 2015) shows that psychosocial risk factors are the main cause of absenteeism in Portugal and the rest of Europe. The

same study also revealed that the loss of productivity of companies due to work absenteeism amounts to 136 billion euros in the European Union (Silva, 2015).

As a rule, frequent absences from work are a symptom of failures in the company's human resources management and should be corrected immediately. Poor leadership, lack of feedback and motivation, lack of creative freedom, excessive control, lack of transparency, are among the most frequent reasons employees are unmotivated and lacking work, among other reasons (Silva, 2015). Pfeider (2013) adds that in the public sector, the phenomenon of absenteeism is contextualized by a specific character: the stability of employment. This aspect makes it difficult to analyze the behavior of absenteeism in the public sphere (Riphahn, 2004; Hassink and Koning, 2009).

Since local authorities are the main regional employers and absenteeism a pertinent issue that has implications for the performance of these organizations, we have proposed to study the causes of absenteeism in the Municipality of Moibe (CMM) and suggest measures to mitigate this problem.

Literature Review

In an atmosphere of growing concern about the economy, competitiveness and quality, absenteeism is worthy of considerable consideration. It is difficult, if not impossible, for businesses to work normally and to achieve their goals if their workers do not attend work. According to Patinha (2012), at the level of society in general, absenteeism entails high costs, having a negative effect on the economy as a consequence of the loss of potential production due to the reduction of the available workforce and the increase of costs with medical treatments and safety social. Economically speaking, it is estimated that the annual cost of work-related accidents and illnesses in Portugal exceeds 4% of the global GDP (Borges *et al.*, 2011). According to the Order of Psychologists, in Portugal, absenteeism and prolonged incapacity due to work-related stress and mental health problems, has been worsening (Antunes, 2013). The consequences of poor mental health create, in addition to absenteeism, a number of negative effects on businesses, such as reduced levels of performance and productivity, low motivation, and high employee turnover.

According to a study conducted by Deloitte (2002, cited by Cunha *et al.*, 2012), the public sector is one of the most negative in Portugal. The study covered 136,000 employees with the objective of analyzing the impact of municipalities in the public sector and the national economy, noting that each employee misses on average one month of work per year.

Absenteeism refers to the time not worked or the absence of the worker from his work activities (Benavides *et al.*, 2001), whether due to voluntary or involuntary factors (Darr and Johns, 2008). Already Cunha *et al.* (2012) point out that the most consensual definition is that absenteeism refers to the unexpected absence of an employee from his or her place of work, considering also that this term excludes absences due to vacations, strikes, breaks, special leave (eg, maternity), or for other reasons known or programmed by the organization.

In a more sociological sense, Mallada (2008) and Araújo (2011), understand that absenteeism is directly related to the attitudes of the individual and of their own identity in relation to work, being absences justified or not and is measured by the difference between the contracted and actual work time. Other absenteeism classifications are considered in the study of this theme: temporary versus permanent, voluntary vs. involuntary; justified versus unjustified (Cunha *et al.*, 2012; Pinto, 2006). According to these authors, voluntary absences are avoidable, they are programmed because they depend on the worker's willingness to be absent or not, that is, it is due to an intention of the one who is absent while involuntary absences are not foreseeable, not being programmed, can be controlled by the individual, arising as a consequence of unexpected illnesses, accidents and other factors, that is, they result from elements external to the will of the one who is absent.

Pinto (2006) states that the existence of significant relationships between individual characteristics and absenteeism are universally recognized, but currently little understood. According to this author, absenteeism varies according to gender, age, because with the increase of the average life expectancy and

changes in the legislation, namely the alteration of the retirement age, it resulted in an increase in the number of older people in the work, being essential to analyze these factors to better understand the implications that the impact of aging workers will have on the organization.

Women, in addition to their professional activities, are usually in charge of household chores and childcare, which can lead to overwork, being more exposed to depressions and exhaustion, and being able to move away from their jobs in a given period (Silva, 2015). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), depression will be the most common disease by 2030. Dr. Shekhar Saxena of the WHO, Department of Mental Health, told the BBC that “WHO figures clearly show that the burden of depression (in terms of losses for those affected) is likely to increase, so that by 2030 alone it will be the largest cause of losses (for the population) among all health problems.” (BBC, 2009). Although depression leads to 11 times higher absenteeism than non-depressive illnesses, being more frequent in women and in people considered poor.

