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# Factors Associated with Absenteeism among UNRWA Staff in Gaza Governorates-Palestine

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# Factors Associated with Absenteeism among UNRWA Staff in Gaza Governorates-Palestine

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**Declaration**

I declare that the study Factors associated with absenteeism among UNRWA Staff in Gaza governorates\Palestine is my own work and that all the sources that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and this work has not been submitted for any other degree at any other institution.

**Signed****Raja Kh. Abu Shammala****Date: April 2008**

## **Dedication**

**I dedicate this work to my great mother, brothers , sisters, to my perfect counterbalance "My Wife", and to my dear and beloved sons and daughters.**

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## Abstract

This study aimed to assess the absenteeism among UNRWA employees and identify the contributing factors associated with it.

This study relied mainly on both the analytical description and data from personnel division at UNRWA. Special questionnaire was prepared and designed and then distributed on a sample of (514) employees from all UNRWA departments in Gaza governorates. The researcher retrieved (466) questionnaire out of them; the received questionnaire were manipulated and analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), including frequencies, Pearson correlation, Means and other statistical measures.

The findings revealed that the annual absenteeism rate among UNRWA employees through 2007 was 4.7% with absenteeism among female higher than that among male (11.4: 10 days per employee, per year) respectively. Generally the results for all statements of agency characteristics show that the weight mean equals 63.6 % which is greater than 60%, which mean the respondents to the sample agree that the organization's characteristics are not satisfactory and lead to absence from work. Also the results of management style of the manager show that the weight mean equal 62.00 % which is more than 60% , which means the respondents to the sample agrees that the management styles of managers at UNRWA installations are not satisfactory and lead to absenteeism. Moreover the relationship between personal factors and characteristics of the work are statically significant and the results show that the value of the coefficient spearman correlation equal 0.466.

In the results of this study, the researcher concludes that the average percentage rate of absenteeism is high in UNRWA installations when compared with other countries such as Canada 2.5 % at year 2006 and 2.1% at year 2002 at USA as cited in literature.

The researcher gives concise recommendations: Establish training courses for employees about the different types of leave which they are entitled to, and the procedures to be followed regarding authorized leave and unplanned circumstances which warrant absence from work. Also the researcher has recommended monitoring absenteeism in the units on an ongoing basis, and maintaining accurate absence statistics that reflect absenteeism patterns. Moreover he recommends developing the practice of giving intangible rewards, such as posting names of employee with good attendance on the bulletin board and giving credit to employee who are showing some improvements regarding their attendance.

## ملخص الدراسة

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم الوضع الحالي للغياب بين موظفي وكالة الغوث لتشغيل اللاجئين بغزة وتحديد العوامل المؤثرة ذات العلاقة بغياب الموظفين.

اعتمدت الدراسة بشكل أساسي على كل من التحليل الوصفي ومعلومات من قسم شؤون الموظفين بوكالة الغوث بغزة حيث تم تصميم وتوزيع استبانته على عينة مكونة من 514 موظف من مختلف أقسام وكالة الغوث الدولية في قطاع غزة وقد جمع الباحث 466 استبانته من المجموع الكلي للاستبيانات، والتي تم التعامل معها وتحليلها باستخدام نظام (SPSS) بهدف الحصول على التكرارات و العلاقات والمتوسط الحسابي وباقي المقاييس الإحصائية.

أظهرت النتائج أن نسبة الغياب داخل وكالة الغوث الدولية في سنة 2007 هي 4.7% وكان غياب الموظفين 11.4 يوماً في السنة لكل موظفة، بينما غياب الموظفين الذكور هي 10 أيام لكل موظف في السنة، وأن خصائص المنظمة والأسلوب الإداري للمدراء داخل مؤسسات وكالة الغوث الدولية بغزة غير مرضية لدى الموظفين. وكما أظهرت النتائج أيضاً أن هناك علاقة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين العوامل الفردية وخصائص العمل حيث أن معامل الارتباط كان 0.466.

وقد خلص الباحث من خلال الدراسة إلى أن نسبة الغياب لدى الموظفين العاملين في وكالة الغوث عالية مقارنة مع بعض الدول الأخرى مثل كندا 2.5 % سنة 2006 والولايات المتحدة الأمريكية 2.1% في سنة 2002 كما هو موضح في الدراسات السابقة.

وجاءت الدراسة مصحوبة ببعض التوصيات ومما أوصى به الباحث النقاط الموجزة التالية: إنشاء نظام تدريب للموظفين عن الأنماط المختلفة للإجازات المتاحة للموظفين والخطوات التي تتبع في حال الإجازات المشفوعة بإذن أو تلك في حال الظروف الطارئة التي تستدعي الغياب و متابعة الغياب في وحدة العمل على أساس مستمر والاحتفاظ بإحصائية دقيقة للغياب والتي تعكس نسبة الغياب ونمط الغياب لدى الموظفين، إلى جانب اعتماد نظام حوافز مثل كتابة أسماء الموظفين بنظام حضور جيد على لوحة الشرف ومكافئة الموظف الذي يظهر تطور في حضوره والتزامه بالعمل.

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## **Abbreviations**

<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nation Relief and Work Agency
<b>COMP</b>	Compassionate Leave
<b>CTO</b>	Compensatory Time Off
<b>SKLV (Y)</b>	Sick Leave with Medical Report
<b>SKLV (N)</b>	Sick Leave without Medical Report
<b>SLHAJ</b>	Haj Leave With/Without Pay
<b>SLMTM</b>	Special Leave Without Pay Less Than One Month
<b>SLWOP</b>	Special Leave Without Pay For a Month and More
<b>SUSP</b>	Suspension With/Without Pay
<b>SPLV</b>	Special Leave
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
<b>SEHP</b>	Special Environmental Health Program
<b>ANAO</b>	Australian National Audit Office
<b>AFOM</b>	Australian Faculty of Occupational Medicine
<b>APSC</b>	Australian Public Service Commission
<b>MPCWA</b>	Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet, Western Australia
<b>PCBS</b>	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
<b>CCH</b>	CCH Internet Research Network
<b>USA</b>	United State of America
<b>NGOs</b>	Non Governmental Organizations
<b>FNO</b>	Field Nursing Office
<b>CFNO</b>	Chief Field Nursing Office

# **Chapter (1)**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Preface**

A level of employee absence is an expected element of working life. It is also a normal feature of a healthy work environment that supports family friendly practices. However, this does not mean that all absences should be regarded as inevitable and accepted positively. Workplace absence has a negative impact on performance and, regardless of whether it is across the organization or isolated in pockets, it often reflects unhealthy organizational and management practices (Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), 2005).

A certain level of workplace absence is to be expected and can be beneficial for an organization. Attending work when genuinely unwell is a health and safety issue for both the sick employee and others in the workforce. On the other hand, high rates of absence are costly and impact on individuals, business units and the organization as a whole (Australian Faculty of Occupational Medicine (AFOM), 1999).

To many in the world of work, absenteeism is one of those stubborn problems for which there is no clear culprit and no easy cure (Rhodes & Steers, 1990).

Absenteeism is a widespread behavior in the workplace and an expensive occurrence for both employers and employees (e.g., an immediate unscheduled need to hire less efficient replacements and excessive overload to compensate for absentees respective (Ferguson et al, 2001).

Reducing absenteeism is one of the most overlooked methods of reducing company cost (Hamilton-Atwell, 2003). Unscheduled absences affect almost every type of organization. Hoque and Islam (2003) describe absenteeism as a subject to be studied, a matter to be thought over and a problem to be solved. Besides the direct costs associated with absenteeism, there are also indirect costs such as hiring of casual staff, reduced productivity, turnover and potential loss in revenue (Mason & Griffin, 2003).

Robinson (2002) notes that the indirect costs of absenteeism can be up to three times higher than the direct costs of absenteeism. It therefore becomes vital that organizations recognize the extent of this problem due to the high costs associated with continued unscheduled absences. Besides the cost implications, absenteeism is influenced by dozens of interrelated factors which make it even more difficult to quantify & qualify (Tylczak, 1990).

The creation of a culture where employees are engaged and committed to the organization and its leadership has been shown to directly result in reduced absence. Additionally, all absence management strategies need to emphasize both prevention of avoidable absence and also providing support to those who are ill or injured and aiding their return to work (APSC, 2005).

One of the important problems facing UNRWA manager is the high number of absenteeism that may affect the UNRWA departments' productivity (Field interview UNRWA 2007).

Indeed, this problem has recently been identified as an important problem that is urgent to be managed. The political conditions put UNRWA on extra load and then extra productivity is expected. Employees may not go to work because they want to do things in life that are more satisfying, so absenteeism may become an issue in many workplaces. More often than not, the reasons related to the environment of organization and de-motivation of individual workers in

certain departments and from other unrelated activities, refer to the importance of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and their impacts. If employees are satisfied, then more work may be completed and can lead to more profit. Employees may like the job because the organization is concerned with their thoughts and this might guide them into work more often because it is a place of enjoyment and fulfillment. However, actual causes of high absenteeism in the Palestinian organization are still unclear. Therefore, it is necessary for investigations and studies to be conducted in order to shed light on how to stop this unnecessary absenteeism and to discover causes and events which commonly contribute to decline in productivity.

## **1.2 Justification**

Absenteeism is a serious workplace problem (Rhodes & Steers, 1990). Productivity loss due to absenteeism is a serious and growing challenge (Fitz & Barbara). This affects the ability of such an organization to cope effectively with the challenges presented by its environment and it has a disruptive effect on the functioning of this kind of an organization (McHugh 2001 & Van der Walt 1999).

Absenteeism is a significant issue that has the potential to reduce productivity and damage the credibility of the UNRWA departments. The ability of the Agency to deliver outcomes and meet the needs of the Palestinian community can be greatly reduced if levels of workplace absence are unacceptably high. Fostering an attendance culture in the Agency is a key component of ensuring that UNRWA employees continue to meet their performance and accountability obligations to UNRWA departments while also delivering high quality services to the public.

So the researcher conducted this study to identify the contributing factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA departments in Gaza-Strip, which will allow the UNRWA departments' Chiefs to design effective absence management plan identifying workplace absences, their possible causes, and addressing problems through the implementation of better practice strategies. Identifying effective absence management requires a coordinated approach involving senior managers, human resource management, line management, employees and occupational health professionals.

### **1.3 Background**

The Gaza Strip is a small piece of land that measures 360 square kilometers (46 kilometers long and 6-10 kilometers wide), with an estimated population of about 1,407,041 in year 2007. The refugee camps in Gaza Strip are amongst the most densely- populated areas of the world. The Gaza Strip is one of the five areas of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) operations. It is a unique field as 66.7% of the populations is refugees and 48.9% of refugee populations reside in eight densely crowded refugee camps, for example the area of Beach camp is about 0.4 square kilometers and the number of refugees who live in this camp is 79566 refugees. This density reflects on the other aspects; the shelters are crowded, schools and classrooms are crowded as some 3,000 additional pupils are registered in UNRWA school every year (UNRWA, 2007)

#### **1.3.1 UNRWA programs**

##### **1) Emergency appeal activities**

Since the start of the AL-AQSA Intifada, UNRWA has launched emergency appeals.

The activities under the emergency appeal are the following:

- Emergency employment creation program for those who have lost their jobs to be employed for three months.
- Emergency Food Assistance 3,164,766 food parcels have been distributed to almost 132,754 families.
- Emergency Cash Assistance Program \$22,216,627 has been distributed to 72,595 families.
- Re-housing Program for houses that have been demolished or partially damaged by IDF military actions (UNRWA, 2007).

## **2) The community health program**

The Program has been providing essential services to Palestinian refugees since 2002. To this end, counselors have been placed in UNRWA schools, 13 in community centers and 14 in health clinics in Gaza in the occupied Palestinian territories. They work under the direction of 9 supervisors and a coordinator. The greatest numbers of interventions undertaken have been for refugees in distress or suffering mental disturbance because of the incursions, Defense Forces and other causes (UNRWA, 2007).

## **3) Education program**

UNRWA provides services for school population of 193,662 students in 187 schools for the school years 2005/2006. The Agency also has a vocational training center with places for 1,024 refugee students distributed over 31 specializations (UNRWA, 2007).

#### **4) Health program**

UNRWA health program aims to protect, preserve, and promote the health of Palestine refugees and to meet their basic health needs. In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA has 15 main health centers. In addition there are three sub-centers in camps (UNRWA, 2007).

#### **5) Relief and social services program**

This Program includes rendering assistance to 18,312 families (84,379 persons) of the poorest refugees as the Relief Services Division organizes direct material and financial aid for those refugee families without a male adult medically fit to earn an income and without other identifiable support sufficient to cover food, shelters and other basic needs (UNRWA, 2007).

#### **6) Environmental health and water program**

The existing state of the environment in Gaza is a direct threat to health resources, and future economic development. Because of this, UNRWA set up a Special Environmental health Program (SEHP) in 1993 to deal with the challenging environmental conditions facing the refugees. (SEHP) was established to make it possible to participate in and support activities, which appeared to be essential to improving the sanitation (UNRWA, 2007).

#### **7) Micro finance and micro enterprise program**

Since June 1991, UNRWA has been providing small and micro enterprise credit to the business community in Gaza through a variety of loan products. Before the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000, the Program used to provide nearly 900 loans worth of \$1 million each month. Due to the economic recession caused by the ongoing conflict, demand

for the Programs credit products has declined during the last quarter of the year 2000 and 2001 and 2003. The program began to recover slowly in the first quarter of 2004 and the year 2005; the program has had further improvement as it has reached its peak in regards to volume of lending since it has launched its credit operations in 1991. For the year 2005, the Program has maintained 117 percent of its operational self-sufficiency (UNRWA, 2007).

### **1.3.2 Refugee camps in the Gaza strip**

#### **1) Jbalia refugee camp**

UNRWA operates 25 schools in Jbalia. Enrollment in the current academic year is 29,038 pupils. 3,569 families residing in the camp are eligible for relief assistance under the Agency special hard category. The Agency's health center in the camp is staffed by 95 health care workers. In addition, in the village of Beit Hanoun, there is another health center with 24 staff members. The special Environmental Health Program Sanitation Office is staffed by 75 employees. Also there is small scale Enterprise Credit Program (UNRWA, 2007).

#### **2) Beach refugee camp**

UNRWA operates 23 schools in the camp. A health center is staffed by 32 health care workers. The refugees living in the camp also receive health care services at the Agency Remal health Center, located just east of the camp. The center operates in morning and afternoon shifts, and it is staffed by 90 health care workers. 2,407 families (10,902 individuals) residing in the camp are eligible for relief assistance under the Agency's special hard category. UNRWA carries out sanitation activities in the camp. The Special Environmental Health Program Sanitation office is staffed by 37 employees. Also there is Small scale Enterprise Credit Program (UNRWA, 2007).

### **3) Nuseirat refugee camp**

UNRWA operates 16 schools in the camp. Agency's health center in the camp is staffed by 65 health care workers. 2,389 families (11,407 individuals) residing in the camp are eligible for relief assistance under the Agency's special hardship category. UNRWA carries out sanitation activities in the camp. The Special Environmental Health Program Sanitation Office is staffed by 40 employees. Also there is Small scale Enterprise Credit Program (UNRWA, 2007).

### **4) Bureij refugee camp**

UNRWA operates 8 schools in Bureij refugee camp. 1,055 families residing in the camp are eligible for relief assistance under the Agency special hard category. The Agency's health center in the camp is staffed by 38 health care workers. The special Environmental Health Program Sanitation Office is staffed by 24 employees. Also there is Small scale Enterprise Credit Program (UNRWA, 2007).

### **5) Maghazi refugee camp**

UNRWA operates 6 schools in Maghazi refugee camp. 643 families (2,849 individuals) residing in the camp are eligible for relief assistance under the Agency special hard category. The Agency's health center in the camp is staffed by 27 health care workers. The special Environmental Health Program Sanitation Office is staffed by 16 employees. Also there is Small scale Enterprise Credit Program (UNRWA, 2007).

### **6) Deir EL-Balah refugee camp**

UNRWA operates 8 schools in Deir El Balah refugee camp 994 families (4,089 individuals) residing in the camp are eligible for relief assistance under the Agency special hard category.

The Agency's health center in the camp is staffed by 43 health care workers. The special Environmental Health Program Sanitation Office is staffed by 14 employees. Also there is Small scale Enterprise Credit Program (UNRWA, 2007).

#### **7) Khan Younis refugee camp**

UNRWA operates 20 schools in refugee camp 994 families (4,089 individuals) residing in the camp are eligible for relief assistance under the Agency special hard category. The Agency's health center in the camp is staffed by 87 health care workers. In average, 28,590 consultations are held there each month. In 1966, the Agency constructed another health center in the nearby village of Maen staffed by 22 staff members. The special Environmental Health Program Sanitation Office is staffed by 54 employees. Also there is Small scale Enterprise Credit Program (UNRWA, 2007).

#### **8) Rafah refugee camp**

UNRWA operates 33 schools in refugee camp. A total of 3,060 families (13,700 individuals) residing in the camp are eligible for relief assistance under the Agency special hard category. The Agency's health center in the camp is staffed by 87 health care workers. The Agency constructed new health center in the Tel Es-Sultan quarter with 29 staff members. New Health center at Nasr area (Between Rafah and Khan Younis) was opened in September 2004 with 17 staff members. The Agency's Special Environmental Health Program Sanitation Office is staffed by 73 employees. Also there is Small scale Enterprise Credit Program (UNRWA, 2007).

#### **1.4 The purpose of the study:**

This study aimed to assess the current situation of absenteeism among UNRWA staff and to identify the contributing factors associated with absenteeism.

#### **1.5 Specific objectives:**

1. To identify the average rate of absenteeism among UNRWA employees in the Gaza governorates.
2. To identify the contributing factors ( personal, work, management style and organization) associated with absenteeism.
3. To discuss the implications and make recommendations to overcome the Absenteeism issue at UNRWA.

#### **1.6 Research question**

- 1- What is the average rate of absenteeism among UNRWA staff in the Gaza governorates?
- 2- What are the main characteristics of the employees associated with absenteeism among UNRWA staff in the Gaza governorates?
- 3- What are the main characteristics of management style associated with absenteeism among UNRWA staff in the Gaza governorates?
- 4- What are the main characteristics of the work associated with absenteeism among UNRWA staff in the Gaza governorates?
- 5- What are the main organizational characteristics associated with absenteeism among UNRWA staff in the Gaza governorates?

### **1.7 Research hypothesis:**

H1: There is no relationship between personal factors and characteristics of the work at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

H2: There is no relationship between personal factors and Management Style at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$

H3: There is no relationship between personal factors and the organization characteristics at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

H4: There is a significant statistical difference at the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to some of demographic and personal factors at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

## **Chapter (2)**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher will focus on the definitions of absenteeism, level of absenteeism, impact of absenteeism on the organization, factors associated with absenteeism and the management and control of absenteeism.

#### **2.2 Definition of absenteeism**

There are many definitions for absenteeism as follows:

Sikorki (2001) absenteeism is defined as not being present or attending, missing, existing, lacking, inattentive, and/or being preoccupied.

Plunkett and Attner (1997) describe “absenteeism” as follows: “Absenteeism is the percentage of an organization’s work force not at work on any given day.

Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1994) define “absenteeism” as: “the failure of people to attend work on a given day.”

Botes (1994) describes “absenteeism” as: “the habit of being invariably absent from work, with or without a valid excuse, abstention from work for trivial reasons.”

Absenteeism involves nonattendance from scheduled work in terms of hours and days rather than minutes, it is distinguishable from being late or tardy to work (Rhodes & Steers, 1990).

Absenteeism is “nonattendance of employees for scheduled work when they are expected to attend” (Huczynski & Fitzpatrick, 1989).

Van der Merwe and Miller (1988) define “absenteeism” as implying: “...an unplanned, disruptive incident; but more specifically, it can be seen as nonattendance when an employee is scheduled to work.”

This research will use the following definition to absenteeism: “The failure of people to attend work on a given day. The absence which occurs refers to long or short period of absence and is taken over a period of one year excluding the maternity leave, official holidays and annual leave.”

### **2.3 Impact of absenteeism on an organization**

According to Robbins (1998), the annual cost of absenteeism has been estimated to be over forty billion dollars for organisations in the United States of America, and over twelve billion dollars for Canadian firms. It costs industrial firms in Germany more than thirty-five and a half billion dollars each year. Unscheduled absences, often termed absenteeism, are associated with lower levels of organizational productivity (Harrison & Price, 2003).

Bennett (1994) points out the following effects of absenteeism on an organisation: decreased production, overtime costs to compensate for absent workers, problems resulting from having to reschedule projects, failure to meet deadlines; on administration and supervision, such as: Low morale, loss of team spirit, overworked personnel stress for certain individuals. Flanagan and Finger (1998) state the following: Employee absenteeism is one of the most pervasive, persistent and challenging problems confronting organizations. Many organizations fail to

measure the real costs of absenteeism and erroneously conclude that it is just a minor annoyance. Some companies recognize the costs, but apparently are resigned to accepting high absenteeism as they do not take meaningful actions to reduce it. It is only after absenteeism is accepted as a costly and serious problem that meaningful efforts to reduce it can be initiated and implemented. Absenteeism adversely affects employee morale and is a significant barometer of morale. A high rate of absenteeism, if left unchecked, usually develops into very serious problems for an organisation, which, in turn, negatively affects morale and turnover (Levine, 2004). Absenteeism is one of the most widespread obstacles to productivity, profitability and competitiveness. It causes overtime, late deliveries, dissatisfied customers and a decline in morale among workers expected to cover for absent colleagues (Flood, 2004).

