Guidelines for developing an absenteeism management programme within an institution for higher learning

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Abstract:
The goal of the proposed study was to explore with line managers some guidelines for an absenteeism management programme in the environment of higher learning. The aim was to gain insight from line managers into the variables to be taken into consideration in the development of an absenteeism management programme. The researcher used a qualitative research approach to gain deeper understanding of the line managers’ need to deal with absenteeism within the environment of higher education. The study used a non-probability sampling technique with purposive sampling for selecting the sample. Semi-structured interviews conducted using an interview schedule in conjunction with a recording device were conducted to gather data from ten participants. A qualitative analysis was carried out to grasp the richness of themes derived from the participants' narratives. The analysis involved both transcribing and interpreting the data. The empirical findings revealed that participants were confronted with employees’ absenteeism in the course of their daily operations. The majority of participants reported a lack of proper policies and procedures within the institution to guide them in managing absenteeism. The study also revealed that participants felt they would benefit from a programme that specifically addressed absenteeism behaviour in the workplace. The participants recommended items that would be essential in such a programme. These included, inter alia, a return to work policy, proper monitoring mechanisms and a link between absenteeism and the performance management system.

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