The causes of absenteeism are not always associated with the individual and may arise from organizational factors (Sukumaran and Alamelu, 2014; Hassan *et al.*, 2014). Routine, lack of motivation, a bad environment within the company, poor working conditions, lack of employee involvement in company objectives, lack of supervision, low salaries, no promotion and growth within the company. The lack of reward systems, the lack of a performance appraisal system, and workplace bullying are among the many causes of corporate absenteeism (Boon *et al.*, 2015, Lee *et al.*, 2015). A study by Ybema *et al.* (2010) points out that job dissatisfaction leads to increased absenteeism in companies, as well as the fact that workers feel that they are not productive for the company. Pavalache-Ilie (2014), Intaraprasong *et al.* (2012), Mohammad *et al.* (2011), Edwards (2014), Koning and Van Kleef (2015), Ibrahim and Aslinda (2013), Rodrigues (2008) and Qamar (2012) conclude that job satisfaction has a positive relationship with organizational commitment, negatively affecting levels of absenteeism. Robins and Judge (2013) also consider that satisfied workers are more likely to get involved beyond work-related obligations. Uhl-Bien, *et al.* (2014) emphasize job satisfaction as a reflection of negative or positive feelings about their co-workers and the work environment. Luthans (2011) associates the outcome of organizations with employee satisfaction. Workers more satisfied with working conditions, in general, show a decrease in absenteeism (Greenberg, 2011). Torre *et al.* (2015) concluded that equity in employee compensation systems also exerts a negative influence on absenteeism.

Silva (2015) argues that if organizations adopt motivational incentives this measure is more effective than the imposition of sanctions in the fight against absenteeism. It also notes that measures such as rewards for workers with low rates of monetary absenteeism, or the granting of a time limit to deal with personal matters, the use of high-performance systems by companies, greater ability, knowledge, and motivation, contributes to a significant reduction in absenteeism.

The absenteeism index should be considered a factor of analysis in any organization, as high levels of absenteeism can compromise all productivity and efficiency. Behind the absenteeism index can be many problems that affect daily the quality of life, the performance and attendance of employees, problems that may be personal, biological, environmental, social, family, financial, or even related to organizational structure (Valtor 2012). Human Resources plays a fundamental role in the whole process, because it is the leadership that is expected of it, being the department responsible for recruitment and selection, and for the development of people and the organizational climate (Cunha, 2012, Samad and Yusuf, 2012).

The level of unemployment in the labor market is a factor that negatively affects absenteeism, as individuals are less likely to be absent from work even when they are ill (Livanos and Zangelidis, 2013). Also, ethical leadership, reflected in recent scandals involving public managers in the government sector, as it is associated with procedural justice in people management, tends to reduce absenteeism and increase organizational commitment (Hassan *et al.*, 2014).

There are several models that explain the process that leads a worker to identify a problem and make the decision to leave. Costa (2009) refers to the existence of several theoretical models from the social and human sciences such as economics, psychology, and sociology. Steers and Rhodes (1998) argue that absenteeism results from motivation and ability to attend being influenced by individual demographic

factors (personal and family) and job satisfaction. Prates and Cordeiro (2011) and Patinha (2012) conclude that organizational practices, absenteeism culture and attitudes, values and goals are essential variables in the motivation to be present.

From the models based on the economic, psychological and sociological aspects, we adapted the Steers and Rhodes Model (1999) because we consider it a suitable, assimilated and diagnostic model becoming adjusted for the present investigation since it contributes to the analysis of the inter-relationship between three dimensions: organizational culture, management practices, human resources, and absenteeism.

In the present investigation, absenteeism was considered as all absences from work, including also those triggered by motives presented in the regime of the Public Employment Contract (Law no. 35/2014, 2014): assistance to relatives, death of family members, work accidents, strikes, maternity and paternity protection, court and worker-student travel. Vacations and holidays have been excluded, as well as weekly rest and point tolerances since according to article 171 of the aforementioned law, the right to leave is inalienable. In local authorities, there is specific legislation regarding the justification of absences (Law nº35 / 2014 - article 21, 2014).

Authors such as Taylor (1999), Pelleter (2004) and Saldarriga (2007) argue that when analyzing this phenomenon, a multifactorial etiology must be taken into account that is, taking into account individual variables such as motivation, needs, habits, values, knowledge and variables related to the organization such as the work climate and the policies of the organization.

This research intends to understand the causes that lead CMM workers to be absent from work and propose corrective measures to mitigate absenteeism and consequently reduce operational costs and improve CMM's image.

Methodology

In this investigation a case study was chosen by randomly selecting a sample of the workers' population of the Municipality of Moibe (CMM) intending to answer the following **Generic Research Question:**

What are the causes associated with absenteeism in the Municipality of Moibe?

In order to answer the generic research question, two specific research questions were addressed:

Question 1 - Are there any significant differences between the gender, age, marital status, number and dependent children, length of service and time in the current position, employment contract and the number of days missed?

Question 2 - Is there any relation between the indicators *Nature of Work* and *Attitudes, Values and Objectives versus Number of Days Missed at Work*?