## **2.4 Type of absenteeism at UNRWA installations**

### **1) Sick leave**

It is an absence, regardless of duration, whether paid or unpaid, resulting from an employee being too sick or injured to work or to undergo a planned medical procedure. This category excludes absences related to accepted compensation cases.(UNRWA,2008)

### **2) Special leave**

Special leave with or without pay for compelling reasons such as illness, examinations, attendance at court, study, nursing a child may be approved. It also includes hajj leave and special leave for compassionate reasons such as the death of a family member (spouse, father, mother, son, daughter or sister), suspension and CTO.(UNRWA, 2008)

## **2.5 Average percentage of unscheduled absenteeism.**

According to the 2002 CCH Unscheduled Absence Survey, the average percentage of unscheduled absences at U.S. organizations was 2.1% in 2002, while the average per employee cost for unscheduled absences rose from \$610 in 2000 to \$789 in 2002 and the three most common reasons for unscheduled absences are personal illness (33%), family issues (24%), and personal needs (21%) (CCH Inc., 2002).

According to the 2006 CCH Unscheduled Absence Survey, conducted for CCH by Harris Interactive, the absenteeism rate was 2.5% in 2006 up from 2.3% last year, and the highest since 1999, when the rate was 2.7%.

In a full time employee scheduled to work 230 days, this translates to about 5-6 days absence per annum (wooden,1992).

The Queensland data indicates similar trends. The absence rate for the Queensland Public Service in June 2004 was 3.95 per cent, being 4.12 per cent for females and 3.7 per cent for males. In Canada, the time loss through absenteeism was 5 days per employee per year, in non-unionized operation and 10 days in organizations involving a represented workforce (Shephard, 1992).

Based upon the UNRWA attendance reports (2008) the rates of absenteeism are as the following: (see annex No. 2)table (2.1) type of absenteeism and No. of days lost through year (2007). The percentage of absenteeism in year 2007 was 4.7% whereas female employees were absent from work 11.4 days per employee in the year which is higher than percentage of male staff absence which was 10 days per employee in the year.

Table (2.2) (see annex No. 2) type of absenteeism and No. of days lost through year (2006).

The percentage of absenteeism in the year 2006 was 3.1% whereas female employees were absent from work 8 days per employee in the year which is higher than percentage of male staff absence which was 7 days per employee in the year.

Table (2.3) (see annex No. 2) type of absenteeism and No. of days lost through year (2005).

The rate of absenteeism in the year 2005 was 3.6% whereas female employees were absent from work 9 days per employee in the year which is higher than percentage of male staff absence which was 8 days per employee in the year.

Rate of absenteeism is calculated by dividing the number of working days absence in any given period by the total number of available working days in the period, as follows:

Absenteeism Rate =  $\frac{\text{Number of lost working days to absence}}{(\text{Number of employees} \times \text{number of working days})} \times 100$ . Conclusion, there is difference of level of absenteeism between years; the highest level is found in the year 2007. Also there is deference at the level of absenteeism between UNRWA and the aforementioned literary review. UNRWA has the highest rate of absence compared to the literary review.

## **2.6 What is the acceptable level of absence?**

According to the Australian Public Service Commission, (2005) there is no optimum or standard level of acceptable workplace absence that is applicable service-wide. Agencies are best placed to determine when workplace absence rates require further investigation and management. If agencies think there is a problem, it is worth investigating.

An acceptable average absence rate may mask ‘pockets’ or ‘hot spots’ in certain divisions, business units or individual teams within an agency.

To understand whether absence rates are having a negative impact or reflecting unhealthy aspects of the organisation, they should be viewed in the context of turnover rates, reasons for leaving the Agency, staff satisfaction and usage of employees’ counseling programmes.

## **2.7 Consequence of employees absenteeism**

Winfield (1991) suggests that absenteeism can have both positive and negative consequences for different groups. These groups include individuals themselves, their co-workers, the larger work group, the organisation and management, trade unions, the family and the society at large. The proposed consequences of absenteeism are presented in table (2.4) (see annex No. 2). Furthermore, it is noted that this list is not comprehensive as situations do vary and the effects may not always be felt immediately and absence duration could determine different outcomes.

## **2.8 Factors that contribute to absenteeism**

In this section, the researcher discusses factors related to personal characteristic, work characteristic, leadership style and organizational characteristic.

Harrison and Martocchios (1998) research showed that there were five classes of variables hypothesized to be origins/cause of absences: personality, demographic characteristics, job-related attitudes, social context, and decision-making mechanisms.

Reasons for voluntary absenteeism include personal characteristics, nature of the work, level of satisfaction and generational pressures that affect the motivation of the employee to attend work (Rhodes & Steer, 1990)

There are various reasons why a person may not attend work, such as an illness, family emergency or just to have a day off from work. Thus, not all use of sick leave is because of actual illnesses. It is estimated that between 36% and 50% of absences are because of sickness and other unavoidable circumstances, such as family illness or transportation problems. This means that other absences are due to avoidable reasons, such as to have a day off, to attend a social event, to sleep in, and so on (Careers, 2004).

A study prepared by Lambert et al indicated that absenteeism was related to individual factors, such as age and gender, as well as attitudinal measures, such as commitment to the organization and job satisfaction. The results suggested that the use of sick leave was influenced by factors not related to whether or not employees were ill. This suggests that sick leave could be influenced and perhaps manipulated by factors that may be under the control of correctional agencies (Lambert et al.2005)

Employees use minor illnesses (such as non-chronic headaches) or home/family-related situations (such as unscheduled leisure time) as justifications for “calling it a day” (leaving early) or not coming to work at all. This trend might account for a significant portion of the problematic absenteeism within work organizations (Harvey & Nicholson, 1999).

In a survey conducted by Aon Consulting (1998), employees missed workdays because of personal matters such as caring for a sick child.

An employee's ability to attend is influenced by factors such as family responsibilities, transportation problems, accidents and the like. Once all these variables are identified, managers may begin to understand why employees sometimes choose not to come to work when they are fully capable of attending. By the same token, it is equally important for managers to understand those circumstances in which people, for whatever reason (illness or otherwise), are genuinely unable to come to work (Rhodes & Steers, 1990)

Cascio (2003) notes the cause of absenteeism is due to personal or family related issues.

Increasingly, organizations are being characterized by issues such as child- and elder care and single-parent families, which can all have an impact on the absenteeism levels in organizations (Erickson, (2001).

Family responsibilities are a major factor to workplace absence rates. Career's leave allows employees to provide occasional care for their children, or injured, ill, frail or disabled relatives, There are also a range of other unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances, which act as barriers to attendance. Household and family emergencies as well as bereavement and compassionate situations often require an employee to spend time away from the workplace (Australian Public Service Commission, 2005).

The higher the level of unemployment is the lower the absenteeism, and during booms absenteeism is higher than during recessions (Brits & Reese, 1982).

A range of complex factors lead to workplace absences. These include: a person's ability to attend work (medical incapacity from injury or illness), barriers impacting on attendance (such as caring responsibilities or personal emergencies) and their motivation to attend work (affected by levels of engagement, motivation and job satisfaction) (APS, 2005).

In a survey conducted by Aon Consulting (1998), employees missed workdays because of stress, personal matters, caring for a sick child, no available day care, caring for elderly dependents, time spent at work on personal matters, and employee sickness. The survey concluded that the total amount of missed time due to personal reasons and sickness averages 6% of pay, almost as much as the time taken for vacations/holidays.

Preston (1995) noted that employees with longer service may feel less threatened by the prospect of job loss and thus engage in more absence. However she cites various studies that differentiate between length of service in a job and length of service in an organization, with the long service in one job with few promotions possibly resulting in demotivation and increased absence, while several different jobs within an organization may indicate organizational commitment and motivation to attend. Some studies found that past absences tended to be a reliable predictor of future behavior, meaning that the behavior was consistent.

VandenHeuvel (1995) found the absence behavior of women more sensitive to pressures external to the workplace such as stressful life events, while the absence behavior of men is more responsive to factors internal to the workplace, such as job satisfaction.

Evans and Palmer (1997) hold that the rate of absenteeism among females is higher than among males: the underlying explanation for this may not lay in the gender difference per se, but rather in other variables that affect male and female roles, both at work and in the wider society. As the age of dependent children increases, there is evidence that the female absenteeism rate drops. The decreased absenteeism rate can also be related to the occupational structure of an organization, due to the fact that a higher proportion of females than males occupy lower occupational positions.

Steers and Porter (1987) maintain that, as a group, women are absent more frequently than men. It can also be expected that female absenteeism will increase with family size.

Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1994) also maintain that the absenteeism rate among women tends to be higher than that among men.

Evans and Palmer (1997) state that absenteeism episodes among younger people tend to present more frequently and to be of shorter duration, while such episodes among older people present less frequently, but are of longer duration, especially after the age of 50.

Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1994) point out that older employees experience higher rates of involuntary absenteeism than younger employees, whose voluntary absences are less frequent. Evans and Palmer (1997) further indicate that absence due to illness amongst males is age-related. After the age of 40, absenteeism rates increase - and even more so after the age of 50.

Female gender, increased age and low education factor increase absence from work (Krause and Lund, 2004). Studies suggested that gender is often a factor in absence. There is general agreement that females are more likely to be absent than males. However, it is unlikely that this is a result of any lower commitment to work, and more likely to be due to both ill-health factors and greater responsibility for family related duties (Preston 1995). The Australian Public Service found that female employees took 16 per cent more sick leave and 28 per cent more career's leave than male employees (ANAO 2003).

The Western Australian Public Service study reported similar trends, with females being 1.2 times more likely to take sick leave than males. This was not seen as a lack of work commitment, but rather reflecting the dual role of many women and the accessing of sick leave for career purposes (MPCWA 2001).

ANAO (2003) findings that employees aged 60 years and over and less than 25 years had higher rates of absence than other employees. The same agency also found that females had higher rates of absence from work. Tylczak (1990) indicates that age has an effect on absenteeism. Bennett (1994) also indicates that age contributes to high rates of absenteeism.

It was found that job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job stress, being overweight; gender, age, tenure, supervisory status, and education were associated with the use of sick leave (Lambert et al., 2005).

Brits and Reese (1982) maintain that single males are absent more often than married men, while single females are absent less often than married women.

An employee's length of service also could play a role in the occurrence of employee absenteeism. Evans and Palmer (1997) state that longer periods of service with an organization could result in a decrease in absenteeism, since employees' loyalty to an organization normally increases over time. There is a correlation between longer periods of service and lower rates of employee absenteeism.

Evans and Palmer (1997) point out that personality tests have indicated that employees who exhibit personality traits, such as anxiety and emotional instability, are more likely to be absent from work than employees who are more introverted and emotionally stable.

Evans and Palmer (1997) state that, one of the strongest indicators of future absence behavior is past absence behavior. The absence frequency is a strong predictor than total number of days lost.

Brits and Reese (1982) maintain that the distance between an employee's residence and place of work has an influence on absenteeism. The further away from work an employee lives, the more often he or she is absent.

Boone and Kurtz (1996) point out that between fifteen to sixteen per cent of American workers have some type of elder care responsibility. About twenty-two per cent of workers are expected to assume such responsibilities over the next four years. In the years ahead care of

the elderly will have a greater impact on the workplace than childcare. The trend that the elderly intends to live with their children in modern times, will have a greater impact on the absenteeism of employees due to family responsibilities, to take care of the elderly.

Steers and Porter (1987) point out the following: some evidence suggests that difficulty in getting to work can at times influence actual attendance. This difficulty may take the form of distance from work, traveling time to and from work, or weather conditions that impede traffic. Exceptions to this trend have been noted who found no relationship between either traveling distance or the availability of public transport and absenteeism. In general, however, increased difficulties in commuting to work owing to transport problems does seem to present one possible impediment to attendance behavior for some employees, even when the individual is motivated to attend.

The Western Australian Public Service confirmed this relationship, as employment status was an important predictor with full-time employees more likely to take sick leave. Interestingly, full-time males were 1.3 times more likely to take sick leave than full-time females. They were not surprised that the longer a person was at work, the less they had to attend to other life requirements (MCPWA 2001).

Employees may not be able to attend work because of barriers, such as sickness, need to deal with family and personal matters, and transportation problems providing transportation for employees may lead to decreased use of sick leave (Rhodes & Steers, 1990).

Health, as a physical response to financial stress, influences absenteeism ( Joo, 1998).

Bagwell (2000) found that greater absenteeism was associated with poor financial management.

Christensen et al found that psychosocial factors at the workplace level may be important predictors of absence from work (Christensen et al, 2005).

Kivimaki et al. (1997) found no association between interpersonal relationships and absent from work. While a study by Niedhammer et al. (1998) and a study by North et al. (1996) found an association for men but not for women.

Lach (1999) found in a recent survey, 42% of wealthy households, 41% of college educated workers, and 43% of those less than 24 years of age admitted that they had pretended to be sick in order to avoid work. The major reason given in the survey was they just wanted a day off, followed closely by the need for a mental health day. This suggests that a sizable proportion of sick leave is because a person elects to be absent rather than must be absent from work.

Arnold, Cooper and Robertson (1995) further assert that factors, such as working conditions, shift work, long hours, a job that involves risk or danger, the introduction of new technology into the work environment, quantitative and qualitative work overload and work under load are factors that may be intrinsic to a job and may be linked to work stress.

Increased absenteeism occurs with increased working hours and overtime. Shift work has an inconsistent relationship with attendance even though good evidence exists for an increased

association with adverse health effects. This probably depends upon the degree of self-selection of the workforce involved and the operation of other incentives. Decreasing absenteeism has been associated with flexible working hours and the converse with inflexible hours (Leigh, 1991).

Short-term leaves may provide information concerning the health status of any given group of workers. In addition, such leaves may also be related to factors connected to work organization, such as number of hours of work, shift, and autonomy, among others (Fischer, 2000).

The work context (how the work is organized) and the work content (what the job involves) contribute to stress levels, job satisfaction, commitment and motivation, which in turn impact on attendance. Good working conditions and job design are known to impact positively on morale and engagement, encouraging employees to come to work (Bevan, 2003).

One United States survey found that organisations with good/very good morale experienced low absence rates, whereas those reporting poor/fair moral experienced high absent rates (CCH, 2005).

Where high absenteeism is presenting a problem, motivational factors related to the employee's level of engagement may be a contributing factor. Low engagement has been linked to high absence rates, with research into a fortune 100 manufacturing company finding that absences in low engagement teams averaged 8%. In a highly engaged team, absences averaged 4.8% (Welling, Bernnthal & Phelps, 2005).

(Arnold, Cooper & Robertson, 1995) identify five categories of work associated with absenteeism. These categories are: factors intrinsic to the job, role in the organization, relationships at work, career development and organizational structure and climate.

Various Australian studies demonstrate a positive relationship between hours worked and absence: the higher the number of hours worked, the higher the level of absence. This was consistent with labor choice models, where there is a diminishing marginal utility associated with working longer hours (Preston, 1995).

According to Booyens (1998) a lack of clear performance expectations and job descriptions creates role ambiguity. Collins, et al (2000) reveal that working without job descriptions could contribute to dissatisfaction and absenteeism, due to the lack of clarity regarding job boundaries.

Work commitment develops through a process of identification in which a person experiences some idea as an extension of the self (Bennett 2002). A committed individual incorporates some of the attributes of an organization into his or her own cognitive response set (Savery, Travaglione & Firms 1998).

Empirical research that shows an individual's level of sick leave can be predicted on the basis of his or her estimate of what the average level of absenteeism is within his or her group (Gellatly, 1995).

Morin (2003) has defined six factors that give meaning to work: the purpose of work, its moral correctness, autonomy, pleasure at work, recognition and positive relationships. When employees perceive these characteristics in their job, they tend to experience psychological well-being and effective commitment to the organization

Arkin (1996) provided an extensive list as to possible causes of employee absenteeism □ inadequate or poor supervision, wage problems, under-utilization of skills, adverse working conditions, inadequate selection inadequate information about job requirements, unsatisfactory working conditions, lack of opportunity for advancement, lack of a well organized training program in effective grievance procedure, lack of proper facilities and services excessive fatigue boredom.

Sagie (1998) measured voluntary and involuntary absences using data from self-reports and personal records. He found that organizational commitment and job satisfaction were strongly related to voluntary absence.

Employees stay away from work without any valid or acceptable excuse. Why do employees stay away from work without submitting a valid or acceptable excuse? Andrews (1995) states the following: It appears from research undertaken in the United States of America that the main cause of disciplinary action is absence from work. Absenteeism, laziness and misuse of sick leave are considered to be the overriding problems. The reasons why employees are sometimes guilty of these actions can be summarized as follows.

- Inability of employers to reconcile the objectives of their employees with those of the institution. Employees, who cannot identify themselves with the institution, lose interest and can become guilty of these offences.
- If an employee does not exhibit the correct attitude towards his work, he will not necessarily feel guilty if he is absent from work without a good reason.
- Values and norms of personnel can have a definite influence on their working behavior. If the standards of honesty and incorruptibility are not highly rated by an employee, absenteeism and the misuse of sick leave will be considered acceptable actions.
- Some employees assume that paid sick leave which is granted to employees as a fringe benefit should be utilized whether they are ill or not. Because of this, sick leave is considered by some workers to be extra free time.
- The security of tenure, which is enjoyed by public officials, can often be a contributory cause to absence from work without reason. In other words, employees may assume that because they cannot easily be dismissed from their jobs, they have the right to stay away from work.

The group-level variance in absenteeism has been attributed to the effect of absenteeism norms that are assumed to influence individual behavior (Johns, 1997).

Moorhead and Griffin (1989) hold that employee satisfaction affects absenteeism: Job satisfaction is a specific attitude that indicates the degree to which individuals feel positively or negatively about their jobs. It is an emotional response to one's tasks as well as the physical and social conditions of the workplace. Often, job satisfaction is measured in terms of feelings about various job facets, including the work itself, pay, promotion, co-workers, and supervision (Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn, 1994).

The problem of getting employees to attend work is probably as old as work itself (Edwards & Whitson, 1993). Absenteeism is generally a problem for any organization that uses fixed work schedules (Williams & MacDermid, 1994).

Andrews (1995) believes that tension and insecurity can manifest as absenteeism if employees do not receive job-related training.

Issues such as efficiency demands and performance monitoring; service encounters and managing customers, employee–job fit, support structures and human resource management have been identified as causing stress and absences (Dean & Rainnie, 2004).

Lower classifications and larger teams show higher rates of absence ( ANAO, 2003)

Luthans (1989) agree that there is an inverse relationship between satisfaction and absenteeism. Absenteeism levels tend to be low when satisfaction is high, and absenteeism levels tend to increase when job satisfaction is low. High job satisfaction will not necessarily result in low levels of absenteeism, but it is likely that low job satisfaction will result in increased levels of absenteeism.

Porter, Lawler and Hackman (1981) point out that a reliable predictor of absenteeism is job satisfaction. It can be concluded that job satisfaction is a major factor that contributes to absenteeism in an organisation.

Accordingly, Martocchio (1994) found that perceptions of social-groups norms were positively associated with actual absenteeism.

A UK study found differences between the attendance of older and younger people, as well as single and married people. The study also found women with caring responsibilities were more likely to be absent than males (Bridges& Mumford, 2000).

Janssen et al. (1999) mentions that autonomy could lead to a high level of satisfaction associated with low staff turnover and low rates of absenteeism in the workplace.

A survey of employees found that 26% of absenteeism is believed to be related to stress both job-related and lifestyle related (Wacheski, 1997).

According to De Boer et al. (2002) working conditions such as the assignment to scheduled working hours and the allocation to replace absent colleagues contribute to absenteeism in the workplace.

Regarding work characteristics, the literature provides broad evidence that all the following factors have prolonging disability effects: low control over work, particularly over the work and rest schedule, high psychological job demands, low skill discretion, and high job stress or job strain (Krause and Lund, 2004).

Jacobson et al. (1996) found significant relationships between high stress and absenteeism, and female workers reported higher stress levels and absenteeism than men.

Gard et al. (2002) studied 640 surveyors and found consistent results: team-based organization, group and supervisory practices such as learning by doing, mentoring and guided

delegation contributed to the improvement in the quality of client service, case handling time, teamwork performance and employee well-being.

Poor morale caused from negative work environments can cause stress, which in turn can cause employee absenteeism (Fishman, 1996). Evans and Palmer (1997) maintain that stress is a factor that gives rise to absenteeism.

The lack of group cohesion among employee could be related to absenteeism in the workplace (Shader et al. 2001). Groups with greater solidarity have more influence over their members than loosely structured groups. A cohesive group has a feeling of common identity. As group cohesiveness increases, so does individual enjoyment and satisfaction (Adams & Bond 2000).

The literature generally indicated a positive relationship between work unit/group size and absence, with increasing firm size being correlated to increasing levels of absence. This was possibly because absence from a large group was less conspicuous. One study suggested that firm size was less relevant than the size of workgroups within that firm (Preston 1995).

There are mixed views regarding correlations between absence and the availability of overtime. Theory suggests a positive relationship, with greater overtime being related to greater absence levels. In practice the results are mixed a 1989 study found a negative relationship between overtime and absence while a study of nurses confirmed a positive relationship (Preston 1995).

