

Employee Sick Leave

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I conducted a quick study of [Employee Sick Leave](#) using results from research that was carried out in the past. The results used in this article are from the top search results of the phrases ‘*Employee Sick Leave*’ and ‘*Facts about Employee Sick Leave*’ from google scholar. The following are some of the findings.

According to Beemsterboer et al (2009), the following are determinants of the frequency and duration of sick leave:

- **Working conditions affect the frequency of sick leave**

1. When an employee feels that their work is appreciated, they take fewer leave days and when they do, the duration is short. An assumption that can be made from this is that appreciating employees’ work increases their job satisfaction and they will like going to work.
2. When employees’ expectations of the future are high, they take fewer leave days, with short durations.

- **Work contents affect employee sick leave frequency and duration**

1. When the workload is high, employees tend to take more sick leave, with longer durations.
2. When there is a good match between the work an employee does and their level of education, employees will likely take fewer leave days with a short duration.

- **Working relations determine sick leave**

1. When employees have a positive opinion of their supervisors, they take fewer leave days with short durations
2. When managers are well-knowledgeable about the workplace, employees tend to take fewer leave days.
3. A good atmosphere at work results in fewer leave days, with short durations.

- **The environment affects leave days**

1. Pollution at the workplace results in more leave days, with long durations.
2. Bad air climate in the surroundings of the workplace results in more leave days, with long durations.

- **Health status of employees affects leave days**

1. When an employee is continuously questioned about their perceived health, they feel that they

are being seen as if they have poor health. This results in more leave days, with long durations.

2. When employees suffer from burnout due to work, they tend to take more leave days, with long durations.
3. Employees who take more visits to a doctor usually have poor health and therefore will take more leave days, with long durations.
4. Employees who frequently take medication usually have poor health and will more leave days, with long durations.

- **Employees' motivation determines sick leave days**

1. More pleasure in work means an employee is highly motivated and therefore, they will take fewer leave days with short durations.
2. If employees are more satisfied and happy at home, they will be less motivated for work and will take more leave days, with long durations.

- **Employees' circumstances determine leave days**

1. Older people tend to take less sick leave but with longer durations.
2. Married people tend to take less sick leave, with short durations
3. Alcoholics take more leave, with long durations.
4. People who smoke take more leave, with long durations.

The paper by Schön (2015) investigates unemployment, health and sick leave. The key results of the research are the following:

- **Sick leave days show a pro-cyclical pattern**

This means that in times of high unemployment, workers generally take fewer leave days. This relationship is highly statistically significant at a value of -0.7155 correlation.

- **Average use of sick leave is hump-shaped over income levels**

Employees who earn a medium-income level generally have 10% more sick days than employees in lower-income levels. Employees in top income levels take short duration sick leave at a high frequency. Lower-income employees take fewer leave days so that they can keep their jobs. This fear of losing jobs is explained in one of the points below.

- **Sick leave affects an employees' future at work**

Sick leave is a strong predictor of layoff and promotions. Layoff or promotion decisions are made also factoring in the past sick leave days taken by an employee.

- **Fear of future unemployment determines sick leave taken**

When employees are afraid that taking sick leave will cost them their jobs, they tend to work even when they are sick to keep their jobs.

The data used in these studies was obtained from the German Socioeconomic Panel (GSEOP) for the period 1994 to 2011. The GSEOP data contains information (such as sex, age, education level, marital status, employment status, previous layoffs, time worked at organizations, health information etc.) about foreigners, immigrants and Germans and is representative of other population subgroups that are not originally German. The other data was from literature reports from 1984 to 2004, combined and used in the paper by Beemsterboer et al (2009).

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References

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