A questionnaire was used to collect data, based on theoretical research, supported by hypotheses, and later computerized and statistical treatment of the data obtained. In order to guarantee the validity of the questionnaire, a pre-test was carried out to a group of 10 people and asked for the feedback of the coherence and global comprehension, in order to make the necessary adjustments. For the operationalization of the study, a random, accidental, non-probabilistic sample was developed in the universe considered for study - CMM workers. The survey aimed to know the opinion of workers on the causes of absenteeism to work.

Questionnaires were delivered between November and December 2014 at CMM workplaces directly and face-to-face to 104 employees, representing 78.8% of the target population, who work at CMM, in the various services being the ones to fill the survey that was collected at the time and to whom anonymity was guaranteed. In determining the sample size we had a significance level of 5% and a sampling error of 4.44%. In the questionnaire, closed questions were used in order to obtain comparable data.

The questionnaire was structured in two parts. In the first part, data were collected on the respondents, i.e. the characteristics of the sample, namely age, sex, marital status, number of children, professional category, length of service in the municipality, length of service in the function, employment contract in public functions, professional category, number of days absent from work in the year 2014 and main reasons for these absences.

In the second part, data were collected on the perception that the respondents had about the *Nature of Work* and *Attitudes, Values, and Objectives* (Table 1), materialized on a Likert scale with levels from 1 to 5, in which 1 represented “Unimportant” and 5 “Very Important”.

Table 1. Nature of Work, Attitudes, Values, and Objectives

Nature of Work	Attitudes, Values, and Objectives
Assorted and engaging tasks	Satisfaction with work
Degree of autonomy at work	Expectations regarding work
Participation in decisions	Reconciling work demands with personal development
Communication with superiors	I would like to do another type of work
Relationship with co-workers	I feel motivated and satisfied in the company
Adequacy of working hours	I feel I can be promoted
Adequate remuneration	I intend to continue working in the company
Workplace Facility Conditions	

All statistical work was performed on IBM SPSS software (v22 - SPSS Inc Chicago, IL) and Excel (Microsoft Office 2015, Microsoft Corporation). A Type I error probability, (α), of 5% was defined.

The Municipality of Moibe

The Municipality of Moibe (CMM), so called for confidentiality, is located in a granite, transition, and landscape area, typically *beiraltina*. Occupying an area of 218.84 Km², it is a municipality with about 12000 inhabitants distributed in 20 parishes. Famous for the production of wine and apple, mainly of the species “*Bravo de Esmolfe*”. The municipality has existed since the year 1189. It is currently composed of a President, a Vice President, and five Councilors. Being the largest employer in the area has 132 employees (Social Balance, 2014). Public services are considered the main employers in the area, which leads to a greater concentration of people in the Town leading to the depopulation of villages and a high rate of emigration.

The CMM’s mission is to exercise the attributions and powers conferred to it, in accordance with the law and regulations, being governed by values such as efficiency, effectiveness, quality, transparency and rigor, in order to guarantee quality of life to municipal residents and to all users of municipal services. It presents a flexible structure composed of the following units: Administrative Division, Economic and Financial Division, Planning, Construction, Urban Planning and Environment Division and Organic Unit for Social and Cultural Development. According to the typology of Mintzberg (2010), CMM is inserted in the Mechanistic Bureaucracy, sustained in its routine, specialized, formalized and vertically centered character.

According to the Social Balance (2014), CMM employees were absent for 798 days due to illness, 303 days for vacations and 178 days for accidents in service or occupational disease. It should be noted that absences due to vacations are not considered as absenteeism. In order to calculate the Absence Rate in the CMM for the year 2014, the formula of Grace (2002) (Eq.1) was used. A total of 132 workers were

considered, 253 working days and 1129 days absence of all workers. It was also considered 8 hours of work per day.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Absenteeism Rate} &= \frac{\text{Total Hours Absence}}{\text{Maximum Annual Potential}} * 100 \\
 &= \frac{1129 \text{ days of absence} * 8 \text{ hours}}{(253 \text{ working days} * 132 \text{ workers}) * \text{hours}} * 100 = 3.381\%
 \end{aligned}
 \tag{1}$$