Yadivalli (1998) states that a lack of commitment to the job is a major obstacle to progress, leading to low productivity, poor moral demeanor and high levels of absenteeism in the workplace.

Erickson et al. (2000) mentions that absenteeism is higher in work units that reflect a tolerance of excessive absenteeism in their workplace, and lower in workgroups where absenteeism is frowned upon.

Absenteeism is generally seen as the result of situational, contextual, and dispositional factors rather than an inherent trait (Martocchio & Jimeno, 2003).

Absenteeism is a growing problem for organizations (Wood 1998). Employees may be absent from work for reasons that include personal reasons and unsatisfactory working conditions (Kass, Vodanovich & Callender, 2001). The work environment has been found to impact absenteeism, especially in terms of producing differing levels of job satisfaction and organization commitment. Absenteeism can be symbolic of deeper feeling of hostility or perceptions of inequitable treatment in the job situation. Absenteeism can be away to get back at the organization for a poor work environment, low pay, or other attributes of the job with which employees are dissatisfaction (Rhodes & Streers, 1990).

Uncomfortable working conditions such as heavy physical work, repetitive movements, and high physical demands, have been found to be associated with different definitions of absence from work (Lund et al., 2006).

Venne (1997) examined the impact of twelve hour shifts on Canadian prison guards, and concluded that the shifts increased absenteeism.

Towner (1998) maintains that many muscular–skeletal problems are caused or exacerbated by stress. If stress is ignored, the effects worsen and the length of sickness absence increases. It is evident that stress could negatively affect employees health which, in turn causes absenteeism.

Roles that require low level skills often have higher rates of absence. Issues such as skill variety, irrelevant and insignificant work tasks, little autonomy, and a lack of feedback on performance contribute to employees feeling disengaged (Parkes & Wall, 1998).

An Irish study found that poor employee-manager relationships was resulting in reduced morale, increased stress, low levels of commitment and high rates of workplace absences. Staff indicated that they did not feel valued by management, they were not encouraged to use their initiative, they felt poor quality relationships frequently existed, thought there was a lack of trust and mutual respect, and felt over-managed and under-led. Even where good management exists, the extent to which managers proactively deal with individual cases, and the extent to which they feel confident and supported by the organisation can impact on attendance. Problematic absences will continue to exist if managers lack the confidence to have difficult conversations and the support to take action when required (Bennet, 2002).

Leadership styles and management practices cover a broad spectrum. At one extreme is a style colloquially referred to as the toxic manager. This type is characterized by aggressive, overly critical and divisive management behaviors that often result in increased absences, high

turnover and psychological injury. Similarly overly directive (command and control) and overly supportive (popular) leadership styles are also linked with increased workplace absence (Comcare, 2005).

Poor relationships with superiors, lack of control over work, low participation in decision-making, low levels of support and poor communication are increasing absence from work (Comcare, 2005).

Management style, behaviour, management hierarchy and allocation of responsibility are all clearly linked to absence rates (Bennet, 2002). Poor leadership at the senior management level can generate low morale across an organisation. Low morale has been linked to the reason why employees call in sick at the last minute (CCH, 2005).

The research study by Song, Daly, Rudy, Douglas and Dyer (1997) revealed that the lack of a participative management style contributes to absenteeism in the workplace.

Preston notes that occupation is related to absence. Higher level occupations such as managerial and professional work are expected to be associated with less absence due to assumptions of greater job or organizational commitment, responsibility and satisfaction. Such jobs often provide more autonomy and flexibility in hours than technical, trade or laboring positions. Studies indicated that absence rates were higher in those occupations where conditions were unhealthy or dangerous or in occupations (Preston 1995).

A study conducted by Brooke and Price (1989) tested a causal model of absenteeism. They included direct inputs of health-related and organizational constructs associated with absenteeism. The empirical model offered the following as determinants of absenteeism: routinization, centralization, pay, distributive justice, work involvement, role ambiguity, conflict and overload, kinship responsibility, organizational permissiveness, job involvement, organizational commitment and health status involvement. Results indicated that of these variables, kinship responsibility, organizational permissiveness, role ambiguity, negative direct effects of centralization, pay had direct effects on absenteeism.

There is an ambiguous relationship between salary and absence, as it varied from firm to firm. Many studies found that higher salaries were related to lower absence, while others suggested that higher incomes meant employees could better afford non-paid absences (Preston, 1995). The root cause of absenteeism may be partly attributable to the way in which organizations are managed, such as unfairness (De Boer, Bakker, Syrott & Schaufeli, 2002).

The Western Australian Public Service found a negative relationship between salary and absence, with higher paid employees being less likely to take sick leave. This study found that an additional \$10,000 in base salary reduced the odds of clearing paid sick leave by 0.8 (MPCWA, 2001).

The Australian Public Service noted a generally negative relationship between salary and absence, with absence decreasing as classification increased. However the Australian Public Service did note the Western Australian public sector finding that the requirement to submit a leave application may be less strictly enforced at higher classification levels (ANAO 2003).

If employees are motivated to attend work, transport and commuting problems can have an influence on employee absenteeism (Evans & Palmer, 1997). Mintcloud (1992) believes that lack of motivation is one of the biggest reasons for employee absenteeism.

Collins et al. (2000) mention that the lack of adequate equipment hinders employees from effective role performance and is another factor contributing to the absenteeism of employees. Amick et al found that duration of absence is shorter in companies promoting an interpersonal and value-focused environment (Amick et al., 2000).

De Witte (2005) employee with perception of low job security are more likely to engage in withdrawal behavior and report lower organization commitment, lower organization commitment often leads to employee absenteeism.

In a study of workers at a Southern, it was found that implementation of a cash incentive program was associated with a decrease in employee absenteeism. Moreover, it was found that the cash reward system had a far greater impact on employee absenteeism. (Landau, 1993). Incentives for not being absent are generally seen as reasons or pressures to attend work (Mowday et al., 1982). An employee may find the lack of incentives and reinforcers to attend work as a reason to be absent (Robins & Lloyd, 1983).

There can be many different types of employee incentive programs to deal with worker absenteeism. Employers may use non monetary rewards to encourage attendance. A recognition program in which quarterly citations were issued to employees at sewing plants was found to be associated with a significant decrease in job absences (Schappi, 1988).

In a study of workers at a Southern manufacturing, it was found that implementation of a stricter disciplinary system and a cash incentive program was associated with a decrease in employee absenteeism (Landau, 1993). Joo and Garman (1998) found that a higher level of financial well-being was associated with less absenteeism. Bagwell (2000) found that greater absenteeism was associated with poor financial management.

Wooden and Drago (1995) note several factors that might explain the absence of one employee in a large firm has less effect, large organizations tend to have more hierarchical structures and impersonal procedural rules and thirdly, work in large organizations may be less satisfying due to lower standards of communication, group cohesion or job autonomy.

The creation of a culture where employees are engaged, committed to the organization and its leadership has been shown to directly result in reduced absence. Additionally, all absence management strategies need to emphasize both prevention of avoidable absence and also providing support to those who are ill or injured and aiding their return to work.

Absenteeism can escalate to the point that it directly affects the smooth running of an institute on (Bydawell, 2000).

South African health care institutions, where work-related issues such as low pay, lack of incentives and poor working conditions demoralize nurses and contribute to absenteeism (Femina, 2000).

Organizational commitment has been suggested as a key factor influencing absenteeism. (Geurts, et al., 1999)

Factors such as being a head teacher, which reflect higher salary and seniority, were consistently related to higher absence, probably because they confer power and protection from any monitoring systems in place (Kremer et al. 2005).

Fowler (1998) educates all employees regarding the company's absenteeism policy, monitors the absences; counsels those who have had unscheduled absences; follows up with these employees and administers corrective action to those employees who do not comply with the policy. Companies need to make sure that all employees understand the current policies that exist within their companies regarding absenteeism, this leads to decrease absenteeism.

Organizational commitment has been found to be associated with absenteeism in non-correctional organizations and correctional organizations (Lambert et al., 2005). When employees are dissatisfied or not committed to the organization, they are more likely to miss work and leave their job (Aamodt, 2004).

Excessive absences often coincide with poor performance, high turnover rates and low organizational commitment (Tarrant, 2005). Jacobson et al. (1996) found that financial stress was one of the stressors that affect absenteeism.

Absenteeism is a phenomenon that affects businesses and countries worldwide. According to an Unscheduled absence survey conducted by the CCH, unscheduled absenteeism by

American workers reached a seven years in high in 1998, resulting in the business and non profit sector suffering million of dollar in losses (Anonymous, 2001).

The creation of a culture where employees are engaged and committed to the organisation and its leadership has been shown to directly result in reduced absence (APSC, 2005).

Culture is defined as the values commonly held among a group of people. It is a set of norms, customs, values and assumptions that guides the behavior of a particular group of people. Culture gives each group its uniqueness and differentiates (Nahavandi & Malekzadeh, 1999).

Nahavandi and Malekzadeh (1999) state the following: Organizational culture is the set of values, norms, and beliefs shared by members of an organization. Given time, all organizations develop a unique culture or character. Employees share common values and beliefs about work – related issues. These shared elements make them unique and set them apart from employees in other organizations. The influence of organizational culture is generally limited to work-related values and behavior. However organizational culture is strongly influenced by both national culture and cultural diversity.

A group or organization-culture can also influence absenteeism. Greenberg and Baron (2003) state the following: It is easy to understand why people who are uncommitted to their jobs may want to stay away from them, potentially resulting in high rates of absenteeism. However, the degree to which people actually express their low commitment by staying away from their jobs appears to depend on the cultures from which they come. Large groups of employees from the Peoples Republic of China and Canada were surveyed about their attitudes towards

being absent from work. The Chinese frowned on absence based on illness, the Canadians accepted illness generally as a valid excuse for being out of work. In the Chinese culture a person of good character is expected to maintain self-control, so if an employee took time off work due to illness, it is an indication of a lack of control. Chinese employees were more likely to take time off work to deal with personal or domestic issues. The findings underscore a key point: whereas lack of commitment may encourage absenteeism (promoting an attitude in favor of it), this alone may not dictate whether or not someone actually will be absent. Determining this as indicated here, requires an understanding of the values regarding absenteeism operating within an employee's culture.

Organizational variables than employee characteristics and that of absenteeism could be eliminated through organizational change (Gillies, 1994).

## **2.9 The management and control of absenteeism**

In any organization, absenteeism must be managed and controlled in order to ensure maximum work attendance of employees on any working day.

Van der Merwe and Miller (1988) identify two preconditions in order to attempt to reduce, control or manage absenteeism effectively. The two preconditions are:

- A clearly stated absenteeism policy that is communicated to all employees.
- Data on absenteeism must be collected systematically.

### **2.9.1 Managing employee work attendance**

If attendance is managed, this will ease the task of managing and controlling absent employees. Sargent (1989) identifies the following key factors when managing work attendance:

- Ensure that the workplace is a good place to be.
- Ensure that line managers and supervisors are held accountable for their behaviour, as well as their performance.
- Ensure that people management forms part of the appraisal system and that people's skills form part of the selection, induction and training policy.
- Make managers and supervisors responsible for absence control and utilize personnel specialists as facilitators.
- Train, coach and counsel line managers and supervisors in communication techniques, which will enable them to cope effectively with their role in counseling and providing support.
- Keep accurate attendance records so that absenteeism can be detected before it becomes a serious problem.
- Do not rely upon false and ineffective motivators, such as attendance bonus schemes. Such measures never truly solve the problem.
- Be realistic. If management has succeeded in reducing the absenteeism rate to two per cent, then control is being exercised effectively.

### **2.9.2 Controlling absenteeism by designing an absenteeism programme**

As stated earlier by Tylczak (1990), there is no perfect absenteeism programme. An organisation should develop its own absenteeism programme by learning from the past to build on the future. Past records and tendencies of employee absenteeism indicate tendencies to be absent in the future.

Research indicates that one of the strongest indicators of future absence behavior is past absence behavior and, moreover, that absence frequency has been found to be a stronger predictor than total number of days lost (Evans & Palmer, 1997).

Tylczak (1990) points out the following Ten Commandments (or basic rules) of Absenteeism for designing a perfect absentee programme:

- Measure and track absenteeism.
- Discuss absenteeism issues with employees.
- Link compensation to working hours.
- Assist employees to maintain or improve their attendance records.
- Reward good attendance records.
- Utilize fair and justifiable discipline.
- Carefully match employees to appropriate jobs and careers.
- Promote safety and health in the workplace.
- Train supervisors to support the anti-absenteeism programme.
- Fine-tune the anti-absenteeism programme to meet specific organizational needs.

### **2.9.3 Reviewing policy and procedures to manage absenteeism pro – actively**

Evans and Palmer (1997) suggest the following when reviewing an absenteeism policy:

- Reward work attendance by creating and fostering an attendance culture. Adopt a positive approach by not attempting to prevent employee absence.
- Line managers must be held accountable and provide them with training, support and guidance in order to assist them with the anti absenteeism programme.
- Employee attitudes and needs must be taken into account.
- Determine what the real cause of absenteeism is in an organisation.

Aspects, such as illness, management of lack of involvement, work specifications and family issues may be factors that contribute towards increasing the rate of absenteeism in an organisation. But by determining the real causes, the problem will be solved permanently.

#### **2.9.4 Improving employees morale**

Employees' morale directly influences absenteeism. High employee morale is a key to a low absentee rate (Tylczak, 1990). According to Tylczak (1990) there are eight steps towards improving employees' morale:

- Emulate. Workers do as you do, and not as you say.
- Appreciate: If workers feel appreciated, their value will appreciate.
- Ingratiate. Employees either want to stay, or want to stay away, depending on your relationship with your employees.
- Stimulate. Boredom isn't at the root of all absentee's problems, but it helps show the seeds of discontent.
- Integrate. An employee seldom skips practice if he/she feels included as a team player.
- Initiate. People like to be where the action is. A better absentee record is a common action reaction.
- Contemplate. The best absentee's problem is one that has been circumvented through pragmatic planning.
- Delegate. Nobody wants to miss their own parade.

#### **2.9.5 Creating the right climate and organizational environment**

Bennett (1994) states the following: The first and perhaps most important thing to do to control absenteeism is to maintain careful records that identify individuals and types of work with the highest absenteeism rates. Although employee absenteeism is troublesome, annoying and financially expensive, it is important not to become obsessed with the issue.

Monitoring and checking the validity of each and every absence can be enormously time-consuming, and proving that a particular absence was improper may be virtually impossible.

Also the constant questioning of employees on these matters could create an oppressive, unpleasant and unproductive working environment. More important are employee attitudes and the creation of an organizational environment where people feel that it is wrong to take time off without justification.

### **2.9.6 Counseling as a tool for reducing absenteeism**

Return-to-work interviews can reduce absenteeism levels up to twenty percent. Evans and Palmer (1997) emphasize the importance of conducting return-to-work interviews with employees. Such an interview is normally conducted by an employee's immediate manager or supervisor and serves various purposes.

Counseling can be effective in reducing absenteeism. Success depends on the root cause of individual absences (Bittel & Newstrom, 1990).

The following categories of absentees are identified by Bittel and Newstrom (1990):

- Chronic absentees. Certain employees have a limited capacity for dealing with pressure on or off the job. They may be prime candidates for counseling. The consequences of poor attendance must be brought to their attention prior to counseling. Normally their absence is habitual usually of long standing, and correction requires pressure to attend as well as hand holding.
- Vacationing absentees. Employees work only for as long as they require financial resources, after which they treat themselves to a day or two off. Such cases are difficult to deal with, since they are often more than capable of doing the job, but lack a sense of responsibility and consciously choose to be absent. Counseling is rarely effective for this group.

- Directionless absentees. The age group of this category is normally young, and such employees have not yet found their real purpose in their career. They follow the example of the vacationing absentees. A serious talk with such employees may be more effective than counseling.
- Aggressive absentees. Employees could be emotionally disturbed if they are willfully absent in the hope that their absence will cause an inconvenience in the workplace. This absentee group requires professional counseling. Supervisors cannot provide this kind of counseling.
- Moonlighters. Employees who have more than one job are often too tired to come to work. They are faced with conflicting schedules. A straight talk with such employees, instead of counseling is prescribed. These employees must be forced to make a choice between jobs if their attendance is negatively affected.
- Occasional absentees. This category of absenteeism refers to employees who are absent more than the normal accepted rate. Their absence is legitimate and their illnesses are real. They are prime candidates for counseling. Such employees deserve a mixture of sympathy, understanding and sometimes outright advice. The employer may even be contributing to the absenteeism. Contributing factors may be a lack of support and training.

### **2.9.7 Effectiveness of penalizing absenteeism**

Porter, Lawler & Hackman (1981) point out the following limitations on the effectiveness of penalizing absenteeism:

- Penalties that organisations may impose on employees are often limited in terms of union contracts.
- Penalties such as dismissal are not feared by employees in times of plentiful employment and are not very effective.

- Penalties such as dismissal are inflexible; as such measures can be imposed only once.
- Penalties can result in a high staff turnover, which is very costly.

## **2.10 Conclusion**

There are indeed many factors that contribute to absenteeism: personal factors, work factors, leadership style and organization factors. Line managers and supervisors at all levels must promote an awareness of all the factors that contribute towards and give rise to employees' absenteeism in order to manage and control absenteeism more effectively, efficiently and economically. Management must be made aware of the effects of absenteeism on an organization. The effective daily record keeping of employee absences is essential for managing and controlling absenteeism. An absenteeism policy must be implemented and be reviewed annually. Management must also take proper disciplinary action against employees who are guilty of unauthorized absence from their workplace.

## **Chapter (3)**

### **Conceptual framework of the study**

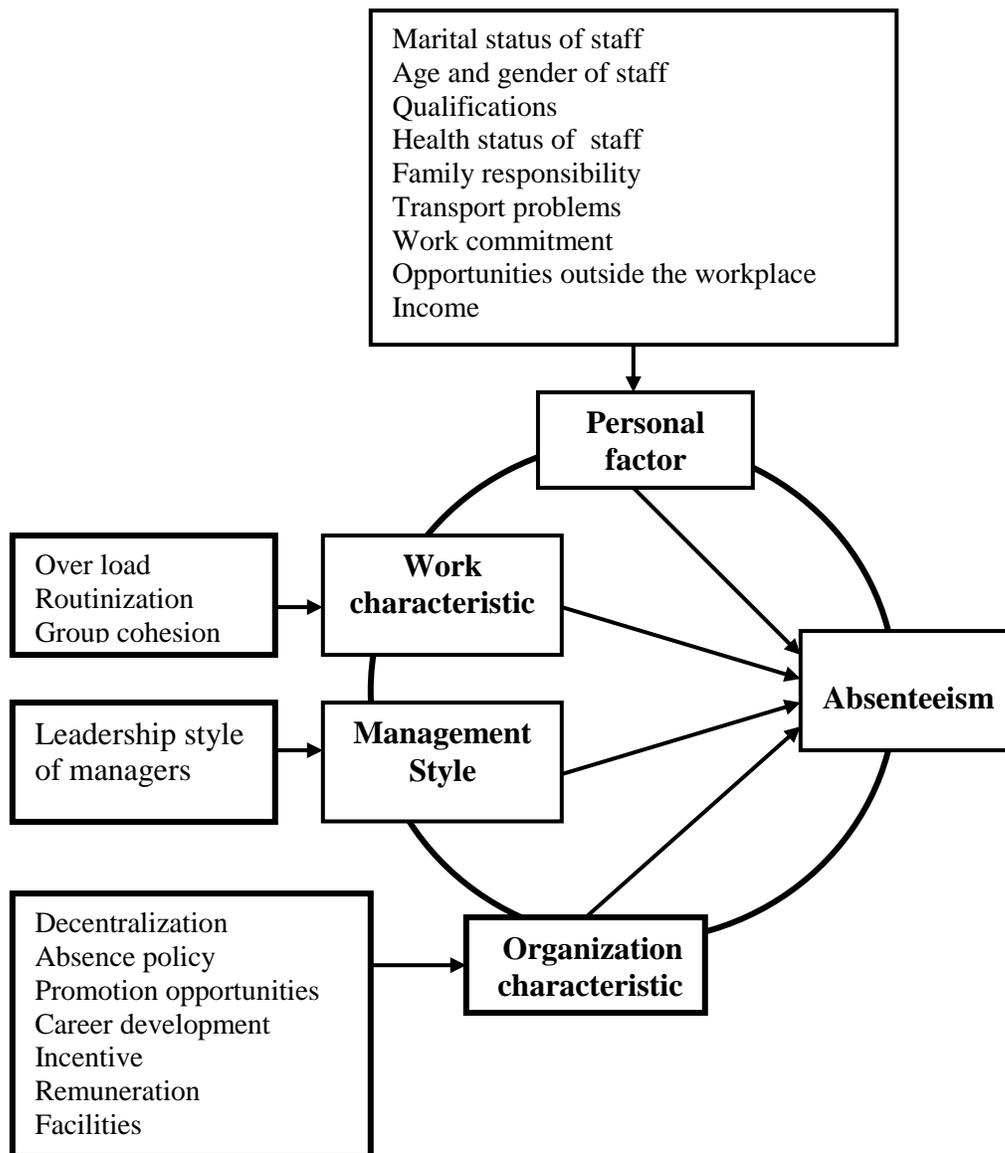
#### **3.1 Introduction**

A conceptual framework is a set of interrelated concepts that are grouped together in a rational scheme by virtue of their relevance to a common theme (Polit & Hungler 1995). The title of this study focuses on absenteeism amongst employee in the workplace.

