

Journal of Organizational Behavior

Special Issue Call for Papers

Presenteeism at Work: Developments and Avenues for Future Research

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Overview

Woody Allen once said that 80% of success in life could be attributed to simply showing up. However, according to recent growing body of research on attendance behaviors this wry estimate maybe rather optimistic. *Presenteeism*- a phenomenon of workers being on the job but because of illness, injury or other medical conditions, not fully functioning, can cut individual productivity by one-third or more (D'Abate & Eddy, 2007; Miraglia & Johns, 2016). The term addresses the grey area that exists between notion of full engagement at work and absenteeism, i.e., an employee who is present on the job but is absent in mind or behavior (Smedley, 2011). In the early 2000s, Bank One estimated \$311.8 million lost due to illness-related reductions in productivity versus \$27 million costs due to absenteeism, figures that illustrate that coming to work when sick is a more significant workplace issue than sickness absence (Hemp, 2004). Farrell (2013) labels presenteeism as the 'real 800-pound Gorilla' adding up to \$150 billion in lost productivity.

More than a decade since Paul Hemp's (2004) *Harvard Business Review* article introduced us to the notion of 'presenteeism', our understanding of the phenomenon remains woefully inadequate. Many questions lack clarity: What constitutes presenteeism and its measurement? What factors influence the development of presenteeism? When and how does it influence employee attitudes, behaviors and performance. There is little consensus around the nature of presenteeism, which has resulted in a proliferation of interpretations as to what constitutes presenteeism and its impact on a variety of outcome variables (e.g. Collins, Baase, Sharda, Ozminkowski, et al., 2005; Deery, Walsh & Zatzick, 2014; Johns, 2010; Mazzetti, Vignoli, Schaufeli & Guglielmi, 2017; Worrall, Cooper, & Campbell, 2000). Past research suggests an array of outcome variables, all apparently being the correlates of presenteeism (e.g. van den Heuvel, Geuskens, Hooftman, Koppes & van den Bossche, 2010; Michielsens, Bingham & Clarke, 2014; Gosselin, Lemyre & Corneil, 2013). Gary John's (2010) *Journal of Organizational Behavior* seminal incubator on presenteeism annotated for basic preconditions towards development of a theory of presenteeism. Yet, little attention has been given to empirically study the extent to which contextual and relational factors influence presenteeism and its outcomes. For example, research results regarding the correlation between various types of attendance behaviors such as presenteeism and absenteeism are still ambiguous (e.g. Deery, Walsh, & Zatzick, 2014; Gosselin, Lemyre, & Corneil, 2013; Halbesleben, Whitman & Crawford, 2014). Besides, research still struggles to identify an adequate way of measuring and analyzing presenteeism (Gerich, 2015; Johns & Miraglia, 2015).

Moreover, the considerable growth in studies involving non-US/European/Western context (there have been at least 15 studies or more) since Johns's (2010) call for contextualization of research in the field (e.g. Garczynski, Waldrop, Ruppercht, & Grawitch, 2013; Lu, Lin &

Cooper, 2013; McTernana, Dollarda & LaMontagne, 2013; Patel, Budhwar & Varma, 2012; Waghorn & Chant, 2012). Even though the cultural and institutional context represented in these studies differs from US, UK and Europe, so far organizational scholars did not incorporate such differences in work place expectations and cultural values. There is still much more about presenteeism's nomological network that needs to be explored especially in different cultural and interdisciplinary contexts.

Additionally, research investigating the causes and effects of presenteeism on employed workforce has largely examined micro-individual level linkages. We know little, if any, about the net effects of highly intertwined economic, political and social systems on organizational phenomena such as presenteeism (Shoss & Penney, 2012). A multi-level examination of presenteeism causes as well as effects at individual, team and/or organizational/societal level is likely to be of tremendous value to OB/HR field and policy makers, because they may reveal important patterns relevant for work/job design as well as workforce planning.

Special Issue Objectives

To provide organizations and managers with better understanding of the phenomenon, the aim of this call is to identify and explore the causes, consequences and boundary conditions around presenteeism and its relationships with other constructs using rigorous qualitative and/or quantitative methods, with the key goal to narrow down the plausible explanations for those relationships and provide a grounded basis for innovative theorizing at both micro as well as macro-level.

Questions that might be addressed by papers in this special issue call (by no means exhaustive) include:

- What are the different conceptualizations/definitions and types of presenteeism? What causes sickness and non-sickness related presenteeism? What are the similarities and differences in its outcomes? Are there any variations in the above for different contexts (such as nations, industry sectors, etc.)?
- How does presenteeism develop over time? Are there differences in the formation and effects of long-and short-term presenteeism?
- How are attendance decisions made and what factors shape presenteeism at multiple levels (e.g., individual, group/team, organization)?
- How social dynamics shape the prevalence of presenteeism in organizations?
- How does attendance behavior influence individual and organizational health and productivity (or effectiveness)?
- What are the outcomes and costs of presenteeism? Are there positive consequences of working while ill? Can presenteeism be functional for individuals?
- What are the economic and psychological consequences of presenteeism?
- How can we measure presenteeism? What are the most prevalent threats to valid measures of presenteeism and how can we address them?
- How do cross-cultural differences influence presenteeism? How should such differences be taken into consideration in the conceptualization, measurement, and study of presenteeism?
- What types of institutional and cultural factors serve as barriers for or can facilitate organizational involvement in the prevalence of presenteeism?
- Are there any specific leadership behaviors that reduce the prevalence of presenteeism?

- What types of metrics can be developed to link employer investments in health and wellbeing programs to changes in presenteeism and employee health?
- Does sickness versus non-sickness presenteeism tend to increase or decrease with a rising unemployment rate?
- What are the effects of macro-economic events on national-, state-, and community-level incidences of physical and mental health outcomes associated with presenteeism?
- Are the effects of such macro events immediate, lagged or cumulative on presenteeism rates?

Contributors Should Note

We expect contributions to this special issue to be empirical as well as conceptual regardless of methods. We are seeking evidence that will help us narrow the range of plausible explanations rather than confirmation for such behavior and offer insights for down-the-road theorizing with respect to its impact not only at the individual level but also at organisation, team, society and economic levels.

The editorial team will organize two workshops for potential authors and reviewers of this special issue at the 2019 Academy of Management Meetings in, Boston as well as Henley Business School, University of Reading, UK once the call is released. During the first workshop at the AOM Meeting, the guest editors' team will engage with potential authors about the most important research topics and questions related to presenteeism. Post which, a Manuscript Development Workshop will be held at Henley Business School, University of Reading, UK for authors whose papers received an invitation to revise and resubmit (R&R). During this Workshop (dates to be announced), the authors of R&R manuscripts will present and discuss their papers with other attendees and the guest editors. Note, that presentation at the workshop will not guarantee acceptance of a paper for publication in *JOB* and that attending the workshop will not be a precondition for acceptance into the Special Issue.

JOB will accept manuscripts for this special issue **beginning 15 December 2019, through 15 January, 2020**. Manuscripts should not be submitted before or after this date. We anticipate publishing this special issue in 2021. **To submit a manuscript**, please visit the website <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/job/>. Please remember to select Manuscript Type as **Special Issue** from the drop-down menu. Manuscripts should be formatted according to the *JOB* Style Guide. Please direct questions about the submission process, or any administrative matter, to the Managing Editor at JOBedoffice@wiley.com. For other queries related to the SI, please email Charmi Patel (charmi.patel@henley.ac.uk).

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