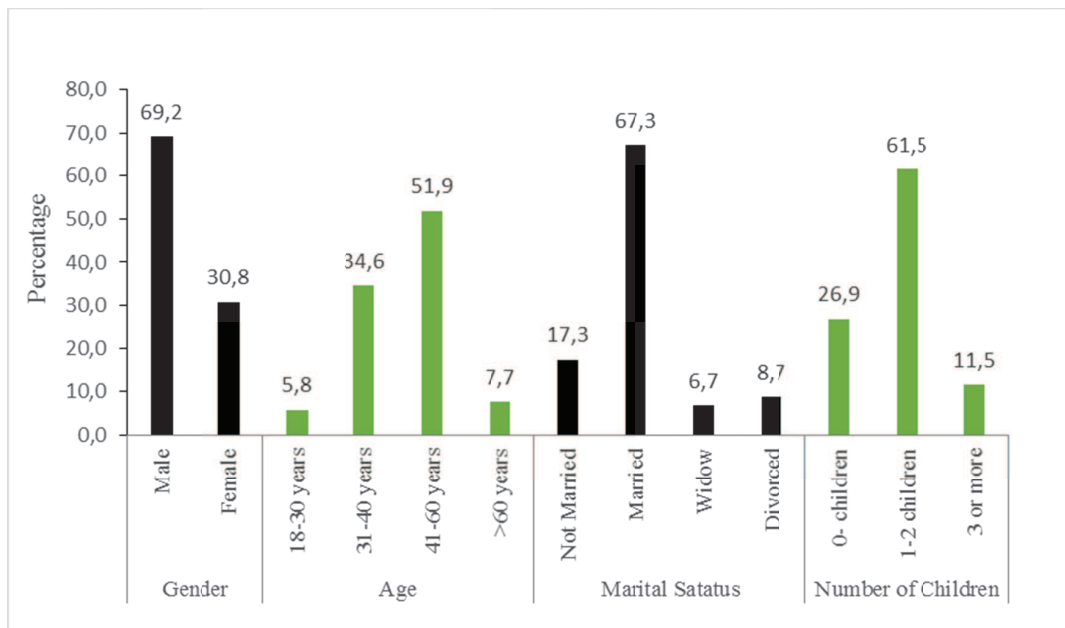
This value indicates that, on average, each worker missed work 8.55 days a year, with all the functional disorders, costs, productivity and image that situations of this type cause to the organization. Although this rate of absenteeism is lower than the value reported by Cunha *et al.* (2012), on average one month per year, it is still necessary to try to understand the underlying causes of this absenteeism rate.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Sampling

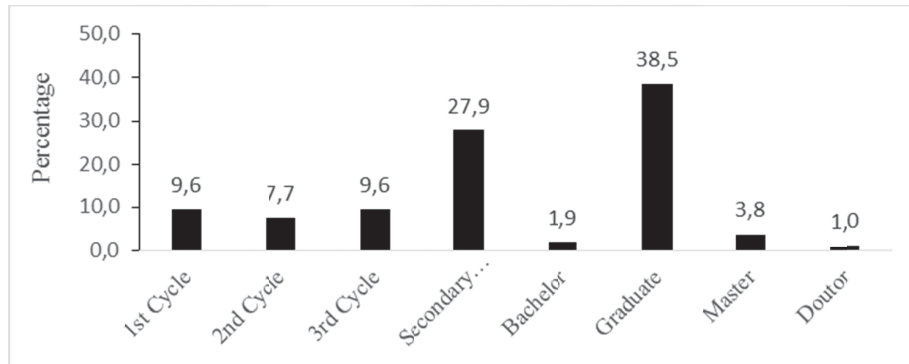
In the sample, 30.8% of the respondents were female and 69.2% were male (Graph 1). The majority (51.9%) of the respondents are between 41 and 60 years of age and 34.6% are between 31 and 40 years of age.

With regard to marital status and the number of dependent children, it can be seen that 67.3% of the respondents are married or live together, 17.3% are single and 15.4% are widowed or divorced. Also, 61.5% of the respondents have 1 to 2 dependent children and 26.9% do not have children (Graph 1).



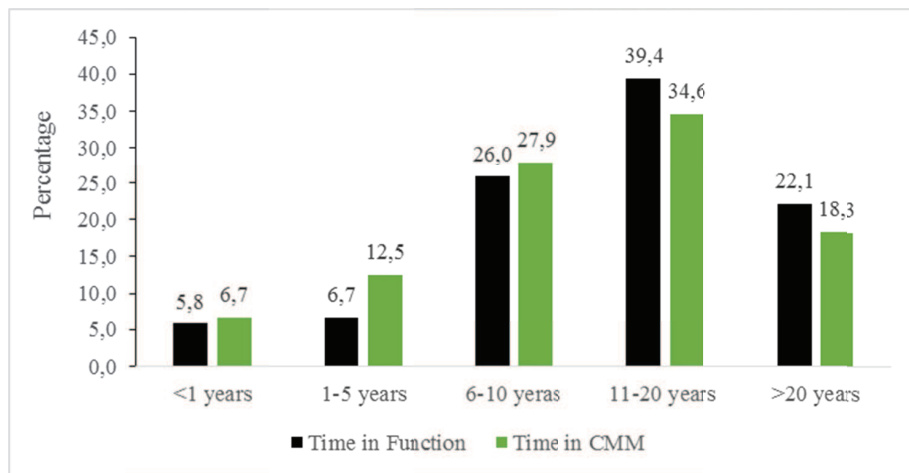
Graph 1. Gender, Age, Marital Status and Number of Children

Regarding schooling, it is verified that about 38.5% of respondents have a Bachelor’s degree and 28% only have the Secondary. It can also be observed that 54.8% of the interviewed employees have a qualification between the 1st and the Secondary, and about 45.2% have higher qualifications than the Bachelor (Graph 2).