In the discussion of the background to the problem and in outlining the research questions, four main factors associated with absenteeism were identified the factors that contribute to absenteeism among UUNRWA staff. They are the personal characteristics of the employee, characteristics of the manager, characteristics of the work and characteristics of the organization. These factors outlined in the framework (figure 1) with various aspects related to each factors. It deiced to use the concepts outlined in the framework as a base to plan the structure and substance of the questionnaire.

**Fig ( 3.1 ) Conceptual framework**

**Conceptual framework of Factors Associated with Absenteeism amongst UNRWA Employees in Gaza Governorates**



The four main components of the framework as well as the concepts outlined in each component in (figure 1) are briefly discussed below.

### **3.2 Personal factors of the employee**

The personal factors of the employee that associated with absenteeism include health status and personal circumstances. Absenteeism of employee is often related to age and gender. Younger and older employee have a higher rate of absenteeism than middle-aged employee (Gillies, 1994). Being overqualified for the job or finding the job boring and becoming frustrated could lead to absenteeism (Forster, 1995). Many individual factors appear linked to absenteeism: past absence history, education, personality (Brook & Price, 1989)

Family issue and poor personal health increase illness related absenteeism (Drentea & Iavarakas, 2000). Females have a higher work-absence rate as compared to men (Vistnes, 1997). Personal circumstances such as the marital status of the employee and family responsibility could also contribute to absenteeism . Gender differences regarding frequency of absence could be influenced by the extent of family commitment. employee are also faced with the responsibility of balancing their social life and their work (Taunton, et al., 1995).

### **3.3 Work Characteristic**

There are various characteristics of the work that could contribute to absenteeism among employees. Time pressure, long working hours, work overload, lack of autonomy, lack of superior's support, etc. have increased occupational stress with unhealthy consequences such as burnout, anxiety, panic disorders and depression. Those mental health problems force employees to take long-term leaves of absence, leaving their workload to the good will of their fellow workers (Cohen, et al., 1997).

The intrinsic nature of the work including repetitive tasks, monotony, routinization, danger and role ambiguity can influence absenteeism. Persons who work in dangerous jobs report

between 1.4 and 1.6 days more absence per year than those in safe work. A positive association between workloads and absenteeism has been observed (Leigh,1991).

Autonomy allows or encourages individual decision-making in the daily operational activities in the workplace (Taunton et al., 1995). Group cohesion is the degree to which members of an organization have close relationships with one another in the organization (Taunton et al., 1995). The lack of group cohesion could contribute to the absenteeism of employee in the workplace.

### **3.4 Management style**

The characteristics of the manager that contribute to absenteeism are associated with his or her leadership style (Taunton et al., 1995). The inappropriate use of power, the failure of the manager to motivate employee staff and the use of an autocratic leadership style could contribute to absenteeism of employees in the workplace.

An Irish study found poor employee-manager relationships was resulting in reduced morale, increased stress, low levels of commitment and high rates of workplace absences. Employees indicated that they did not feel valued by management, were not encouraged to use their initiative, felt poor quality relationships frequently existed, thought there was a lack of trust and mutual respect, and felt over-managed and under led (Bennett, 2002).

### **3.5 Organization characteristics**

Characteristics of the organization that contribute to absenteeism of employee include decentralization, that is the delegation of decision-making powers to middle and lower level managers (Gillies 1994). Employee might experience difficulties in making decisions on certain tasks and become absent from work. Other issues are the lack of promotion

opportunities and the lack of career development opportunities, incentives and equipments. Absenteeism could also be attributed to the absence of an absenteeism management policy, inadequate remuneration, and manpower shortages (Taunton et al., 1995). The failure to address these issues in the workplace could result in employee being absent.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

Absenteeism has many disadvantages such as an increased workload and the disruption of the employee work schedules. It lowers the morale of employee and this lowering of the morale can affect the quality and quantity of work. It also impacts negatively on the organizational budget. Four main components of the framework regarding absenteeism are the characteristics of the employee, characteristics of the manager, characteristics of the organization and characteristics of work. Absenteeism was investigated by addressing the hypostasis of the study that relate to these four main components.

## **Chapter ( 4 )**

### **Methodology**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the methods and procedures that were applied to obtain the data required for the study. It describes the research design, the population, the sampling techniques, the data collection instrument, the pilot study, data analysis and ethical aspects of the research.

#### **4.2 Research design**

The type of this research is descriptive a cross- section study. It has been chosen because they are economical and cheap and in the same time it can describe the nature of the study objectives. Additionally, cross section studies examine exposure and effect in the same time, and they can give some indicators about the association among different exposures and the outcome under investigation (Brownson and Petitti, 1998).

In this research cross sectional study allow to identify which of the characteristics of the employee, manager, work and organization are associated with absenteeism among employees in the workplace.

#### **4.3 Research setting**

The research study was conducted at all UNRWA departments in Gaza strip. The researcher regarded this setting as appropriate because it was easy to obtain the cooperation of the managers and employees and their assistance in data collection.

#### 4.4. Population

The population included all employees whom work at all departments before 31/ 12/ 2004. The total size of the population was 7991 employees. Table (4.1) (see annex No. 2). provides an overview of the number of employees in the different departments categories male and female and sample size.

#### 4.4.1 Sampling

Stratified Random Sampling was used in this research, population is first divided into two strata male and female then handled as simple random sampling in all departments.

A total of 514 questionnaires were distributed and 466 were retrieved. This constitutes a response rate of 90.8 as seen in table (4.2 ).

**Table (4.2) questionnaire distribution and response rates**

<b>Departments</b>	<b>Questionnaires sent out</b>	<b>Questionnaires returned</b>	<b>Percentage of total %</b>
Administration	13	11	2.1
Education	390	352	68.5
Engineering	9	8	1.5
Environmental health	26	24	4.7
Finance	6	6	1.1
Health	40	37	7.4
Microfinance &m.enterprise	7	7	1.4
Procurement and logistics	13	12	2.3
Relief and services	10	9	1.8
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>90.8</b>

#### 4.5 Data collection

Data collection is a precise, systematic method of gathering information relevant to the research aim, research objectives and research hypotheses.

#### **4.5.1 Data collection approach**

In this study, a structured data collection approach was used to collect the data. This approach was selected because it allowed for the quantification of responses, and the statistical analysis thereof. A self-report method, using a structured questionnaire, was applied. A questionnaire was selected because it was easy to administer. It was relatively inexpensive because no postage costs were involved. The respondents completed the questionnaires in their spare time. There was a great sense of anonymity because each respondent was given his or her own questionnaire and the responses could not be linked to any particular person. Respondents were more likely to provide honest answers because each one could complete the questionnaire in private. This was of particular importance because of the sensitive nature of absenteeism in the workplace.

#### **4.5.2 Characteristics of the instrument**

After completion of an in-depth literature study, a questionnaire was designed, keeping the research objectives in mind. A questionnaire is a printed self-report form designed to elicit information that can be obtained through the written responses of the subject. The items were derived from the literature review and were in line with the conceptual framework. The questionnaire was divided into five sections: First section elicited responses that were measured on the nominal and ordinal levels of measurement. Second, third, fourth and fifth sections comprised Likert Scales, and therefore the ordinal level of measurement was applicable. A Likert Scale consists of a series of opinion statements about a particular issue, event or person. Respondents indicated the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement (Edelmann, 2002). In this study respondents had to indicate their level of agreement with each item by responding with % the "strongly disagree 0-20%", "to disagree 21-40 %",

"to neither agree nor disagree 41-60 %", "to agree 61-80 %" or "to strongly agree 81-100 %" options. Respondents responded to the closed-ended items by indicating their responses with a "%".

Using the conceptual framework adapted from Taunton et al. (1995), the questionnaire was structured as follows:

**Section A:** Background information.

**Section B:** Data related to the characteristics and personal circumstances of employees.

**Section C:** Data related to the characteristics of the manager.

**Section D:** Data related to characteristics of the work.

**Section E:** Data related to the characteristics of the organization.

**Section A** was designed to obtain background information on the age of employee, gender, marital status, level of qualifications, address of work, home address, health status, salary, grads and number of family.

**Section B** aimed to investigate which the respondents were of the opinion that various reasons related to the characteristics of personal contribute to absenteeism among employees. The focus was on the health status of the employees, family responsibilities, marital responsibilities, work commitment, transport problems, opportunities outside the workplace and income. Eighteen questions were formulated in this regard.

**Section C** comprised items about characteristics of the work in relation to autonomy, reutilization and group cohesion. The purpose was to find out which employees believed that these aspects contribute to absenteeism. Seventeen items were formulated in this regard.

Section **D** aimed to determine which the respondents believed that the characteristics of the manager contributed to their absenteeism. Eighteen items on the leadership style of the manager were formulated here.

Section **E** was designed to identify which respondents believed that the characteristics of the organization contribute to absenteeism, with the focus on decentralization, the absence management policy, promotion opportunities, career development, incentives, remuneration, facilities and manpower. Thirteen items were developed in this regard.

At the end of questionnaire open question was inherit .

#### **4.5.3 Data collection process**

Data was collected in May 2007 and July 2007. Prior to data collection, the researcher held a meeting with the group of assessment from UNRWA employees. The purpose of this meeting was to inform them about the nature and importance of the research study. The questionnaire and the data collection procedure were discussed with them, and ethical considerations were attended. To ensure that respondents gave their honest answers without fear of reprisals from their supervisors or peers, they were specifically assured that anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained.

The group assisted with the distribution of the questionnaires to the respondents. Envelopes in which to insert and seal the completed questionnaires were also distributed. The respondents were allowed to complete the questionnaires at a time convenient for them. A due date for returning the completed questionnaires was agreed upon. Then the next appointment was arranged with the assistant group for the collection of the questionnaires at their respective workplaces.

## **4.6 The main tool of the study**

The researcher has used the questionnaire as a main tool to collect relevant study field.

### **4.6.1 Questionnaire reliability:**

The researcher assessed the content validity and reliability of the questionnaire by two ways which are as follows:

#### **1) Arbitrating the questionnaire**

Distributing the questionnaire to a group of arbitrators containing seven academic members from the Islamic University of Gaza/Faculty of Commerce and Quads University School of Public Health, one of them is an expert in statistical analysis. The researcher has modified, deleted, and added the necessary parts of the questionnaire in response to the groups suggestions.

#### **2) Pilot study**

The aim of a pilot study is to obtain information in order to assess the feasibility of the questionnaire. The pilot study was carried out in March 2007, the population for the pilot study possessed similar characteristics to the research population. The research method was applied on a limited scale. Thirty five questionnaires were distributed and a good response rate was obtained. The questionnaires were sent to the statistician for analysis, to work out the validity and reliability of the questionnaire who was satisfied with the results.

### **4.6.2 Statistical validity of the questionnaire**

To insure the validity of the questionnaire, two statistical tests should be applied. The first test is Criterion-related validity test (Pearson test) which measure the correlation coefficient

between each item in the field and the whole field. The second test is structure validity test (pearson test) that used to test the validity of the questionnaire structure by testing the validity of each field and the validity of the whole questionnaire. It measures the correlation coefficient between one field and all the fields of the questionnaire that have the same level of similar scale.

### **1) Internal consistency:**

Internal consistency of the questionnaire is measured by a scouting sample, which consisted of thirty questionnaires, through measuring the correlation coefficients between each paragraph in one field and the whole field (see annex No. 2). Tables No.'s (4.3- 4.6) below shows the correlation coefficient and p-value for each field items. As show in the table the p- Values are less than 0.05 or 0.01, so the correlation coefficients of this field are significant at  $\alpha = 0.01$  or  $\alpha = 0.05$ , so it can be said that the paragraphs of this field are consistent and valid to be measure what it was set for.

### **2) Structure validity of the questionnaire**

Structure validity is the second statistical test that used to test the validity of the questionnaire structure by testing the validity of each field and the validity of the whole questionnaire. It measures the correlation coefficient between one field and all the fields of the questionnaire that have the same level of liker scale.

As shown in table No. (4.3) the significance values are less than 0.05 or 0.01, so the correlation coefficients of all the fields are significant at  $\alpha = 0.01$  or  $\alpha = 0.05$ , so it can be said that the fields are valid to be measured what it was set for to achieve the main aim of the study.

**Table No. (4.3) structure validity of the questionnaire**

<b>Number</b>	<b>section</b>	<b>Person correlation coefficient</b>	<b>P-value</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Personal factors</b>	0.867	0.000
<b>2</b>	<b>The characteristics of the work</b>	0.755	0.000
<b>3</b>	<b>Management Style</b>	0.919	0.000
<b>4</b>	<b>Organization characteristics</b>	0.803	0.000

#### **4.7 Reliability of the research**

The reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency which measures the attribute, it is supposed to be measuring. The less variation an instrument produces in repeated measurements of an attribute, the higher its reliability. Reliability can be equated with the stability, consistency, or dependability of a measuring tool. The test is repeated to the same sample of people on two occasions and then compares the scores obtained by computing a reliability coefficient. It is difficult to return the scouting sample of the questionnaire-that is used to measure the questionnaire validity to the same respondents due to the different work conditions to this samples. Therefore two tests can be applied to the scouting sample in order to measure the consistency of the questionnaire. The first test is the Half Split Method and the second is Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha.

##### **1) Split half method**

This method depends on finding Pearson correlation coefficient between the means of odd rank questions and even rank questions of each field of the questionnaire. Then, correcting the Pearson correlation coefficients can be done by using Spearman Brown correlation coefficient

of correction. The corrected correlation coefficient ( consistency coefficient) is computed according to the following equation :

Consistency coefficient =  $2r/(r+1)$ , where r is the Pearson correlation coefficient. The normal range of corrected correlation coefficient ( $2r/ r+1$ ) is between 0.0 and + 1.0 As shown in Table No.(4.4), all the corrected correlation coefficients values are between 0.7942 and 0.8400 and the significant ( $\alpha$  ) is less than 0.05 so all the corrected correlation coefficients are significance at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . It can be said that according to the Half Split method, the dispute causes group are reliable.

**Table (4.4) Split-Half Coefficient method.**

<b>Number</b>	<b>section</b>	<b>person-correlation</b>	<b>Spearman-Brown Coefficient</b>	<b>Sig. (2-Tailed</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Personal factors</b>	0.6587	0.7942	0.000
<b>2</b>	<b>The characteristics of the work</b>	0.6924	0.8182	0.000
<b>3</b>	<b>Management Style</b>	0.7241	0.8400	0.000
<b>4</b>	<b>Organization characteristics</b>	0.7057	0.8275	0.000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0.6952</b>	<b>0.8202</b>	0.000

## **2) Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha**

This method is used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire between each field and the mean of the whole fields of the questionnaire. The normal range of Cronbach's coefficient alpha value between 0.0 and + 1.0, and the higher values reflects a higher degree of internal consistency. As shown in Table No. (4.5) the Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated for the first field of the causes of claims, the second field of common procedures and the third field of the Particular claims. The results were in the range from 0.8254 and 0.8817. This range is considered high, the result ensures the reliability of the questionnaire.

**Table (4.5) Cronbach's Alpha for reliability**

<b>Number</b>	<b>section</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Personal factors</b>	18	0.8254
<b>2</b>	<b>The characteristics of the work</b>	17	0.8435
<b>3</b>	<b>Management Style</b>	18	0.8817
<b>4</b>	<b>Organization characteristics</b>	13	0.8506
	<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>0.8667</b>

#### **4.8 Statistical processing:**

To achieve the research goal, researcher used the statistical package for the Social Science (SPSS) for manipulating and analyzing the data.

#### **Statistical methods are as follows:**

- 1- Frequencies and Percentile
- 2- Alpha- Cronbach's Test for measuring reliability of the items of the questionnaires
- 3- spearman correlation coefficients for measuring validity of the items of the questionnaires
- 4- spearman –Brown Coefficient.
- 5- sign test
- 6- Mann-Whitney Test.
- 7- Kruskal-Wallis test is used to check and if there are any significant difference in point of view of the respondents.
- 8-Kolmogorove-smiron test is used to identify if the data follow normal distribution or not.

#### **4.9 Ethical considerations**

It is imperative that a researcher protects the rights of the participants of a research study and those of the institution in which the study is conducted. A researcher should also ensure that the scientific integrity of the study is maintained.

#### **4.9.1 Protecting the rights of the respondents**

Prior to obtaining informed consent from the respondents, the researcher explained the nature and purpose of the study. The procedure to be followed when completing the questionnaires was explained in writing. The respondents were assured that no harm would befall them for revealing their reasons for absenteeism in the workplace. They were assured that the recommendations of the study might contribute towards a better working environment. The respondents were not obliged to participate in the study, as one of the principles of the ethical conduct in the research was that participation in studies should be voluntary. Respondents were informed that participation in the research study was voluntary and that failure to comply would not result in any penalties. Confidentiality and anonymity were very important in this study, as absenteeism is a sensitive issue. Respondents who are often absent from work might be reluctant to respond to the items because they might feel that the questionnaire was designed to examine their behavior. The researcher anticipated that the respondents could fear reprisals and therefore the researcher ensured that the principles of anonymity and confidentiality would be applied strictly. The respondents were informed that they should not write their names on the questionnaires and that the raw data would be entered into the computer using codes. The respondents were assured that confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study. The researcher assured them that the completed questionnaires would be locked up in a secure place and that only the researcher would have access to them.

#### **4.9.2 Rights of the institution**

Permission to conduct the research study was obtained from the Director of UNRWA and from Helsinki committee.

### **4.9.3 Scientific integrity**

In this study, the research method and conceptual definitions were approved by the supervisor. Data was collected after the supervisors approved the instrument, and the instrument was tested for its validity and reliability. During data analysis appropriate tests were used and there was no manipulation of statistics or distortion of findings to support the researcher opinions. A statistician assisted with data analysis. The researcher ensured that the findings were supported by data.

### **4.10 Conclusion**

Quantitative descriptive research was conducted to determine which factors contribute to absenteeism in the workplace. A self-report method, employing a structured questionnaire was employed to collect data. four hundred and sixty six (466) respondents participated in the study. The collected data was subjected to analysis by employing factors analysis, descriptive statistics was used. The researcher applied specific measures to enhance the external validity of the study and to ensure that ethical principles were being adhered to. The research findings are presented in chapter five.

## Chapter ( 5 )

### Results

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analysis the study sample of respondents , this analysis will take descriptive nature including tables and clarifications and comments. The study will try to shed light on the factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA Agency. These factors are: personal factors, work characteristics, management style and organization factors.

#### 5.2 Demographic and characteristics of the respondents

##### 5.2.1 Age distribution

**Table (5.1) Age distributions of respondents ( n=466 )**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 30 years	134	28.8
30- 40 years	133	28.5
More than 40 years	199	42.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100</b>

A slight majority, 267(57.3%) respondents were 40 years or younger, and 199 (42.7%) were over 40 years and older as shown at table (5.1). Voss et al. (2001) found that short periods of sick leave are more common among younger employees, probably because older employees usually take up higher responsibility at work and will not request sick leave.

##### 5.2.2 Gender distribution

The gender distribution of the respondents is indicated in (Table 5.2)

**Table (5.2) Gender distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	307	65.9
Female	159	34.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100</b>

The respondents comprised 159 (34.1%) females and 307 (65.9%) males. The majority of respondents were therefore male. This could be explained by the fact that the UNRWA agency is characterized by a male dominated work.

### 5.2.3 Address (province) distribution

The address distribution of the respondents is indicated in table (5.3)

**Table (5.3) Address distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Address (province)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Rafah	75	16.2
Khanyounis	93	19.9
Middle (Camps)	88	18.8
Gaza	130	27.9
South Gaza	80	17.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table No.(5.3) shows that 16.2% of the sample live in Rafah, 19.9% live in Khanyounis, 18.8% live in Middle camps, 29.7 % live in Gaza and 17.2% live in South Gaza.

### 5.2.4 Geographical distribution of work place

The work place (province) distribution of the respondents is indicated in table (5.4).

**Table( 5.4) Workplace (province) distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Address (province)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Rafah	78	16.7
Khanyounis	85	18.2
Middle (Camp)	98	21.1
Gaza	128	27.5
South Gaza	77	16.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table No.(5.4) shows that 16.7% work in Rafah, 18.2% work in Khanyounis, 21.1% work in Middle, 27.5% work in Gaza, and 16.5% work in South Gaza.

### 5.2.5 Last qualification of respondents distribution

**Table( 5.5) last qualification distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>last qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than secondary degree	16	3.4
Secondary degree	16	3.4
Diploma two years	116	24.9
Bachelor	273	58.6
Master's or higher	45	9.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table (5.5) shows that (31.7%) from the respondents have Diploma two years and less, the majority (68.3 %) hold a Bachelor or more. This indicates that UNRWA employees have good qualification.

### 5.2.6 Marital status of research sample distribution

**Table( 5.6) Marital status distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Married	427	91.6
Single	34	7.3
Divorced	0	0
Widow	5	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table (5.6) shows that 427 (91.6%) are married and 34 (7.3%) are single. According to Erickson et al. (2000) married employees with younger children could be more often absent from work due to family problems than single employees without children. However, single respondents could also experience family and personal problems.