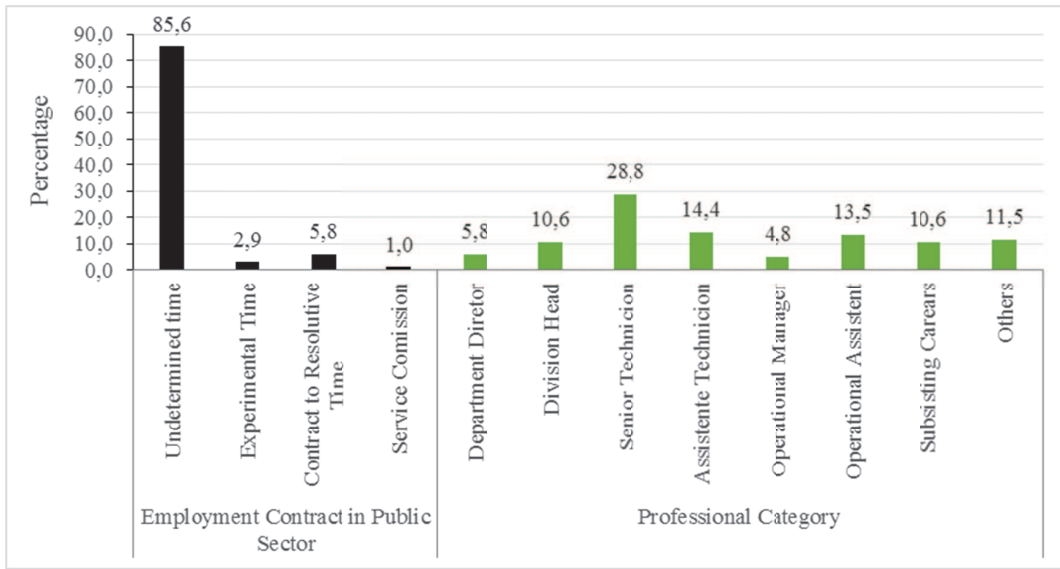
Graph 2. Academic Degree

As can be seen in Graph 3, the employees have identical percentages in the time of service in the CMM and in the current function they perform. However, some of them came from other institutions so the length of service in the current function is greater than the length of service in the Chamber.



Graph 3. Time in Function and Time in CMM

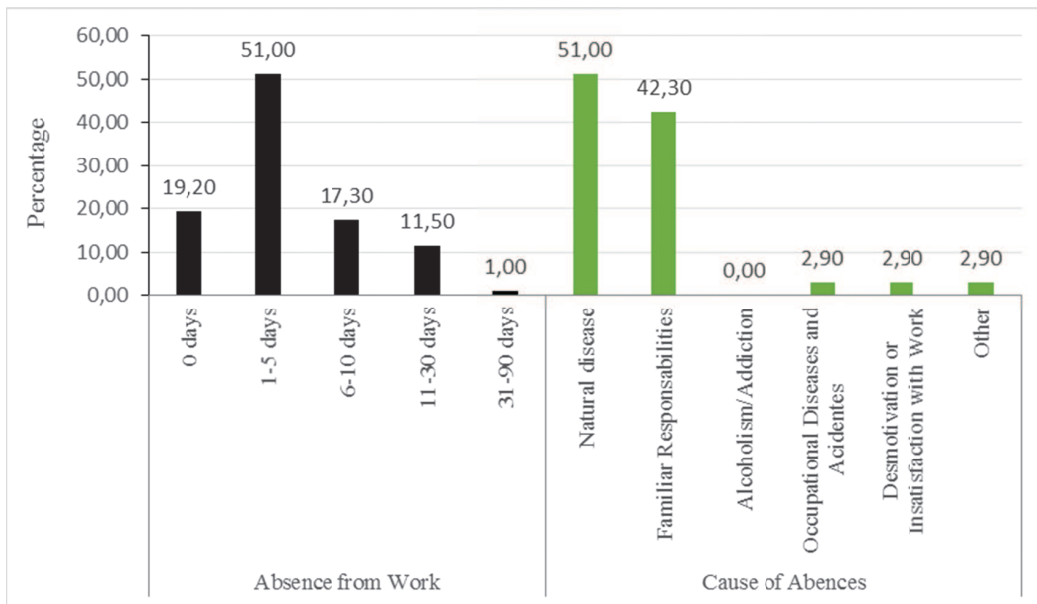
The vast majority, about 85.6% of CMM respondents have an indefinite contract, which gives them a guarantee of stability and subsistence. Regarding the professional category, according to Graph 4, a significant majority of the sample is Technical Superior (28.80%), 14.40% Technical Assistants and 13.50% Operational Assistants.



Graph 4. Employment Contract and Professional Categories

Of the 104 CMM respondents, 80.8% were absent from work for at least 1 to 5 days and 19.2% never missed work. It can also be observed that of the employees who went to work in 2014 (80.8%), the vast majority, 63.11%, were absent in about 1 to 5 days and only 1% of the respondents were absent for more than 90 days (Graph 5).

Of the workers interviewed who reported that they had missed work last year, 51% said that the main cause of these absences was natural illness (colds, flu, etc.) and 42.3% say they lacked work for personal responsibility causes. Regarding other types of absences, it can be observed that they do not have great relevance since they present little values the absences due to illness and occupational accidents, demotivation or dissatisfaction with work and other absences. Finally, the option for alcoholism and drug dependence did not show any absence (Graph 5).



Graph 5. Absences from Work (days) and Causes of Absences

In general, all items included in the Nature of Work were classified by the respondents in a satisfactory manner with a minimum average of 3.0 on a scale from 1 (Little) to 5 (Very). However, it is worth mentioning three items that workers interviewed considered most important: a good relationship with co-workers (average of 3.80), working hours are adequate (average of 3.66) and relationships with superiors are Satisfactory (average of 3.51). Although in a general way, the dispersion of the answers is not very considerable, the items adequate remuneration, conditions of the work-place and communication with the superiors are the ones that present a greater dispersion in the answers.

It should also be noted that approximately 20.2% of the respondents report the tasks as little varied and attractive, 25% consider them to have little autonomy at work, 35.6% think that the remuneration is not adequate and 27.9% consider themselves to be less satisfied with conditions of the workplace (Table 2).

Table 2. Average Rating – *Nature of Work*

Items	1	2	3	4	5	Average	Standard Deviation
Assorted and engaging tasks	9,60	10,60	48,10	24,00	7,70	3,10	1,019
Degree of autonomy at work	5,80	19,20	30,80	32,70	11,50	3,25	1,077
Participation in decisions	6,70	21,20	30,80	34,60	6,70	3,13	1,043
Communication with superiors	6,70	10,60	25,00	40,40	17,30	3,51	1,106
Relationship with co-workers	1,00	6,70	27,90	40,40	24,00	3,80	0,918
Adequacy of working hours	1,00	6,70	36,50	36,50	19,20	3,66	0,899
Adequate remuneration	13,50	22,10	25,00	29,80	9,60	3,00	1,207
Workplace Facility Conditions	10,60	16,30	32,70	26,00	14,40	3,17	1,186

From Table 3, it was concluded that the respondents rated the items associated with *Attitudes, Values, and Objectives* in a satisfactory way (average > 3), with the exception of the items *I Feel I Can Be Promoted* with the average of 2.81. It is also noted that 35.6% of the respondents have little hope of being promoted, 19.2% feel little motivated and satisfied in the company and 20.1% have few expectations regarding work. Already 16.40% consider themselves dissatisfied with the work.

Table 3. Average Rating – *Attitudes, Values, and Objectives*

Items	1	2	3	4	5	Average	Standard Deviation
Satisfaction with work	5,80	10,60	41,30	30,80	11,50	3,32	1,077
Expectations regarding work	3,80	16,30	44,20	26,00	9,60	3,21	0,962
Reconciling work demands with personal development	3,80	16,30	42,30	27,90	9,60	3,23	0,968
I would like to do another type of work	7,70	16,30	33,70	29,80	12,50	3,23	1,108
I feel motivated and satisfied in the company	3,80	15,40	46,20	27,90	6,70	3,18	0,911
I feel I can be promoted	13,50	22,10	37,50	24,00	2,90	2,81	1,043
I intend to continue working in the company	2,90	7,70	27,90	35,60	26,00	3,74	1,024

Research Hypothesis

In order to test **Question 1**, the Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test was used, followed by a multiple comparisons of the order means with ANOVA Tukey, as described by Maroco (2011).

As an example, note the following null hypothesis regarding Question 1:

H_0 – Number of days absent from work -Gender – There is no significant relationship between the *Number of Days Absent from Work* and *Gender*.

Table 4 presents the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test statistics for the hypotheses considered, for the significance level (α) of 5%.

Table 4. Kruskal-Wallis Tests

Variables	Number of days you missed work last year	
	p	χ^2
Gender	0,520	0,415
Age	0,034	8,686
Academic degree	0,039	14,811
Marital status	0,081	6,730
Number of children in charge	0,152	3,769
Service time - CMM	0,007	14,176
Time in actual function	0,357	4,377
Employment Contract in Public Sector	0,131	7,084
Professional category	0,156	9,311

The *Age* ($\chi^2 = 8.686$ and $p = 0.034$) has a significant statistical effect ($p \leq 0.05$) with *The Number of Days the Worker Failed to Work* i.e. there are significant differences between the number of days that workers missed work and the age. The Tukey test ($p = 0.0038$) highlights this difference for the age groups 18-30 years and greater than 60 years. Of these two levels are the respondents with more than 60 years who lacked more to the work.