### 5.2.7 Current post distribution of respondents

**Table 5.7 Current post distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Current post</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Director	18	3.9
Teacher	331	71.1
Engineer	4	0.9
Doctor	10	2.1
Driver	9	1.9
Secretary	9	1.9
Social worker	9	1.9
labour	22	4.7
Para medical staff	20	4.3
Clerk	16	3.4
Any other post	18	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table (5.7) shows that (71.1 %) of UNRWA employees are teachers.

### 5.2.8 Respondents distribution by field of work

**Table 5.8 department distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>department where are you working</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Education	351	75.3
Health	37	7.9
Environmental health	24	5.2
Finance	6	1.3
Engineering	8	1.7
Administration	12	2.6
Relief and services	9	1.9
Microfinance & M .enterprise	7	1.5
Procurement and logistics	12	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100</b>

Table (5.8) shows that 75.3 % of UNRWA employees work at education department.

### 5.2.9 Experience at current post distribution

**Table 5.9 Years of experience at current post distributions (n=466)**

<b>Number of years at current post</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 10 years	245	52.6
10-20 years	148	31.8
More than 20 years	73	15.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100</b>

Table (5.9) shows that 52.6% from the sample have experience less than 10 years, 31.8% from the sample have experience between 10-20 years, 15.6% from the sample have experience more than 20 years. According to Robbins et al. (2003), studies consistently demonstrate an inverse relationship between tenure and absenteeism, which means that employees with higher work experience will be less absent than those with lower work experience or length of employment.

#### **5.2.10 Respondents distribution by grade**

The Grade distribution of the respondents is indicated in table (5.10)

**Table 5.10 Grade distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1-5 Grads	57	12.2
6-9 Grads	244	52.4
10 Grads and more	165	35.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the table (5.10) the researcher found that (52.4%) of employees have grades between 6 to 9.

#### **5.2.11 Monthly income distribution**

The Rate of monthly income distribution of the respondents is indicated in table (5.11)

**Table 5.11 Monthly income distributions of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Monthly income</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 700 \$	169	36.3
700\$ - 900\$	261	56.0
More than 900 \$	36	7.7

<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>
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Table No.(5.11) shows that 36.3% of employees have monthly income less than 700\$, 56% of employees have monthly income ranged from 700\$-900\$ and 7.7% of employees have monthly income greater than 900\$. As a result more than half of employees have a salary range 700 to 900 dollars.

### 5.2.12 The distribution of research sample by family size

**Table 5.12 Number of family members distributions of respondents (n=466)**

Number of family members	Frequency	Percent
1-4	97	20.8
5-9	294	63.1
9 and more	75	16.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table No.(5.12) shows that 20.8% from the sample have less than 4 family members, 63.1% from the sample have between 5-9 family members, 16.1% from the sample have 9 family members or more. This means that most of employees have large families. Voss et al. (2001) found a modest relationship between absenteeism and number of dependents, respondents with small children between the ages 0-6 years reported higher rates of absence than those with older children.

### 5.2.13 Health status

#### 1) Do you suffer from any chronic health problem?

**Table 5.13 Do you suffer from any chronic health problem? distribution of respondents (n=466)**

Do you suffer from any chronic health problem?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	69	14.8
No	397	85.2

<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>
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Table No.(5.13) shows that 14.8% from the sample suffer from chronic health problem, and 85.2% from the sample don't suffer from any chronic health problem. So, the health status of employees is good.

### 2) Do you take any kind of drug continuously?

**Table 5.14 Do you take any kind of drug continuously? distribution of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Do you take any kind of drug continuously?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	65	13.9
No	401	86.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table No.(5.14) shows that 13.9% from the sample take drugs continuously, and 86.1% from the sample don't take any kind of drugs.

### 3) Do you practice sports activities regularly ?

**Table 4.15 Do you practice sports activities regularly? distribution of respondents (n=466)**

<b>Do you exercise sports activities regularly?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	173	37.1
No	293	62.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table No.(5.15) shows that 37.1% from the sample practice sport activities regularly, and 62.9% from the sample don't practice sport activities regularly.

### 5.3 Questionnaire data type

Kolmogorove- Smirnov test was used to identify if the data follow normal distribution or not.

This test is considered necessary in case testing hypotheses as most parametric Test stipulate data to be normality distributed.

Results test as shown in table (5.16), clarifies that the calculated p-value is less than the significant level which is equal 0.05 ( p-value < 0.05), this in turn denotes that data follows non-normal distribution, and so non-parametric tests must be used.

**Table (5.16) One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

No.	section	Kolmogorov -Smirnov Z	P-value
1	<b>Personal factors</b>	2.564	0.000
2	<b>Work Characteristics</b>	1.886	0.002
3	<b>Management Style</b>	3.434	0.000
4	<b>Organization characteristics</b>	2.260	0.000
	<b>Total</b>	2.265	0.000

### 5.4 Results and discussion of the factors associated with absenteeism among UNRWA staff.

In the following tables the researcher used a sign test to test if the opinion of the respondents in the content of the sentences are positive ( weight mean greater than 60%, the number of the positive signs are greater than the number of negative signs and the p-value is less than 0.05) or the opinion of the respondents in the content of the sentences are neutral ( p- value is greater than 0.05) or the opinion of the respondents in the content of the sentences are negative

(weight mean less than 60%, the number of the positive signs are less than the number of negative signs and the p-value less than 0.05).

#### **5.4.1 Personal factors**

Table No. (5.17) illustrated that the respondents agree that employees who get absent from work in the case of the death of a relative with weight mean equal 78.6% and P-value 0.001. The respondents were neutral when they were asked about their abilities whether they match the nature of their work or not with weight mean 60.4% and P-value 0.834 and get absent from work in the case of illness of a member of family with weight mean 55.4% and p-value 0.135. With regard to other personal factors, the respondents disagree that these personal factors probably lead to absenteeism with the weight mean less than 60% and p-value less than 0.05. These factors are: the current job don't commensurate with employees ambition with weight mean 53.9%, they feel a frustrated due to general working condition with weight mean 50.9%, ready to leave job at the agency in the case of a better opportunity in another organization with weight mean 47.5%, the transportation to work uncomfortable with weight mean 41.7%, absent from work on the case of tiredness with weight mean 40.8%, no friends at the work who can share my personal problem with weight mean 37.2%, they are unsatisfied with his/her job with weight mean 36.0%, absent from work in case of the death of a neighbor or close friends with weight mean 32.2%, they make sure to get all emergency leave allowed with weight mean 31.1%, don't appreciate the work at the Agency with weight mean 29.7%, absent from work to prolong the weekend with weight mean 29.5%, absent from work in case of mild headache or mild low back pain with weight mean 29.2%, absent from work in the case of financial problem with weight mean 26.8%, they don't feel

any responsibility towards work with weight mean 25.8 % and they don't care to come to work at time with weight mean 25.6%.

According to item No. 11 with weight mean 78.6% and P-value 0.001 most of employees including in the questioner agreed that they should be absent in case of death of relatives. This can be explained on the basis of cultural attitude of nature of Palestinian society which make force on the person to attend funeral events, this result corresponds with a study conducted by Australian Public Service Commission (2005) found household and family emergencies as well as bereavement and compassionate situations often require an employees to spend time away from the workplace.

On the basis of p-value, it was greater than 0.05 which indicate the neutrality of item No.10 which indicates absence in case of illness of family member (p-value equal 0.135) and item No.6 employees see that their abilities are more than the nature of work (p-value equal 0.834).

The neutrality of item No.10 can be explained on the basis according to the PCBS (2006) that 12.7% only of the female in the Palestinian society work and 66.8% of men work. This means that the majority of employees wife's could be house wife's and majority of female husband don't work this mean that the female employees can depend on her husband in case of illness of family member and vice verses, on other hand Palestinian family are extended so, member like grandfather and grandmother are important. However, employees could be unsatisfied when he or she works during illness of any his/ her family members. The results don't match with previous studies, Australian Public Service Commission (2005) found that family responsibilities are a major factor to workplace absence rates. Career's leave allows

employees to provide occasional care for their children, or injured, ill, frail or disabled relatives.

Back to items No. 5,2 with weight mean less than 60% and p-value less than 0.05 most of employees disagree that these items lead to absenteeism. These items: current job don't commensurate with their ambition and not willing to leave it even in case of better opportunity, although the current situation in Gaza strip shows that there is no better opportunity.

According to items bellow with weight mean less than 60% and p-value less than 0.05 employees disagree that they are: not appreciating their work at UNRWA(item1), feeling unsatisfied (item4), don't feel frustrated (item15), not responsible as well (item3), don't come and leave on exact time of work (item13), have no relationship among each other (item12), not interested to have all their emergency leaves (item14), most of them don't have financial problem (item16), employees don't have trend to prolong there weekends (item 18) and most of them don't prefer social events like death of neighbor rather than attendance of work (item9). According to that items employees disagree that these factors lead to absenteeism at UNRWA Agency.

With regard to (item17) with weight mean less than 60% and P-value less than 0.05 most of employees see that the transportation to work are comfortable and this could be due to the small area of Gaza strip and most of employees reside nearly their workplace. On the other hand UNRWA provides transportation for employees who live away from their work place. This goes with previous study which indicate that employees may not be able to attend work

because of barrier transportation problems providing transportation for employees may lead to decreased use of sick leave (Rhodes & Steers, 1990).

In addition employees tend not to be absent in case of mild headache, low back pain and tiredness according to item No. 7,8 with weight mean less than 60% and P-value less than 0.05. This doesn't correspond with previous study employees use minor illnesses (such as non-chronic headaches) calling it a day (leaving early) or not coming to work at all (Harvey & Nicholson, 1999).

Among these respondents employees, the most common reason reported for being absent from work is the death of relatives .

Generally the results for all statements of the personal factors show that the weight mean equal 41.7 % which is less than 60% and the p- value equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05, which mean that the respondents of the sample disagree that the personal characteristics lead to absenteeism at UNRWA Agency. This don't match with previous studies, Rhodes & Steers (1990) found there are various reasons why a person may not attend work, such as an illness, family emergency, or just to have a day off from work. Thus, not all use of sick leave is for actual illnesses. It is estimated that between 36% and 50% of absences are because of sickness and other unavoidable circumstances, such as family illness or transportation problems. This means that other absences are due to avoidable reasons, such as to have a day off, to attend a social event, to sleep in, also Cascio (2003) notes the cause of absenteeism is due to personal or family related issues.

**Table No. (5.17) The sign test for the personal characteristics**

Number	Item	No. of positive Sign more than 3	No. of negative sign, less than 3	Mean	Weight mean	P-value	Rank
1	Don't appreciate the work at the Agency.	37	373	1.48	29.7	0.000	13
2	Ready to leave my job at the agency in the case there is a better opportunity to work in another organization.	136	294	2.37	47.5	0.000	6
3	I don't feel any responsibility towards work.	19	436	1.29	25.8	0.000	17
4	I am not fully satisfied with my job	74	335	1.80	36.0	0.000	10
5	My current job is not commensurate with my ambition.	179	238	2.69	53.9	0.005	4
6	My abilities are more than ,the nature of my work at agency.	185	180	3.02	60.4	0.834	2
7	Absent from work in case of mild headache or mild low back pain.	49	402	1.46	29.2	0.000	15
8	Absent from work on the case of tiredness.	100	316	2.04	40.8	0.000	8
9	Absent from work in the case of financial problem.	19	423	1.34	26.8	0.000	16
10	Absent from work in the case of illness of a member of my family.	186	217	2.77	55.4	0.135	3
11	Absent from work in the case of the death of a relatives.	346	83	3.93	78.6	0.000	1
12	Absent from work in the case of the death of a neighbor or close friends.	58	332	1.61	32.2	0.000	11
13	I don't care to come to work at time.	28	426	1.28	25.6	0.000	18
14	No friends at the work who can share my personal problem.	63	372	1.86	37.2	0.000	9
15	I feel a frustrated due to general working condition.	161	248	2.55	50.9	0.000	5
16	I Make sure to get all my emergency leave allowed.	45	404	1.56	31.1	0.000	12
17	The transportation to work uncomfortable.	107	325	2.09	41.7	0.000	7
18	Absent from work to prolong the weekend.	48	387	1.47	29.5	0.000	14
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>2.08</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>0.000</b>	

#### **5.4.2 The characteristics of the work**

Table No. (5.18) illustrated that the respondents agree that there is large size of work with weight mean 77.3% and P-value 0.001, the responsibilities within the work is too large with weight mean 74.0% and P-value 0.001, the workplace is full of noise and crowdness with weight mean 72.8% and P-value 0.001 and the work is routine with weight mean 65.0% and P-value 0.001. The respondents were neutral when they were asked about their long work hours at Agency with weight mean 58.9% and P-value 0.618, the public who deals with the employees doesn't respect his/here work with weight mean 58.8% and P-value 0.885, inadequate rest period with weight mean 55.9% and P-value 0.295 and no opportunities at the agency to upgrade at work with weight mean 54.1% and P-value 0.065. With regard to the other work characteristics the respondents disagree that the factors below probably lead to absenteeism: absence from work doesn't hinder the continuation of work with weight mean 53.1% and P-value 0.001, shifting work lead to absence with weight mean 40.9% and P-value 0.001, there is no clarity of my responsibilities and powers with weight mean 39.7% and P-value 0.001, the size of team work is inappropriate with weight mean 39.5% and P-value 0.001, don't work within a team with weight mean 36.0% and P-value 0.001, no job description is clear with weight mean 34.7% and P-value 0.001, don't know the nature of work well with weight mean 33.6% and P-value 0.001, don't use skills which are related to work with weight mean 32.7% and P-value 0.001 and no social relationships with colleagues at work with weight mean 30.4% and P-value 0.001.

Regards items No 24,26,31,32 with weight mean more than 60% and P-value less than 0.05 the majority of the employees agree that absence from work at UNRWA is due to work overload, routine work, huge responsibilities in addition to noise and over crowdness. This

match with different studies Brooke and Price (1989) found in a study conducted by them that: routinization, overload and work involvement lead to absenteeism. Luthans (1995) on other hand found that working condition like temperature, lighting ,noise and ventilation is an intrinsic factor that impact on employees job satisfaction. Leigh (1991) observed positive association between workloads and absenteeism. Krause and Lund, (2004) mention regarding work characteristics, that all the following factors have prolonging disability effects: low control over work, particularly over the work and rest schedule; high psychological job demands; low skill discretion, and high job stress.

In term of P- value, it was more than 0.05, which indicate the neutrality of these items: no opportunities at the agency to upgrade work (item 23), Long work hours in the agency (item 25), no adequate rest period during the work (item 30) and the public which deal with does not respect my work.

On the other hand according to items below with weight mean less than 60% and p-value less than 0.05 most of employees disagree that work characteristics are lead to absenteeism at UNRWA Agency. These work characteristics include: inappropriate team size (item 34), no social relationships with colleagues at work. (item 29), don't utilization of employees skills to serve their work (item 28), don't orientation about employees responsibilities (item 20), no clear job description (item 22) and don't knowledge about nature of their work (item 19). This is not corresponding with studies done before. Arkin (1996) provided an extensive list as to possible causes of employees absenteeism □ under utilization of skills, adverse working conditions, inadequate information about job requirements, unsatisfactory working conditions, lack of opportunity for advancement□ □ □ . larger teams show higher rates of absence (ANAO,

2003). The lack of group cohesion among employee could be related to absenteeism in the workplace (Shader et al. 2001). The literature generally indicated a positive relationship between work unit/group size and absence (Preston 1995). According to Booyens (1998) lack of clear performance expectations and job descriptions creates role ambiguity. Collins,et al (2000) reveal that working without job descriptions could contribute to dissatisfaction and absenteeism, due to the lack of clarity regarding job boundaries.

The main causes for absenteeism associated with the work characteristics are: work overload, routine work, huge responsibilities in addition to noise and over crowding.

Generally the results for all statements of the work characteristics show that the weight mean equal 54.2 % which is less than 60% and p- value equal 0.001 which is less than 0.05. Which means that the respondents disagree that the characteristics of work at UNRWA institutions are associated with absenteeism.

**Table No. (5.18) The sign test for the characteristics of the work**

Number	Item	No. of positive Sign more than 3	No. of negative sign, less than 3	Mean	Weight mean	P-value	Rank
19	I know the nature of my work well.	60	396	1.68	33.8	0.000	15
20	There is no clarity of my responsibilities and powers.	99	329	1.99	39.7	0.000	11
21	My absence from work does not hinder the continuation of work.	161	239	2.65	53.1	0.000	9
22	No job description is clear to me.	73	342	1.73	34.7	0.000	14
23	No opportunities at the agency to upgrade at work.	182	220	2.70	54.1	0.065	8
24	large size of work within the agency.	331	103	3.86	77.3	0.000	1
25	Long work hours in the agency.	196	207	2.95	58.9	0.618	5
26	Routinely work entrusted to me.	238	169	3.25	65.0	0.001	4
27	Shifting within the work from the morning to the evening lead to absence.	101	317	2.04	40.9	0.000	10
28	I do not use my skills which are related to my work.	48	395	1.63	32.7	0.000	16
29	No social relationships with colleagues at work.	40	374	1.52	30.4	0.000	17
30	No adequate rest period during the work.	190	212	2.80	55.9	0.295	7
31	My responsibilities within the work is too large.	315	104	3.70	74.0	0.000	2
32	The workplace is full of noise and crowd ness.	296	116	3.64	72.8	0.000	3
33	The public which deal with ,does not respect my work.	216	212	2.94	58.8	0.885	6
34	The size of my team work is inappropriate.	87	303	1.97	39.5	0.000	12
35	Do not work within a team.	74	358	1.80	36.0	0.000	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>2.71</b>	<b>54.2</b>	<b>0.000</b>	

### 5.4.3 Management style

Table No. (5.19) illustrated that the respondents agree that direct manager: doesn't allow employees to share decision making process with weight mean equal 85.3 % and P-value 0.00, doesn't operate to achieve justice among staff with weight mean 79.5% and p-value 0.001, discriminates between staff with weight mean 72.8% and p-value 0.001, doesn't motivate them when they do well with weight mean 72.1% and p-value 0.001, doesn't operate to create motivating atmosphere for workers with weight mean 68 % and p-value 0.001, doesn't work on improving the team spirit among staff with weight mean 67.5% and p-value 0.001, and doesn't discuss the annual performance appraisal report with them with weight mean 64.4% and p-value 0.02. The respondents were neutral with p-value greater than 0.05 when they were asked about these aspects: direct manager slogan implement and then discuss with weight mean 63.6% and p-value 0.055, direct manager doesn't solve the work problems in a convincing way with weight mean 62.8%, and p-value 0.150, direct manager criticizes the staff in front of colleagues and beneficiaries with weight mean 62.3% and p-value 0.084, direct manager is unable to make decisions with weight mean 61.7% and p-value 0.758, direct manager deliberately always negative criticism the staff with weight mean 60.8% and direct manager has no confidence in the staff with weight mean 60.6% and p-value 0.276. With regard to the other management style questions, the respondents disagree that these manager characteristics probably lead to absenteeism with the weight mean less than 60% and p-value less than 0.05. These characteristics are: direct manager doesn't have administrative capabilities with weight mean 54.6% and p-value 0.001, direct manager deliberately creates problems within the work with weight mean 54.3% and p-value 0.001, direct manager helps to create conflicting atmosphere between staff with weight mean 44.2% and p-value 0.001, direct manager does not respect or appreciate colleagues with

weight mean 39.7% and p-value 0.001 and direct manager does not share employees social and family events with weight mean 36.3% and p-value 0.001.

By reference to items 48,49,43,42,47,51 and 52 with weight mean more than 60% and P-value less than 0.05 employees agree that absence from work at UNRWA is due to leadership style. These items are: central decision, no justice among staff, discrimination between staff, manager doesn't motivate staff when they do well, no motivation atmosphere, manager don't improve the team spirit among staff and doesn't discuss the annual appraisal report with staff. These manager characteristics lead to poor relationship between employees and the manager, loss of confidence between them, increase stress at work and increase the conflict between staff,. As a result all these aspects lead to increase absence from work. This goes with difference studies Comcare (2005) who found poor relationships with superiors, lack of control over work, low participation in decision-making, low levels of support and poor communication are increase absence from work. (CCH, 2005) see poor leadership at the senior management level can generate low morale across an organization low morale has been linked to the reason why employees call in sick at the last minute. These results also goes with (Bennet, 2002) management style, behaviour, management hierarchy and allocation of responsibility are all clearly linked to absence rates. The research studies by Song, Daly, Rudy, Douglas and Dyer (1997) revealed that the lack of a participative management style contributes to absenteeism in the workplace.

However, in items 36,38,40,46,41 and 44 the opinion of the respondents in the content of the sentences are neutral p- value is greater than 0.05. These manager characteristics are: slogan implement and then discuss, the manager don't solve work problems in convincing way,

manager criticize the staff in front of colleagues and beneficiaries, manager unable to make decision, manager deliberately always negatively criticism and has no confidence in the staff. According to items 37,39,45,50 and 53 with weight mean less than 60% and p-value less than 0.05 most of employees disagree that these manager characteristics are lead to absenteeism. These items are: the manager doesn't have administrative capabilities, manager create problem at the work, there is a conflict atmosphere created by manager, manager doesn't respect colleagues and manager doesn't share social and family event with colleagues. On the other hand employees see these characteristic of manager are satisfy, motivate and support the staff this could be lead to decrease the level of absent at the work. This goes with previous study (Comcare, 2005) who that found where good management exists, the extent to which managers proactively deal with individual cases, and the extent to which they feel confident and supported by the organization can impact on attendance. Problematic absences will continue to exist if managers lack the confidence to have difficult conversations and the support to take action when required.