The *Schooling* ($\chi^2 = 14,811$ and $p = 0.039$) has a significant statistical effect ($p \leq 0.05$) with *The Number of Days that the Worker Failed to Work* i.e. there are significant differences between the number of days the workers missed work and schooling. The Tukey's test ($p = 0.0027$) highlights this difference for the respondents who hold the 1st Cycle of Education and the holders of a Graduation's degree. Of these two groups are the respondents with the least literacy, 1st Cycle who lacked the most work.

The *Time of Service in the CMM* ($\chi^2 = 14,176$) and $p = 0.007$) has a significant statistical effect ($p \leq 0.05$) with *The Number of Days that the Worker Failed to Work* i.e. there are significant differences between the number of days that the Workers to work and the time of service in the Municipality. The Tukey's test ($p = 0.050$) highlights this difference for the respondents with the connection to the Municipality for less than 5 years and those who have a link between 11-20 years. Of these two groups are those who have more time to connect to the Municipality those who lack the most work. These differences are justified, because in general, the greater the age, the greater the risk of natural and occupational diseases (Robbins and Judge 2013). It is also these lower educated workers who have been in the House for the longest time, who may have higher levels of demotivation and dissatisfaction depending on the position and tasks they perform. All these reasons and other reasons may be the source of the higher mean of absences.

Relationship between the Indicators *Nature of Work* and *Attitudes, Values and Objectives* and *Failures to Work*

In order to test the relationship between the *Nature of Work* indicators and *Attitudes, Values and Objectives* and *Faults at Work* the Spearman non-parametric correlation test was used because all values of p associated with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test applied to indicators are equal to zero, so we conclude that these variables do not follow a Normal Distribution (Table 5).

As an example, note the following null hypothesis regarding **Question 2** associated with the *Nature of Work* indicator:

H_0 - There is no relation between the *Number of Working Days Missed* in 2014 and the *Nature of Work* (varied and attractive tasks, the degree of autonomy at work, participation in decisions, communication with superiors, and relationships with co-workers, adequacy of working hours, adequate remuneration and conditions of the workplace).

Table 5. Test of Normality the variable Nature of Work and Attitudes, Values, and Objectives

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Nature of Work						
Assorted and engaging tasks	0,261	104	0	0,882	104	0
Degree of autonomy at work	0,199	104	0	0,91	104	0
Participation in decisions	0,21	104	0	0,902	104	0
Communication with superiors	0,248	104	0	0,882	104	0
Relationship with co-workers	0,231	104	0	0,875	104	0
Adequacy of working hours	0,212	104	0	0,879	104	0
Adequate remuneration	0,191	104	0	0,908	104	0
Workplace Facility Conditions	0,173	104	0	0,912	104	0
Attitudes, Values, and Objectives						
Satisfaction with work	0,213	104	0	0,895	104	0
Expectations regarding work	0,231	104	0	0,9	104	0
Reconciling work demands with personal development	0,219	104	0	0,903	104	0
I would like to do another type of work	0,179	104	0	0,911	104	0
I feel motivated and satisfied in the company	0,233	104	0	0,892	104	0
I feel I can be promoted	0,217	104	0	0,901	104	0
I intend to continue working in the company	0,215	104	0	0,879	104	0

Note that in both indicators many of the correlations are practically nulls and not significant at the level of $\alpha = 0.05$ and the remaining variables have a weak correlation $0.1 \leq r \leq 0.3$ or $-0.1 \leq r \leq -0.3$ (Table 6 and 7). This indicates that in the current economic, social and political context, where a highly

contractual labor market prevails, employees do not risk jeopardizing their employment by not attending the workplace, regardless of the *Nature of Work* or *Attitudes, Values, and Objectives*. It should be noted that 93.30% of absences from work are associated with health reasons and family responsibilities, or are causes that cannot be remedied.

Table 6. Spearman's Non-parametric Correlation Test between the *Nature of Work* and the Faults at Work (days)

Work Nature		Absences from work - days	
rô de Spearman	Assorted and engaging tasks	Correlation Coefficient	-0,208
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,034
	Degree of autonomy at work	Correlation Coefficient	-0,109
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,271
	Participation in decisions	Correlation Coefficient	0,015
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,881
	Communication with superiors	Correlation Coefficient	0,023
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,819
	Relationship with co-workers	Correlation Coefficient	0,036
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,717
	Adequacy of working hours	Correlation Coefficient	0,027
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,782
	Adequate remuneration	Correlation Coefficient	0,104
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,293
	Workplace Facility Conditions	Correlation Coefficient	0,198
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,044

It can be seen that the correlation between Job Satisfaction and Absenteeism is very weak which goes against the results of other investigations (Locke, 1976, Taylor and Scott 1999, Stell and Rentsch 1995).