Among these respondents, the most common reasons associated with absenteeism are: central decision, no justice among staff, discriminate between staff, manager doesn't motivate staff when they do well, no motivation atmosphere, manager don't improve the team spirit among staff and doesn't discuss the annual appraisal report with staff.

Generally the results for all statements of the leadership style show that the weight mean equal 62.00 % which is more than 60% and the p- value equal 0.001 which is less than 0.05. Which means the respondents of the sample are not satisfied with the management style at UNRWA institutions and this may lead to absenteeism.

**Table No. (5.19 )The sign test for management style.**

Number	Item	No. of positive Sign more than 3	No. of negative sign, less than 3	Mean	Weight mean	P-value	Rank
36	My direct manager slogan is to implement and then discuss.	238	197	3.18	63.6	0.055	8
37	My direct manager doesn't have administrative capabilities.	161	234	2.73	54.6	0.000	14
38	My direct manager doesn't solve the work problems in a convincing way.	204	175	3.14	62.8	0.150	9
39	My direct managers deliberately create problems within the work.	155	240	2.72	54.4	0.000	15
40	My direct manager criticizes the staff in front of colleagues and beneficiaries.	236	199	3.11	62.3	0.084	10
41	My direct manager deliberately always negatively criticism the staff	217	208	3.04	60.8	0.698	12
42	Direct manager doesn't motivate me when I do well.	262	147	3.61	72.1	0.000	4
43	My direct manager discriminates between staff.	277	136	3.64	72.8	0.000	3
44	My direct manager has no confidence in the staff	197	175	3.03	60.6	0.276	13
45	My direct manager help to create a conflict atmosphere between staff	119	287	2.21	44.2	0.000	16
46	My direct managers unable to make decisions.	193	186	3.09	61.7	0.758	11
47	My direct manager doesn't operate to create motivating atmosphere for workers.	238	171	3.40	68.0	0.001	5
48	My direct manager doesn't make me share him decision making.	374	83	4.27	85.3	0.000	1
49	My direct manager doesn't operate to achieve justice among staff.	309	109	3.98	79.5	0.000	2
50	My direct manager doesn't respect or appreciate colleagues.	99	326	1.99	39.7	0.000	17
51	My direct manager doesn't work on improving the team spirit among staff.	259	155	3.38	67.5	0.000	6
52	My direct managers doesn't discuss the annual appraisal report with me.	237	165	3.22	64.4	0.025	7
53	My direct managers don't share me my social and family events.	78	359	1.82	36.3	0.000	18
	<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>62.0</b>	<b>0.001</b>	

#### **5.4.4 Organization characteristics**

Table No. (5.20) illustrated that the respondents agree that there is central agency decision with weight mean equal 90.8% and p-value 0.001, annual upgrading system is not enough with weight mean 77.7% and p-value 0.001, number of official holiday days is inadequate with weight mean 71.3% and p-value 0.001, unfair incentives system with weight mean 70.0% and p-value 0.001, equivalent end-of-service is inadequate with weight mean 62.9% and p-value 0.006, and promotion system is unfair with weight mean 62.6% and p-value 0.023.

The respondents were neutral with p-value more than 0.05 when they were asked about their monthly salary is insufficient with weight mean 60.1% and p-value 0.280, inadequate sick leave period provided by law with weight mean 59.5% and p-value 0.247 and the system to deal with disease cases with the agency is unfair with weight mean 56.5% and p-value 0.877.

With regard to other organization characteristics, the respondents disagree that these characteristics probably lead to absenteeism with the weight mean less than 60% and p-value less than 0.05. These characteristics are: inadequate tools and equipment with weight mean 57.6% and p-value 0.006, number of emergency leave days is inadequate with weight mean 56.6% and p-value 0.005, Agency laws are inappropriate to reduce absenteeism with weight mean 51.7% and p-value 0.001 and shortage of staff at the Agency with weight mean 49.4% and p-value 0.001.

In striking support for the previous studies with weight mean over 60% and p-value less than 0.05 the causes of absenteeism among UNRWA employees may be relevant to the

organization characteristics which include: lack of employees in participation in decision making, the annual upgrading system inadequacy, inadequacy of the number of days of the official holidays, unfair system of incentives, inadequacy of the equivalent end of service and unfair promotion system within the Agency according to the items 66,62,65,54,60 and 56 respectively. This goes with deference studies, (McHugh, 2002) found that the root cause of absenteeism may be partly attributable to the way in which organizations are managed, such as unfairness. Amick et al (2000) found that duration of absence is shorter in companies promoting an interpersonal and value-focused environment. (Mintcloud 1992) believes that lack of motivation is one of the biggest reasons for employee absenteeism (Landau, 1993) In a study of workers at a Southern, it was found that implementation of a cash incentive program was associated with a decrease in employee absenteeism. Moreover, it was found that the cash reward system had a far greater impact on employee absenteeism.

In term of P- value, it was more than 0.05, which indicate the neutrality of item No. 55,64 and 63 these items are : insufficiency of monthly salary, inadequacy of the sick leave providing by law in the agency and the unfair system of dealing with disease cases within Agency respectively.

however in items 58, 59, 61, and 57 with weight mean less than 60% and p-value less than 0.05 respectively, employees disagree that these items lead to absenteeism at UNRWA Agency, there is no adequate tools and equipments within the Agency, number of emergency leave inadequate, inappropriate laws to reduce absenteeism and shortage of staff within the Agency. This doesn't match with study conducted by Collins et al., (2000) who mentioned

that the lack of adequate equipment hinders employees from effective role performance and is another factor contributing to the absenteeism of employees.

The main causes for absenteeism associated with the organization characteristics; staff members doesn't participation in decision making, inadequacy of the annual upgrading system, inadequacy of the number of days of the official holidays, unfair of incentives system, inadequacy of equivalent end of service, and unfair promotion system within the agency.

Generally the results for all statements of the organization characteristics shows that the weight mean equal 63.6 % which is greater than 60% and the p- value equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Which means the respondents agree that organization characteristics are not satisfy and may be lead to absent from work.

**Table No. (5.20 ) The sign test for organization characteristics.**

Number	Item	No. of positive Sign more than 3	No. of negative sign less than 3	Mean	Weight mean	P-value	Rank
54	The system of incentives within the agency unfair.	276	139	3.50	70.0	0.000	4
55	Monthly salary of non-sufficient.	200	178	3.01	60.1	0.280	7
56	Promotion system unfair within the agency.	218	172	3.13	62.6	0.023	6
57	There is a shortage of staff within the agency	155	249	2.47	49.4	0.000	13
58	There is no adequate tools and equipment within the agency.	170	226	2.88	57.6	0.006	9
59	Number of emergency leave days inadequate.	167	223	2.83	56.6	0.005	10
60	Equivalent end-of-service inadequate.	220	165	3.15	62.9	0.006	5
61	Agency laws inappropriate to reduce absenteeism.	132	200	2.58	51.7	0.000	12
62	Annual Upgrading System not enough (step per year).	299	79	3.88	77.7	0.000	2
63	Period of sick leave provided by law in the agency is inadequate.	192	169	2.98	59.5	0.247	8
64	System to deal with disease cases with the agency unfair.	189	185	2.83	56.5	0.877	11
65	The number of days of annual leave holidays inadequate	276	125	3.56	71.3	0.000	3
66	The staff members don't participate in a central agency decision.	414	26	4.54	90.8	0.000	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>63.6</b>	<b>0.005</b>	

**Table No. (5.21) The sign test for the fields of studies and all items.**

Number	item	Number of positive sign (Greater than 3)	Number of negative sign (less than 3)	Mean	Weight mean	P-value	
1	<b>Personal factors</b>	14	448	2.08	41.67	0.00	4
2	<b>The characteristics of the work</b>	128	335	2.71	54.23	0.00	3
3	<b>Management Style</b>	270	197	3.10	62.00	0.00	2
4	<b>Organization characteristics</b>	259	198	3.18	63.55	0.01	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>2.71</b>	<b>54.23</b>	<b>0.00</b>	

For general table No. (5.21) shows the sign test for each field and the whole fields which illustrate that the average mean for the whole fields equal 2.71 and the weight mean equal 54.23 % which is less than 60% and the value the p- value equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05 which means the respondents statistically disagree these factors cause absenteeism. Though these factor relatively more important than other as reflected in the weight mean and p-value. The important factor lead to absenteeism was organization characteristics and the management style came second. These results would reflect the need to improve organization characteristics and the management style in order to reduce absenteeism.

## 5.5 Hypotheses testing

**H1: There is no relation between a personal factors and characteristics of the work at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .**

To test the hypothesis the researcher used spearman correlation and the result in table No.(5.22) which show that the value of the coefficient spearman correlation equal 0.466 and the p-value equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05, that mean we reject the hypothesis , so There is a relation between a personal factors and characteristics of the work at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

This a logic results, characteristics of work such as level of awareness with nature of work, clarification of responsibilities, appropriate work hours , good size team and working within team which affect the level of personal factors such as employees don't feel frustrated from work, and feel satisfied and don't absent in case of mild headache, tiredness and mild low back pain. Lastly improving work condition will lead to improve personal factors and vice versa. This lead to decrease the factors associated with absenteeism at the agency. This goes with Rhodes and streers (1990) work environment has been found to impact absenteeism, especially in terms of producing differing levels of job satisfaction and organization commitment. Absenteeism can be symbolic of deeper feeling of hostility or perceptions of inequitable treatment in the job situation. Absenteeism can be away to " get back at" the organization for a poor work environment, low pay, or other attributes of the job with which employees are dissatisfaction. And goes with kass vondanovich & Callender (2001) employees may be absent from work for reasons that include personal reasons and unsatisfactory working conditions . Collins,et al., (2000) reveal that working without job

descriptions could contribute to dissatisfaction and absenteeism, due to the lack of clarity regarding job boundaries.

**Table No.(5.22) Correlation between personal factors and the characteristics of the work.**

<b>Spearman correlation</b>	<b>Analysis</b>	<b>The characteristics of the work</b>
<b>Personal factors</b>	Correlation coefficient	0.466
	p-value	0.000
	N	466

The value of critical " r " at df "465" and significant level "0.05" equal 0.088

**H2: There is no relation between a personal factors and management style at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$**

To test the hypothesis the researcher used a spearman correlation and the result is in table No.(5.23) which show that the value of the coefficient spearman correlation equal 488 and the p-value equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05, that means we reject the hypothesis , so There is a association between a personal factors and responsibility toward work and Management Style at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

This is a logic result, management style such as sharing employees social and family events, manager respects colleagues, manager creates good atmosphere between staff, manager doesn't create problems at work and employees find the manager has administration capabilities which affect level of personal factors. For instant employees come to work and leaved the work at time, employees appreciate the work at the Agency, employees fully satisfied with their job, employees don't try to take all emergency leaved allowed and manager treats employees as friends, sharing them their personal problems. This goes with Gray & Anderson (1985) who found that the development of work group cohesion,

consultative and participatory decision management , provision of feedback and the importance of valuing employees are important long term strategies in workplace development. Supervisory practices which lead to a more open expression of opinion and participatory problem solving, may result in reduced ambiguity, role conflict and stress and increased job satisfaction, with a consequent reduction in absenteeism. An Irish study found poor employee-manager relationships were resulting in reduced morale, increased stress, low levels of commitment and high rates of workplace absences. Staff indicated that they did not feel valued by management, were not encouraged to use their initiative, felt poor quality relationships frequently existed, thought there was a lack of trust and mutual respect, and felt over-managed and under led (Bennett, 2002) . Poor relationships with superiors, lack of control over work, low participation in decision-making, low levels of support and poor communication are increase absent from work (Comcare, 2005).

Improving management style lead to improve personal factors and employees become more satisfied at work and vice versa. As a result this lead to decrease the factors associated with absenteeism at the Agency.

**Table No.(5.23) Correlation between personal factors and responsibility towards work and management style**

Spearman correlation	Analysis	Management Style
Personal factors	Correlation coefficient	488
	p-value	0.000
	N	466

The value of critical " r " at df "465" and significant level "0.05" equal 0.088

**H3: There is no relation between a personal factors and the organization characteristics at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .**

To test the hypothesis the researcher used a spearman correlation and the result in table No.(5.24) shows that the value of the coefficient spearman correlation equal 0.515 and the p-value equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05, that means we reject the hypothesis , So there is a relation between a personal factors and the organization characteristics at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

Organization characteristics such as sufficient staff, adequate salary, fair promotion system, adequate tools and equipment and fair incentive system which affect level of personal factors like employees feel satisfied, don't take one day to prolong week end, appreciate the work at the Agency, come to work and leave the work at time and feel responsible toward work, this coincides with literature review of Collins et al. (2000) who mentioned that the lack of adequate equipment hinders employees from effective role performance and is another factor contributing to the absenteeism of employees, Amick et al (2000) found that duration of absence is shorter in companies promoting an interpersonal and value-focused environment . Aamodt, (2004) Found that when employees are dissatisfied or not committed to the organization, they are more likely to miss work and leave their job. The root cause of absenteeism may be partly attributable to the way in which organizations are managed, such as unfairness (De Boer, Bakker, Syrott & Schaufeli 2002). Joo and Garman (1998) found that a higher level of financial well-being was associated with less absenteeism. Improving organization characteristics will lead to improve personal factors and employees become more satisfied at work and more commitment to work and vice versa. By the end this lead to decrease the level of absenteeism at the agency.

**Table No.(5.24) Correlation between personal factors and organization characteristics**

<b>Spearman correlation</b>	<b>Analysis</b>	<b>organization characteristics</b>
Personal factors	Correlation coefficient	0.515
	p-value	0.000
	N	466

The value of critical " r " at df "465" and significant level "0.05" equal 0.088

**H 4: There is a significant statistical differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to some of demographic and personal factors at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .**

**H 4.1: There is a significant statistical differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to gender at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .**

To test the hypotheses the researcher used the Mann-Whitney test ( non parametric test ) to test if there is a difference in respondent of the samples in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to gender, and the result shown in table No.(5.25) which illustrate the following.

There is a significant statistical differences in personal factors attributed to gender at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

There is no significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to gender at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.773 which is greater than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in management style attributed to gender at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.005 which is less than 0.05.

There is no significant statistical differences in organization characteristics attributed to gender at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.729 which is greater than 0.05.

For general There is no significant statistical differences in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to gender at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.755 which is greater than 0.05

Form the table (5.25 ) the researcher found that there is no deference between male and female in absence from work but in reference to UNRWA 2007 attendance records , the researcher found that the incidence of absenteeism among male gender is less than female gender, for example in 2007 average absenteeism days in a year for female is 11 days /year /employee while it is 9 days /year /employee for male. Which is not consistent with the past literature of Evans and Palmer (1997) who hold that the rate of absenteeism among females is higher than males: the underlying explanation for this may not lay in the gender difference, but rather in other variables that affect male and female roles, both at work and in the wider society. As the age of dependent children increases, there is evidence that the female absenteeism rate drops. The decreased absenteeism rate can also be related to the occupational structure of an organization, due to the fact that, a higher proportion of females than males occupy lower occupational positions. Steers and Porter (1987) maintain that, as a group, women are absent more frequently than men. It can also be expected that female absenteeism will increase with family size. Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1994) also maintain that the absenteeism rate among women tends to be higher than that among men. Studies suggest that gender is often a factor in absence. There is general agreement that females are more likely to be absent than males. However, it is unlikely that this is a result of any lower commitment to work, and more likely to be due to both ill-health factors and greater responsibility for family

related duties (Preston 1995). The Australian Public Service found that female employees took 16 per cent more sick leave and 28 per cent more career's leave than male employees (ANAO 2003). The Western Australian Public Service study reported similar trends, with females being 1.2 times more likely to take sick leave than males. This was not seen as a lack of work commitment, but rather reflecting the dual role of many women and the accessing of sick leave for career purposes (MPCWA 2001). At the end all agree that's female absent from work more than male.

**Table (5.25) Mann-Whitney test for differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the gender.**

Field	Mean rank		Z - statistic	p-value
	Male	Female		
<b>Personal factors</b>	251.36	193.29	-4.438	0.000
<b>Characteristics of the work</b>	230.71	234.48	-0.288	0.773
<b>Management Style</b>	221.43	258.35	-2.802	0.005
<b>Organization characteristics</b>	230.51	225.97	-0.347	0.729
<b>Total</b>	<b>235.40</b>	<b>231.29</b>	<b>-0.312</b>	<b>0.755</b>

**H 4.2: There is a significant statistical differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to age at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .**

To test the hypotheses the researcher used the Kruskal-Wallis test ( non parametric test ) to test if there is a difference in respondent of the samples in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to Age, and the result shown in table No.(5.26) which illustrate the following:

There is a significant statistical differences in personal factors attributed to Age at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.007 which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to Age at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.013 which is less than 0.05.

There is no significant statistical differences in management style attributed to Age at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.619 which is greater than 0.05.

There is significant statistical differences in organization characteristics attributed to Age at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.000 which is greater than 0.05.

For general There is no a significant statistical differences in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the Age at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.399 which is greater than 0.05

From the table (5.26 ) its found that there is no deference related to age in absenteeism but in reference to UNRWA attendance records (2007) the researcher found that the younger employees 40 years and less are absent from work 11 days/ years and employees over 40 year absent from work 8 days/ year. This means that younger employees get absent from work more than old employees. This doesn't match with Evans and Palmer (1997) who indicate that absence due to illness amongst males is age-related, after the age of 40 absenteeism rates increase - and even more so after the age of 50. Also Evans and Palmer (1997) state that absenteeism episodes among younger people tend to present more frequently and to be of shorter duration, while such episodes among older people present less frequently, but are of longer duration, especially after the age of 50. Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1994) point

out that older employees experience higher rates of involuntary absenteeism than younger employees, whose voluntary absences are less frequent.

**Table (5.26) Kruskal-Wallis test for differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to Age at current post**

Field	Mean rank			Chi-Square	p-value
	Less than 30 years	30-40 years	More than 40 years		
<b>Personal factors</b>	250.03	246.54	208.70	9.985	0.007
<b>Work characteristic</b>	225.65	208.83	251.85	8.621	0.013
<b>Management Style</b>	227.80	243.30	231.97	0.959	0.619
<b>Organization characteristics</b>	191.68	238.70	248.09	15.403	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>221.78</b>	<b>234.00</b>	<b>242.19</b>	<b>1.836</b>	<b>0.399</b>

The value of chi-square at degrees of freedom "2" and significant level 0.05 equal 5.99

**H 4.3: There is a significant statistical differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to work place at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .**

To test the hypotheses the researcher used the Kruskal-Wallis test ( non parametric test ) to test if there is a difference in respondent of the samples in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the working place , and the result shown in table No.(5.27) which illustrate the following:

There is no significant statistical differences in personal factors attributed to the working place at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.377which is greater than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to the working place at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.020which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in management style attributed to the working place at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.019 which is less than 0.05

There is a significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to the working place at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.044 which is less than 0.05.

For general There is no significant statistical differences in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the working place at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.254 which is greater than 0.05.

The result is logic because most of employees who work at UNRWA work nearby their residence place so they don't need transport, and employees who work far from their residence places UNRWA offer them comfortable transport. Also Gaza strip is a small peace area and all places at Gaza are the same. This goes with literature of (Rhodes & Steers, 1990). who found that employees may not be able to attend work because of barriers such as transportation problems. Providing transportation for employees may lead to decrease using of sick leaves. Finally the transportation at UNRWA and the distribution of employees at work places both are satisfactory.

**Table (5.27) Kruskal-Wallis Test for differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the working place**

Field	Mean rank					Chi-Square	p-value
	Rafah	Khanyounis	Middle	Gaza	south Gaza		
Personal factors and responsibility towards work	229.30	208.31	229.95	245.80	237.86	4.224	0.377
Characteristics of the work	213.65	233.61	268.23	211.67	235.99	11.675	0.020
Management Style	260.04	244.66	202.98	221.44	256.37	11.847	0.019
Organization characteristics	224.70	254.66	245.64	202.53	226.62	9.780	0.044
<b>Total</b>	<b>235.31</b>	<b>245.87</b>	<b>238.52</b>	<b>212.07</b>	<b>250.56</b>	<b>5.341</b>	<b>0.254</b>

The value of chi-square at degrees of freedom "4" and significant level 0.05 equal 9.48

**H 4.4: There is a significant statistical differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to last qualification at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .**

To test the hypotheses the researcher used the Kruskal-Wallis test ( non parametric test ) to test if there is a difference in respondent of the samples in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the Last qualification, and the result shown in table No.(5.28) which illustrate the following:

There is a significant statistical differences in personal factors attributed to the Last qualification at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to the Last qualification at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in management style attributed to the Last qualification at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05

There is a significant statistical differences in organization characteristics attributed to the Last qualification at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05

Generally there is a significant statistical differences in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the Last qualification at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

Comparing educational attainment categories in table (5.28), the highest absenteeism percentage was observed among respondents with less than high school education.

This might be attributed to the type of job. Most of employees with less than high school of education work as cleaner, guard and driver, these types of job is not satisfy employees and also the salary of employees with low level education is low this also lead to absence from work. This matches with the literature of (Krause and Lund, 2004) who found that low level of education lead to increase absenteeism from work, and goes with (Femina 2000) at South African institutions, where work-related issues such as low pay, lack of incentives and poor working conditions demoralize employee and contribute to absenteeism.

**Table (5.28) Kruskal-Wallis Test for differences in level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to last qualification.**

Field	Mean rank					Chi-Square	p-value
	Less than secondary degree	secondary degree	diploma two years	Bachelor	Master's or higher		
<b>Personal factors</b>	362.33	377.91	193.67	228.00	255.42	44.482	0.000
<b>characteristics of the work</b>	360.03	272.07	244.68	217.93	226.94	20.186	0.000
<b>Management Style</b>	54.00	181.38	238.73	243.44	247.18	32.811	0.000
<b>Organization characteristics</b>	410.03	379.00	247.60	205.81	204.93	62.822	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>375.06</b>	<b>360.41</b>	<b>230.86</b>	<b>218.49</b>	<b>243.39</b>	<b>35.459</b>	<b>0.000</b>

The value of chi-square at degrees of freedom "4" and significant level 0.05 equal 9.48

**H 4.5: There is a significant statistical differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to number of years ( experience) at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .**

To test the hypotheses the researcher used the Kruskal-Wallis test ( non parametric test ) to test if there is a difference in respondent of the samples in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the number of years, and the result shown in table No.(5.29) which illustrate the following:

There is a significant statistical differences in personal factors and responsibility towards work attributed to the number of years at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.001 which is less than 0.05.

There is a no significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to the number of years at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.101 which is greater than 0.05.

There is no significant statistical differences in management style attributed to the number of years at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.104 which is greater than 0.05

There is significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to the number of years at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.021 which is greater than 0.05

For general There is a significant statistical differences in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the number of years at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.044 which is less than 0.05.

By reference to table (5.29) employees who work less than 10 years agree that personal characteristics, work characteristics, management style and organization characteristics lead to absenteeism more than employees who work between 10-20 years and more than the employees who work more than 20 years. This goes with Evans and Palmer (1997) who said that an employee's length of service play a role in the occurrence of employee absenteeism. Moreover they state that longer periods of service with an organization could result in a decrease in absenteeism, since employees loyalty to an organization normally increases over time. There is a correlation between longer periods of service and lower rates of employee absenteeism. This doesn't correspond with the Preston (1995) who noted that employees with

longer service may feel less threatened by the prospect of job loss and thus engage in more absence. In my opinion, old employees in the Gaza strip have more respect at organization and more responsibilities toward the work, they are not afraid to loss their job and have more experience. This make them more commitment to the organization and don't absent from work even at the emergency case.

**Table (5.29) Kruskal-Wallis test for differences in the factors contribute to the absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the number of years at current post.**

Field	Mean rank			Chi-Square	p-value
	Less than 10 years	10-20 years	More than 20 years		
Personal factors	251.82	218.63	189.19	9.249	0.001
The characteristics of the work	242.75	213.13	233.81	4.505	0.101
Management Style	245.11	216.11	233.23	4.284	0.104
Organization characteristics	231.78	230.96	214.89	5.917	0.021
<b>Total</b>	<b>251.36</b>	<b>216.42</b>	<b>211.61</b>	<b>8.592</b>	<b>0.044</b>

The value of chi-square at degrees of freedom "2" and significant level 0.05 equal 5.99

**H 4.6: There is a significant statistical differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to marital status at significant level**

$\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

To test the hypotheses we use the Kruskal-Wallis test ( non parametric test ) to test if there is a difference in respondent of the samples in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to marital status, and the result shown in table No.(5.30) which illustrate the following:

There is a significant statistical differences in personal factors and responsibility towards work attributed to marital status at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to the number of years at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.024 which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in management style attributed to marital status at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.049 which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in organization characteristics attributed to marital status at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

In general there is a significant statistical differences in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the marital status at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.006 which is less than 0.05.

According to table (5.30) which shows that the married people are get absent from work more than single. This might be attributed to the fact that the married employee have more responsibilities than the single or divorced employee such as the family care. This agree with the literature review (Bridges& Mumford, 2000) A Uk study found differences between the attendance of single and married people. Family responsibilities are a major factor to workplace absence rates. Career's leave allows employees to provide occasional care for their

children, or injured, ill, frail or disabled relatives (Australian Public Service Commission, 2005).

**Table (5.30) Kruskal-Wallis Test for differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to marital status at current post.**

Field	Mean rank			Chi-Square	p-value
	Single	Married	widow		
<b>Personal factors.</b>	303.28	224.23	358.50	15.631	0.000
<b>Work characteristics.</b>	182.54	234.82	329.10	7.488	0.024
<b>Management Style.</b>	279.34	229.47	313.20	6.043	0.049
<b>Organization characteristics.</b>	172.81	231.28	420.10	16.782	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>221.03</b>	<b>232.80</b>	<b>424.50</b>	<b>10.311</b>	<b>0.006</b>

The value of chi-square at degrees of freedom "2" and significant level 0.05 equal 5.99

**H 4.7: There is a significant statistical differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to current post at significant level**

$\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

To test the hypotheses we use the Kruskal-Wallis test ( non parametric test ) to test if there is a difference in respondent of the samples in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the Current post, and the result shown in table No.(5.31) which illustrate the following:

There is a significant statistical differences in personal factors and responsibility towards work attributed to the Current post at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to the Current post at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

There is a significant statistical differences in management style attributed to the Current post at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

There is significant statistical differences in characteristics of the work attributed to the Current post at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

For general There is a significant statistical differences in the level of absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the Current post at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05.

By referring to table (5.31) there is difference among the various groups of staff regarding factor associated to absenteeism. Employees with lower jobs, lower grades and lower salaries such as Labour, Clerks, Secretary, Paramedical Staff and Drivers agree that the given factors contribute to absenteeism more than Doctors, Teacher, Social workers and Directors with high salaries, high grades and better work circumstances. As a point of view employees who have lower jobs have less responsibilities, could face socioeconomic problems due to their low salaries, feel inferiority complex and exhaustion and don't use all their skills during work. The combination of these factors encourage the absence of the employees from work. This match with the literature review of Parkes & Wall, (1998) who mentioned that roles that require low level skills often have higher rates of absence. According to Preston (1995) Issues such as skill variety, irrelevant and insignificant work tasks, little autonomy, and a lack of feedback on performance contribute to employees feeling disengaged. Many studies found that higher salaries were related to lower absence. Employees may be absent from work for reasons that include personal reasons and unsatisfactory working conditions (Kass, Vodanovich & Callender 2001). Joo and Garman (1998) found that a higher level of financial well-being was

associated with less absenteeism. Last but not least, general improving of work circumstances and salary to the employees may be improve him feeling toward organization and lead to decrease absent from work.

**Table (5.31) Kruskal-Wallis Test for differences in the level of factors associated with absenteeism at UNRWA institutes attributed to the Current post .**

Field	Mean rank											Chi-Square	p-value
	Director	teacher	Engineer	doctor	Driver	Secretary	social worker	labour	Para medical staff	clerk	Any other post		
<b>Personal factors</b>	257	207	380	163	345	304	313	373.8	332	279	176	71.34	0.000
<b>Characteristics of the work</b>	162	223	189	302	332	285	224	332.0	372	204	118	63.09	0.000
<b>Management Style</b>	328	224	340	240	172	274	307	80.3	219	391	329	77.92	0.000
<b>Organization characteristics</b>	205	202	235	265	375	318	226	400.0	388	243	198	96.93	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>0.00</b>

The value of chi-square at degrees of freedom "10" and significant level 0.05 equal 18.3

## 5.6 Conclusions

The data were presented and discussed in this chapter. The factors contributing to absenteeism among employees with a focus on personal characteristics of the employee, characteristics of the manager, characteristics of work and characteristics of the organization were the key areas to be addressed in this study. The research questions were answered by the statistical analysis. The research results revealed that various reasons for absenteeism exist in the workplace. The

hypothesis was also discussed. In chapter 6 the research findings will be summarized. The conclusions and recommendations of the study will be addressed.

## **Chapter ( 6 )**

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn regarding the factors associated with absenteeism among UNRWA employees, as well as making recommendations.

#### **6.2 Summary of the research findings**

##### **1) Profile of respondents**

The profile of the respondents participating in this research and on which the findings are based can be summarized as follows:

Four hundred and sixty six (n=466) employees participated in the survey, from all departments of UNRWA at Gaza Governorates. Respondents were mainly male (66.0%;n=308). (42.8%, n=200) of the employees age over 40 years. Approximately most the respondents (91.6%,n=428) are married. Most of employees work at education department (75.4%,n=352) and most of employees have qualification more than diploma of two year (93.8, n=435) .

##### **2) Research question result:**

1- Average percentage rate of the absenteeism at UNRWA was 4.7% at years 2007. Female employees absent from work 11.4 days per employee, per year more than male who were absent 10 days per employee, per year. The percentage of absenteeism was 3.6% at year 2005. Female employees were absent from work 9 days per employee, per year more than males who were absent 8 days per employee, per year. The percentage of absenteeism was 3.1% at

year 2006. Female employees were absent from work 8 days per employee, per year more than males who were absent 7 days per employee, per year .

2- External factor, as manifested by attending the funerals of relatives were the main personal factor lead to absenteeism.

3- Work pressure, as manifested by work overload, routine work, huge responsibilities in addition to noise and over crowding were the main work characteristics that lead to absenteeism.

4- leadership style of the manager between Autocratic and Bureaucratic , as manifested by exercising power with coercion, a central decision, no justice among staff, discriminate between staff, manager doesn't motivate staff when they do well, no motivation atmosphere, manager doesn't improve the team spirit among staff and doesn't discuss the annual appraisal report with staff were the main leadership style aspects which lead to absenteeism.

5- Organization characteristics are not satisfactory for employees as manifested by staff members do not participate in decision making, inadequacy of the annual upgrading system, inadequacy of the number of days of the official holidays, unfair system of incentives, inadequacy of the equivalent end of service, and unfair promotion system within the agency.

### **3) Hypothesis result:**

1) There is a relation between the personal factors and the characteristics of the work, leadership style, organization characteristics at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ . There is reciprocal relationship between the various factors, each factor can affect as well as be affected by the

other factors which ultimately depending on this relation can increase or decrease the absenteeism.

2) There is no significant statistical difference in the factors contribute to the absenteeism level at UNRWA institutes attributed to gender at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.755 which is greater than 0.05 but in reference to UNRWA 2007 attendance records , the researcher found that the incidence of absenteeism among male gender is less than female gender.

3) There is no significant statistical difference in the factors contribute to the absenteeism level at UNRWA institutes attributed to the age at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.399 which is greater than 0.05 but in reference to UNRWA attendance records (2007) the researcher found that the younger employees 40 year and less are absent from work 11 days/ year and employees over 40 year old absent from work 8 days/ year this means that younger employees get absent from work more than old employees.

4) There is no significant statistical difference in the factors contribute to the absenteeism level at UNRWA institutes attributed to the working place at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.254 which is greater than 0.05.

5) There is a significant statistical differences in the factors contribute to the absenteeism level at UNRWA institutes attributed to the Last qualification at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05. the highest absenteeism percentage was observed among respondents with less than a high school education.

6) There is a significant statistical difference in the factors contribute to the absenteeism level at UNRWA institutes attributed to the number of years at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-value equal 0.044 which is less than 0.05. Employees who worked less than 10 years were

absent from work more than employees who work between 10-20 years and more than the employees who work more than 20 years .

7) There is a significant statistical differences in the factors contribute to the absenteeism level at UNRWA institutes attributed to the marital status at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.006 which is less than 0.05. Married people were more absent from work than single or divorced people.

8) There is a significant statistical differences in the factors contribute to the absenteeism level at UNRWA institutes attributed to the current post at significant level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  since the p-vale equal 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Highest among lower job, lower grads and lower salaries such as Labour, Clerks, Secretary, Paramedical Staff and Drivers as compared to Doctors, Teacher, Social workers and Directors with high salaries, high grades and better work circumstances.

### **6.3 Recommendation arising from the research**

#### **1) Recommendations on the general management of absenteeism**

The recommendations below are aimed at contributing to reduce absenteeism in the workplace. They implemented and evaluated after a period of time, in order to determine whether absenteeism has in fact been reduced.

It is necessary that the organization should develop strategies to minimize absenteeism in the workplace. The characteristics of employees, the leadership style, the work and the organization should be taken into account in developing an absenteeism management strategy.

It is recommended that the organization should:

- 1- Establish training programmes for employees about the different types of leave which they are entitled to, and the procedures to be followed regarding authorized leave and unplanned circumstances which warrant absence from work. This should include workshops concerning labour relations issues.
- 2- Develop and disseminate policies, norms and standards that govern good attendance behaviour.
- 3- Disseminate the disciplinary procedures, applied to absenteeism, to staff members .
- 4- develop a motivation strategy, such as giving attendance bonuses to employee who report to work regularly, in order to encourage habitual absentees to come to work.
- 5- Establish staff support programmes aimed at providing moral support in order to prevent absenteeism. As part of such a programme, direct managers should frequently interact with employees on day, to identify employees whose morale is low, and provide support and counseling to such individuals. It is recommended that direct managers should:
  - A) Monitor absenteeism in the units on an ongoing basis, and maintain accurate absence statistics that reflect absenteeism patterns.
  - B) Communicate with employees that their attendance is monitored by giving them frequent feedback on their absenteeism profile. The feedback could be presented in the form of graphs, which are displayed on the notice board. Absence feedback could also be given in the form of letters to absentees, which indicate the number of absence spells during a certain period in a year, as compared with the attendance patterns in the employee' workgroup during the same period .

C) Develop the practice of giving intangible rewards, such as posting names of employee with good attendance on the bulletin board and giving credit to employee who are showing some improvements regarding their attendance.

D) Follow the relevant disciplinary steps and procedures before referring a employee, who demonstrates unacceptable absenteeism behaviour, to a disciplinary hearing.

## **2) Recommendations on eliminating the main reasons for absenteeism**

- 1- Based on the questionnaire results the researcher found that most of employees are obliged to attend funeral ceremony of their 2<sup>nd</sup> degree relatives for which they have to be absent and so I recommended to guarantee 1-3 day leave to cover the absenteeism in case of funeral ceremony in case of second degree relative death.
- 2- It is recommend to prolong the Eid vacation as it has been noticed that most of employees attempt to prolong their vacation to spend their holiday as other employees enjoy at NGOS and governmental institution.
- 3- It is necessary to alleviate the work pressure that employees experience by reducing the workload, routine work, noise, and over crowedness. That contribute to absenteeism, and ensuring that they are access to equipment and other resources necessary to function efficiently. This is done by recruit and hire adequate employees and build another institution like school and health centers.
- 4- It is recommended that Direct managers should:
  - A) Establish a supportive working environment characterized by open and frequent communication, and an open door policy that allows employees to approach him/her at any time to raise their concerns without fear.

B) Establish a working climate that fosters the acknowledgement of the ideas of many individuals, and thus encourages his or her staff to ask questions and suggest solutions to problems in good time

**3) The research recommendations to conduct the following study**

- 1) Toward a strategy to improve management style and its impact on the absenteeism at UNRWA.
- 2) Toward a strategy to improve organization culture and characteristics and its impact on the absenteeism at UNRWA.
- 3) Testing the factors contribute to absenteeism at public sector institutions .

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### **Interviews**

- 1- Dr / Ayob El Alem :Chief Field Health programs (UNRWA, 2006) Gaza
- 2- Mrs. / Mahasn Mhaesn: Chief Field Education Programs (UNRWA, 2006) Gaza

### **Approval of the questionnaire application**

I am the student Raja Khamis Abu Shammala studying in the Master of Public Health of the University of Jerusalem - Abu Dis, in the framework of the programme I work on the preparation of Masters thesis entitled:

### **"Factors associated with absenteeism amongst UNRWA employees in the Gaza Governorates "**

Expected to help information to be collected from service providers, and decision makers in the relief agency, by identifying the causes of absence aimed at finding ways and means of reducing absenteeism within institutions.

I appreciate you for your concern and your participation.

Mobilizing the questionnaire take fifteen minutes, note that the information to be collected will be used for the purposes of scientific research only, and will remain confidential

Note: study funded researcher, the researcher has obtained approval to conduct field research stakeholders

Thank you

Researcher

Raja Abu Shammala

**Questionnaire**

Dear / employee

The following series of questions concerning the study of the causes of absenteeism among UNRWA staff in the Gaza Strip.

- 1- Please mark signal  below appropriate answer.
- 2- Please answer the questions with reality.
- 3- Please answer questions in consistency with your personal point of view.

(Absenteeism define as: the failure of people to attend work on a given day. Excluding from that: Maternity leave, Annual leave and Official holidays.)

Serial No.....

A demographic data: --

- 1- Gender  Male  female
- 2- Age Less than 30  year 30-40  year more than 40  year
- 3- Address (province):  
 Rafah  Khanyounis  Middle  Gaza  south Gaza
- 4- Working place (province):  
 Rafah  Khanyounis  Middle  Gaza  south Gaza
- 5- Last qualification:  
 Less than secondary degree  secondary degree  diploma two years  Bachelor  Master's or higher .
- 6- Marital status:  
 Single  Married  Divorced  widow
- 7- Current post:  
 Director  teacher  Engineer  doctor  Driver  
 Secretary  social worker  labour  Para medical staff  
 clerk  Any other post .....
- 8- department where are you working?

- Education  Health  Environmental health  Finance  
 Engineering  Administration  Relief and services  
 Microfinance & M .enterprise  Procurement and logistics

**9- The number of years at current post:**

less than 10 ( ) 10-20 ( ) more than 20years ( )

**10- Grade**

1-5 ( ) 6-9 ( ) 10 grads or more ( )

**11- Rate of monthly income**

Less than 700\$ ( ) 700-900\$ ( ) more than 900\$ ( )

**12- Number of family members**

1-4 ( ) 5-9 ( ) 9 and more ( )

**Health status**

**13- Do you suffer from any chronic health problem?** ( ) Yes ( ) No

**14- Do you take any kind of drug continuously?** ( ) Yes ( ) No

**15- Do you practice sport activities regularly ?** ( ) Yes ( ) No

**Dear Employee**

The following series of questions related to the causes of absenteeism among UNRWA employee. Please put ratio consistent with your opinion.

Item	strongly agree 81-100 %	agree 61-80 %	to neither agree nor disagree 41-60 %	disagree 21-40 %	strongly disagree 0-20%
<b>R</b> Personal factors associated with absenteeism					
1-Do not appreciate the work at the Agency.					
2-Ready to leave my job at the agency in the case there is a better opportunity to work in another organization.					
3-I do not feel any responsibility towards work.					
4-I am not fully satisfied with my job					
5-My current job is not commensurate with my ambition.					
6-My abilities are more than ,the nature of my work at agency.					
7- Absent from work in case of mild headache or mild low back pain.					
8- Absent from work on the case of tiredness.					
9-Absent from work in the case of financial problem.					
10- Absent from work in the case of illness of a member of my family: my children, my father, my mother, my wife, ...					
11-Absent from work in the case of the death of a relatives:, my cousin, my grandmother, grandfather ...					
12- Absent from work in the case of the death of a neighbor or close friends.					
13- I do not care to come to work at time.					
Item	strongly agree	agree	neither agree	disagree 21-40 %	strongly disagree

	81-100 %	61-80 %	nor disagree 41-60 %		0-20%
14-No friends at the work who can share my personal problem.					
15-I feel a frustrated due to general working condition.					
16-I Make sure to get all my emergency leave allowed.					
17-The transportation system to work uncomfortable.					
18- Absent from work to prolong the weekend (such as taking on Thursday with Friday).					

**Mention any other personal factors that lead to absence from work?**

- 1-.....  
2-.....  
3-.....  
4-.....

**C**

**Work characteristics associated with absenteeism**

19-I know the nature of my work well.					
20-There is no clarity of my responsibilities and powers.					
21-My absence from work does not hinder the continuation of work.					
22-No job description is clear to me.					
23-No opportunities at the agency to upgrade at work.					
24 - large size of work within the agency.					
25 - Long work hours in the agency.					
26 - routinely work entrusted to me.					
27- Shifting within the work from the morning to the evening lead to absence.					
28- I do not use my skills which are related to my work.					
<b>Item</b>	<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>agree</b>	<b>neither agree</b>	<b>disagree</b>	<b>strongly disagree</b>

	81-100 %	61-80 %	nor disagree 41-60 %	21-40 %	0-20%
29-No social relationships with colleagues at work.					
30 - No adequate rest period during the work.					
31 – My responsibilities within the work is too large.					
32 - The workplace is full of noise and crowd ness.					
33 -The public Which deal with ,does not respect my work.					
34 The size of my team work is inappropriate.					
35 - Do not work within a team.					
<b>Mention any other factors related to the characteristics of the work leading to the absence from duty?</b>					
1-.....					
2-.....					
3-.....					
4-.....					
<b>D Management Style associated with absenteeism</b>					
36-My direct manager slogan implement and then discuss.					
37 -My direct manager does not have administrative capabilities.					
38-My direct manager Does not solve the work problems in a convincing way.					
39 – My direct managers deliberately create problems within the work.					
40- My direct manager criticize the staff in front of colleagues and beneficiaries.					
41- My direct manager deliberately always negatively criticism the staff					
42-Direct manager does not motivate me when I do well.					
<b>Item</b>	<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>agree</b>	<b>neither agree</b>	<b>disagree</b>	<b>strongly disagree</b>

	81-100 %	61-80 %	nor disagree 41-60 %	21-40 %	0-20%
43- My direct manager discriminates between staff.					
44 –My direct manager has no confidence in the staff					
45 -My direct manager help to create a conflict atmosphere between staff (divide and rule).					
46 – My direct managers unable to make decisions.					
47- My direct manager does not operate to create motivating atmosphere for workers.					
48- My direct manager does not make me share him decision making.					
49- My direct manager does not operate to achieve justice among staff.					
50 - My direct manager does not respect or appreciate colleagues.					
51-My direct manager does not work on improving the team spirit among staff.					
52 –My direct managers does not discuss the annual appraisal report with me.					
53- My direct manager does not share me my social and family events.					
<b>Mention any other factors related to Manager style lead to absenteeism?</b>					
1-.....					
2-.....					
3-.....					
4-.....					
<b>E</b>					
<b>Organization characteristics associated with absenteeism</b>					
54 - the system of incentives within the agency unfair.					
55 - monthly salary of non-sufficient.					
56 - promotion system unfair.					
<b>Item</b>	<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>agree</b>	<b>neither agree</b>	<b>disagree</b>	<b>strongly disagree</b>

	81-100 %	61-80 %	nor disagree 41-60 %	21-40 %	0-20%
57 - There is a shortage of staff within the agency					
58 - There is no adequate tools and equipment within the agency.					
59 - Number of emergency leave days inadequate.					
60 - Equivalent end-of-service inadequate.					
61 - Agency laws inappropriate to reduce absenteeism.					
62 - Annual Upgrading System not enough (step per year).					
63- Period of sick leave provided by law in the agency is inadequate.					
64-System to deal with disease cases with the agency unfair.					
65 - The number of days of annual leave holidays inadequate					
66 – The staff member dose not participate in a central agency decision.					
<b>Mention any other factors related to the organization characteristic attributes to absenteeism from work?</b>					
1-.....					
2-.....					
3-.....					
4-.....					