Table 7. Spearman's Non-parametric Correlation Test between the Attitudes, Values, and Objectives and the Faults at Work (days)

Attitudes, Values, and Objectives		Absences from work - days	
rô de Spearman	Satisfaction with work	Correlation Coefficient	-0,046
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,645
	Expectations regarding work	Correlation Coefficient	-0,113
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,255
	Reconciling work demands with personal development	Correlation Coefficient	-0,047
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,632

I would like to do another type of work	Correlation Coefficient	-0,031
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,755
I feel motivated and satisfied in the company	Correlation Coefficient	-0,200
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,042
I feel I can be promoted	Correlation Coefficient	-0,148
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,135
I intend to continue working in the company	Correlation Coefficient	-0,04
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,688

Suggestions and Recommendations

In order to reduce absenteeism and improve employee satisfaction, we leave here some modest recommendations in accordance with the results obtained (Ramos, 2016):

1. *Rewards and Recognition* - apply a rewards system to CMM to distinguish the most successful and best-performing employees;
2. *Improve the Quality of Supervision* - managers should be concerned with their employees, assisting them in the pursuit of their interests, treating them with respect and providing expedited channels of mutual communication;
3. *Empowerment* - decentralization of power in order to allow greater participation of employees in the decision-making process. Promote adequate training with their professional and personal development needs of employees;
4. *Rotation and Enrichment of Tasks* - whenever possible assign the tasks to the employees that are congruent with their interests, attractive and varied giving you greater responsibility and autonomy over the work they perform. It is imperative to provide feedback on the development of your work;
5. *Promotion Expectations* - create in the workers the feeling that their effort will result in a given performance with the consequent reward that they value - for example, the possibility of career progression, recognition of the work developed in the Chamber's Publications, diplomas, medals, etc.;
6. *Promote a Healthy Workforce* - developing socialization and quality of life campaigns, promoting lectures focused on well-being and healthy eating, which stimulate physical exercise practices and alert to the dangers of harmful habits such as smoking and alcoholism are good ways to encourage employees and improve their health and consequently reduce absenteeism;
7. *Improve the Conditions of the Workplace* - equip employees with the means to carry out their activities in a safe environment and free from threats of physical or psychological danger. The physical conditions of the premises (hygiene, the design of the workplace, etc.) interfere with the degree of employee satisfaction.

The prevention of absenteeism in organizations requires critical awareness and a spirit of openness, which leads to a change of attitude of the employees, reducing their absences. Management policies should fit this real problem, resulting in benefits for the employees, the organization and the citizens who use their services in addition to benefiting the national economy.

Conclusions

Absenteeism causes repercussions on the economy in general but also causes serious damage to organizations creating low levels of productivity and high costs. It is, therefore, fundamental to analyze

their causes by focusing essentially on their prevention. This concern should lead to changes in attitudes, behaviors, and practices, in order to reduce the rate of absenteeism. Based on this concern, this research was developed, based theoretically and empirically on the problem of absenteeism, aiming to understand the causes that lead to the decision of the workers of the Municipality of Moibe (CMM) to be absent from work.

The rate of work absenteeism of 3.381% in the CMM, corresponding to 8.55 days per year, a figure well below that reported by Cunha et al. (2012). It was found that about 51% or more or less half of the respondents were absent from 1 to 5 days to work, with the most significant causes being due to natural illness and personal / family responsibilities. The other causes are not very relevant.

We just found a positive relationship between age, schooling, and length of service in the Municipality. They are the older workers, generally with the lowest level of schooling and work longer in the Municipality (over 11 years), who tend to be away for health reasons, justifying the main cause of absence as the natural disease (absence involuntary).

A significant correlation between the *Nature of Work* and *Attitudes, Values and Objectives* dimensions was not confirmed. However, the items relating to co-workers, working hours, communication with superiors (the *Nature of Work* dimension), willingness to continue working in the company and satisfaction with work (the *Attitudes, Values and Objectives* dimension) are the which deserved a better average rating on the part of the respondents. The worse classification was obtained in the perception that the respondents have the possibilities of being promoted.

In addition to these aspects, it is important to emphasize that, given the current economic, social and political situation, employees do not risk their employment by appearing in the workplace, regardless of the *Nature of Work* or *Attitudes, Values, and Objectives*.

The main limitation in the development of this research was the difficulty in inquiring workers who work outside the municipality, such as gardeners and construction workers.

As future research, it is suggested to study the impact of absenteeism on CMM's financial economic results and also to understand its impact on the image of the services rendered to the population.

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