**In your believe what the main causes of absence from work within the agency?**

- 1-.....
- 2-.....
- 3-.....

**What are the suggestion in your opining which can lead to reduce the absenteeism among the agency staff.**

- 1-.....
- 2-.....
- 3-.....

موافقة على تطبيق إستبانة

أنا الطالب رجاء خميس أبو شمالة أدرس في برنامج ماجستير الصحة العامة التابع لجامعة القدس - أبو ديس، وفي إطار البرنامج المذكور أعمل على إعداد أطروحة ماجستير بعنوان:

"العوامل المرتبطة بالغياب لدى موظفي وكالة الغوث الدولية بقطاع غزة"

من المتوقع أن تساعد المعلومات المزمع جمعها من مقدمي الخدمات، وصانعي القرارات في وكالة الغوث، بالتعرف على أسباب الغياب بهدف إيجاد السبل والوسائل التي من شأنها تقليل الغياب داخل المؤسسات التابعة لها.

أقدر لكم اهتمامكم ومشاركتم.

تتطلب تعبئة الاستبيان خمسة عشر دقيقة، علماً بأن المعلومات التي سيتم جمعها ستستعمل لأغراض البحث العلمي فقط، وستبقى سرية.

ملاحظة: الدراسة ممولة من الباحث، وقد حصل الباحث على الموافقة لإجراء البحث الميداني من الجهات المعنية.

ولكم جزيل الشكر،

الباحث:

رجاء أبو شمالة

التاريخ: / / 2007

الإستبانة

عزيزي/تي:

فيما يلي مجموعة من الأسئلة المتعلقة بأسباب الغياب لدى موظفين وكالة الغوث الدولية بقطاع بغزة.

1- الرجاء الإجابة بوضع إشارة  للإجابة المناسبة.

2- لرجاء الإجابة بموضعية على الأسئلة.

3- الرجاء الإجابة على الأسئلة بما يتفق ووجهة نظرك الشخصية.

(يقصد بالغياب عدم حضور الموظف لعمله في يوم ما. يستثنى من ذلك أجازات الأمومة والعطل الرسمية والأجازات السنوية).

الرقم المتسلسل .....

أولاً: البيانات الديموغرافية:-

1 - الجنس: ( ) ذكر ( ) أنثى

2- العمر: اقل من 30 سنة ( ) 30 - 40 سنة ( ) أكثر من 40 سنة ( )

3- عنوان السكن (محافظة):

( ) رفح ( ) خان يونس ( ) المنطقة الوسطى ( ) غزة ( ) شمال غزة

4- مكان العمل (محافظة):

( ) رفح ( ) خان يونس ( ) المنطقة الوسطى ( ) غزة ( ) شمال غزة

5- آخر مؤهل علمي:

( ) اقل من ثانوية عامة ( ) ثانوية عامة ( ) دبلوم سنتين ( ) بكالوريوس  
( ) ماجستير أو اعلي

6 - الحالة الاجتماعية:

( ) أعزب/عزباء ( ) متزوج/ة ( ) مطلق/ة ( ) أرمل/ة

7- الوظيفة الحالية :

( ) مدير/ة ( ) مدرس/ة ( ) مهندس/ة ( ) طبيب/ة ( ) سائق  
( ) سكرتير/ة ( ) باحث اجتماعي/ة ( ) عامل/ة ( ) مهن طبية مساعدة  
( ) كاتب/ة ( ) مسمى وظيفي آخر .....

8- الدائرة التي تعمل/ ين به:

( ) التعليم ( ) الصحة ( ) صحة البيئة ( ) المالية ( ) الهندسة  
( ) الإدارة ( ) الخدمات ( ) التنمية ( ) المواصلات

9- عدد سنوات شغل الوظيفة الحالية:

اقل من 10 سنوات ( ) 20 - 30 سنة ( ) أكثر من 20 سنة ( )

10- الدرجة الوظيفية:

5 - 1 ( ) 6-9 ( ) 10 وأكثر ( )

11- معدل الدخل الشهري:

اقل من 700 دولار ( ) 700-900 دولار ( ) أكثر من 900 دولار ( )

12 - عدد أفراد الأسرة:

4-1 ( ) 5-9 ( ) أكثر من 9 أفراد ( )

الحالة الصحية:

13 - هل تعاري/ ين من أية مشكلة صحية مزمنة؟ ( ) نعم ( ) لا

14 - هل تتعاطى/ ين أي نوع من الدواء باستمرار؟ ( ) نعم ( ) لا

15 - هل تمارس/ ين النشاطات الرياضية بصورة مستمرة؟ ( ) نعم ( ) لا

استبانها أسباب الغياب لدى موظفي وكالة الغوث الدولية في قطاع غزة

عزيزي الموظف / عزيزتي الموظفة

فيما يلي مجموعة من الأسئلة المتعلقة بأسباب الغياب لدى موظفي وكالة الغوث في قطاع غزة وعلي أرجو الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية:- ضع/ي النسبية التي تتفق مع رأيك.

بند	موافق بشدة 100-81 %	موافق 80-61 %	لا اعلم 60-41 %	غير موافق 40-21 %	غير موافق بشدة صفر-20 %
<b>ثانيًا: العوامل الشخصية التي من الممكن أن تؤدي إلى الغياب:-</b>					
1- لا أقدر العمل في وكالة الغوث.					
2- مستعدة/ة لترك عملي في وكالة الغوث في حال توفرت فرصة عمل أفضل في مؤسسة أخرى.					
3- لا أشعر بالمسؤولية تجاه العمل.					
4- لا أشعر بالرضا التام عن وظيفتي.					
5- وظيفتي الحالية لا تتناسب مع طموحاتي.					
6- قدراتي اكبر من طبيعة عملي في الوكالة.					
7- أتغيب عن العمل نتيجة إصابتي بصداع خفيف أو آلام خفيفة أسفل الظهر.					
8- أنتغيب عن العمل في حالة إصابتي بالإرهاق.					
9- أتغيب عن العمل في حال حصول مشكلة مادية					
10- أتغيب عن العمل في حال مرض أحد أفراد أسرتي: أبنائي، أبي، أمي، زوجتي، ...					
11- أتغيب عن العمل في حال وفاة أحد أقرائي: عمي، خالي، جدتي، جدي، ...					
12- أتغيب عن العمل في حال وفاة أحد الجيران أو الأصدقاء المقربين.					
13- لا أحرص على القدوم للعمل في الوقت المناسب.					
14- لا يوجد أصدقاء/صديقات لي داخل العمل ممكن مشاركتهم مشاكل الشخصية.					
15- أشعر بالإحباط من وضع العمل بشكل عام .					
16- أحرص على الحصول على كامل إجازات الطوارئ المسموح به.					
بند	موافق بشدة 100-81	موافق 80-61	لا اعلم 60-41	غير موافق 40-21	غير موافق بشدة

صفر-20 %				%	
					17- نظام المواصلات إلى العمل غير مريح.
					18- أتغيب عن العمل لإطالة عطلة نهاية الأسبوع (مثل أن اخذ يوم الخميس مع يوم الجمعة).
<b>اذكر/بي أي عوامل شخصية أخرى تؤدي للغياب عن العمل؟</b>					
					1.....
					2.....
					3.....
					4.....
<b>ثالثاً: خصائص العمل التي من الممكن أن تؤدي للغياب:-</b>					
					19- أعرف طبيعة عملي جيداً.
					20- لا يوجد وضوح للمسؤوليات والصلاحيات لدي.
					21- غيابي عن العمل لا يعيق استمرار العمل.
					22- لا يوجد وصف وظيفي واضح لي.
					23- لا يوجد فرص في الوكالة للارتقاء في العمل.
					24- حجم العمل كبير داخل المؤسسة.
					25- ساعات العمل طويلة في المؤسسة.
					26- العمل الموكل لي روتيني.
					27- التنقل داخل العمل من فترة صباحية لفترة مسائية يحفزني على الغياب.
					28- لا أستخدم مهاراتي المتعلقة بالعمل.
					29- لا توجد علاقات اجتماعية مع زملائي في العمل.
					30- لا توجد فترة راحة كافية داخل العمل.
					31- مسؤولياتي داخل العمل كبير جداً.
					32- مكان العمل مليء بالزحمة والضوضاء.
					33- الجمهور الذي أتعامل معه لا يقدر عملي.
					34- حجم فريق العمل الذي أرتبني إليه غير مناسب.
					35- لا أعمل ضمن فريق عمل.
<b>اذكر/بي أي عوامل أخرى تتعلق بخصائص العمل تؤدي إلى الغياب عن العمل؟</b>					

.....1
.....2
.....3
.....4

رابعاً: النمط الإداري الذي من الممكن أن يؤدي إلى الغياب:-

غير موافق بشدة صفر-20 %	غير موافق %40-21	لا اعلم %60-41	موافق %80-61	موافق بشدة 100-81 %	البند
					36- شعار مديري المباشر نفذ ولا تناقش.
					37- لا يتميز مديري المباشر بقدرات إدارية.
					38- لا يحل مديري المباشر مشاكل العمل بطريقة مقنعة.
					39- يعتمد مديري المباشر خلق المشاكل داخل العمل.
					40- ينتقد مديري المباشر الموظفون أمام زملائهم وأمام المستفيدين.
					41- يعتمد مديري المباشر دائماً الانتقادات السلبية للموظفين.
					42- لا يثني مديري المباشر على أي عندما أعمل بطريقة جيدة.
					43- يميز مديري المباشر في التعامل بين الموظفين.
					44- مديري المباشر فاقده الثقة في الموظفين.
					45- يساعد مديري المباشر على خلق جو صدام بين الموظفين ( فرق تسد).
					46- مديري المباشر غير قادر على اتخاذ القرارات.
					47- لا يعمل مديري المباشر على خلق جو عمل محفز للعاملين.
					48- لا يشركني مديري المباشر في اتخاذ القرارات.
					49- لا يعمل مديري المباشر على تحقيق العدالة بين الموظفين.
					50- لا يحترم مديري المباشر زملاء العمل ويقدرهم.

					51- لا يعمل مديري المباشر على تنمية روح الفريق بين الموظفين.
					52- لا يناقش مديري المباشر تقرير التقييم السنوي معي.
					53- لا يشاركون مديري المباشر مناسباتي الاجتماعية والعائلية.

اذكر/ بي اي عوامل أخرى تتعلق بالمدير المباشر تؤدي إلى الغياب؟

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....

خامساً: خصائص المؤسسة التي من الممكن أن تؤدي إلى الغياب:-

غير موافق بشدة صفر-20 %	غير موافق %40-21	لا اعلم %60-41	موافق %80-61	موافق بشدة 100-81 %	البند
					54-نظام الحوافز داخل الوكالة غير عادل.
					55- راتبي الشهري غير كافي.
					56- نظام الترقيات غير عادل داخل المؤسسة.
					57- يوجد نقص في الموظفين داخل المؤسسة.
					58- لا يوجد أدوات ومعدات كافية داخل المؤسسة.
					59- عدد أيام إجازات الطوارئ غير كافية.
					60- مكافئة نهاية الخدمة غير كافية.
					61- قوانين الوكالة غير مناسبة للحد من الغياب.
					62- نظام الترقية السنوية غير كافي (درجة لكل سنة).
					63- مدة الإجازات المرضية التي ينص عليها النظام في الوكالة غير كافية.
					64- نظام التعامل مع الحالات المرضية لدى الوكالة غير عادل.
					65- عدد أيام إجازات الأعياد السنوية غير كافية.

					66- قرارات الوكالة مركزية (لا يشترك بها الموظفين).
<u>اذكر/ بي اي عوامل أخرى تتعلق بصفات مؤسسة الوكالة تؤدي إلى الغياب عن العمل؟</u>					
.....					1
.....					2
.....					3
.....					4

في اعتقادك ما أهم أسباب الغياب عن العمل داخل مؤسسة وكالة الغوث؟

- .....-1
- .....-2
- .....-3

ما أهم الاقتراحات التي تراها مناسبة من أجل التقليل من الغياب لدى موظفين الوكالة؟

- ..... - 1
- ..... - 2
- ..... - 3

شكراً على حسن تعاونكم.

## Annex (2)

Table (2.1) type of absenteeism and No. of days lost through year (2007)

Female number of employees 4405				Male number of employee 5128			
Leave Type	SumOfUnits	Medical_Cert	Sex	Leave Type	SumOfUnits	Medical_Cert	Sex
COMP	515	N	F	COMP	597	N	M

CTO	159.5	N	F	CTO	946.5	N	M
SLHAJ	584	N	F	SLHAJ	980	N	M
SKLV	16172.5	N	F	SKLV	14584.5	N	M
SKLV	19430.5	Y	F	SKLV	20787.5	Y	M
SLLTM	402	N	F	SLLTM	237	N	M
SLWOP	12922	N	F	SLWOP	9865	N	M
SPLV	40	N	F	SPLV	54	N	M
				SUSP	3683	N	M
	<b>50225.5</b>				<b>51734.5</b>		

Source: UNRWA (2008)

Table (2.2) type of absenteeism and No. of days lost through year (2006)

Female number of employees 4221				Male number of employee 5154			
Leave_Type	SumOfUnits	Medical_Cert	Sex	Leave_Type	SumOfUnits	Medical_Cert	Sex
COMP	374	N	F	COMP	413	N	M
CTO	137.5	N	F	CTO	847.5	N	M
SLHAJ	630	N	F	SLHAJ	810	N	M
SKLV	10690	N	F	SKLV	9785.5	N	M
SKLV	14332.5	Y	F	SKLV	15893.5	Y	M
SLLTM	347	N	F	SLLTM	219	N	M
SLWOP	6853	N	F	SLWOP	4998.5	N	M
SPLV	28	N	F	SPLV	54	N	M
				SUSP	2132	N	M
	<b>33392</b>				<b>35153</b>		

Source: UNRWA (2008)

Table (2.3) type of absenteeism and No. of days lost through year (2005)

Female number of employees 3819				Male number of employee 4235			
Leave_Type	SumOfUnits	Medical_Cert	Sex	Leave_Type	SumOfUnits	Medical_Cert	Sex
COMP	49	N	F	COMP	96	N	M
CTO	14	N	F	CTO	174.5	N	M
SLHAJ	500	N	F	SLHAJ	1000	N	M
SKLV	11316	N	F	SKLV	10984.5	N	M
SKLV	14074	Y	F	SKLV	15828	Y	M

SLLTM	158	N	F	SLLTM	105	N	M
SLWOP	8052	N	F	SLWOP	3708	N	M
SPLV	53	N	F	SPLV	37	N	M
	31			SUSP	1383	N	M
	<b>34247</b>				<b>33316</b>		

Source: UNRWA (2008)

**Table 2.4 - Consequences of absenteeism**

	<b>POSITIVE</b>	<b>NEGATIVE</b>
<b>Individual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Reduction of job related stress</li> <li>⌚ Meeting of non-work role obligations</li> <li>⌚ Benefit from compensatory non -work activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Loss of pay</li> <li>⌚ Discipline, formal and informal</li> <li>⌚ Altered job perception</li> </ul>
<b>Co-workers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Job variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Increased work load</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Skill development</li> <li>⌚ Overtime Pay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Undesired overtime</li> <li>⌚ Increased accidents</li> <li>⌚ Conflict with absent worker</li> </ul>
<b>Work group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Work group's knowledge of multiple jobs</li> <li>⌚ Greater flexibility in responding to absenteeism and to production problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Increased accidents</li> <li>⌚ Decreased productivity</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation/ Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Greater job knowledge base in work force</li> <li>⌚ Greater labour force flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Increased costs (overtime, etc.)</li> <li>⌚ More grievances</li> <li>⌚ Increased accidents</li> </ul>
<b>Union officers</b>	Power position is strengthened as they are often seen by management as a means to get employees back to work	Where absence is high, lose credibility for being unable to control their members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Increased costs in processing grievances</li> </ul>
<b>Family</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Opportunity to deal with health or illness problems, marital, child and other family related issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Less earnings</li> <li>⌚ Decline in work reputation</li> </ul>
<b>Society</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Reduction of job stress and mental health problems</li> <li>⌚ Participation in community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⌚ Loss of productivity</li> </ul>

Source: Winfield (1991)

Table (4.1)total number of employees at UNRWA in the Gaza strip and sample size.

Department	Female	Male	Total by Dep.	Sample	
				F	M

Administration	21	159	180	3	10
Education	2952	3277	6229	185	205
Engineering and construction	13	101	114	3	6
Environmental health	5	362	367	3	23
Finance	3	17	20	3	3
Health	359	289	648	22	18
Microfinance & M. enterprise	31	66	97	3	4
Procurement and Logistics	14	161	175	3	10
Relief & Social Services	48	113	161	3	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>3446</b>	<b>4545</b>	<b>7991</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>286</b>

Source: UNRWA (2007)

**Table(7.1) the correlation coefficient between each item of (personal factors) in the field and the whole field.**

Number	item	Person correlation coefficient	p-value
1	Do not appreciate the work at the Agency.	0.472	0.004
2	Ready to leave my job at the agency in the case there is a better opportunity to work in another organization.	0.441	0.006
3	I do not feel any responsibility towards work.	0.557	0.000
4	I am not fully satisfied with my job	0.375	0.017
5	My current job is not commensurate with my ambition.	0.339	0.032
6	My abilities are more than ,the nature of my work at agency.	0.461	0.004
7	Absent from work in case of mild headache or mild low back pain.	0.359	0.023
8	Absent from work on the case of tiredness.	0.331	0.037

9	Absent from work in the case of financial problem.	0.467	0.002
10	Absent from work in the case of illness of a member of my family: my children, my father, my mother, my wife, ...	0.552	0.000
11	Absent from work in the case of the death of a relatives:, my cousin, my grandmother, grandfather ...	0.384	0.017
12	Absent from work in the case of the death of a neighbor or close friends.	0.481	0.003
13	I do not care to come to work at time.	0.552	0.000
14	No friends at the work who can share my personal problem.	0.384	0.017
15	I feel a frustrated due to general working condition.	0.613	0.000
16	I Make sure to get all my emergency leave allowed.	0.529	0.000
17	The transportation system to work uncomfortable.	0.426	0.006
18	Absent from work to prolong the weekend (such as taking on Thursday with Friday).	0.544	0.000

**Table(7.1) the correlation coefficient between each paragraph of (work characteristics) in the field and the whole field.**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Person correlation coefficient</b>	<b>p-value</b>
19	I know the nature of my work well.	0.428	0.008
20	There is no clarity of my responsibilities and powers.	0.477	0.002
21	My absence from work does not hinder the continuation of work.	0.415	0.009
22	No job description is clear to me.	0.398	0.012
23	No opportunities at the agency to upgrade at work.	0.490	0.002
24	large size of work within the agency.	0.349	0.030
25	Long work hours in the agency..	0.511	0.001
26	routinely work entrusted to me.	0.530	0.001
27	Shifting within the work from the morning to the evening lead to absence.	0.384	0.019

28	I do not use my skills which are related to my work.	0.616	0.000
29	No social relationships with colleagues at work.	0.410	0.011
30	No adequate rest period during the work.	0.415	0.009
31	My responsibilities within the work is too large.	0.495	0.001
32	The workplace is full of noise and crowd ness.	0.495	0.001
33	The public Which deal with ,does not respect my work.	0.457	0.003
34	The size of my team work is inappropriate.	0.619	0.000
35	do not work within a team.	0.382	0.017

**Table(7.1) the correlation coefficient between each paragraph of (Management Style) in the field and the whole field.**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Person correlation coefficient</b>	<b>P-value</b>
36	My direct manager slogan implement and then discuss.	0.562	0.000
37	My direct manager does not have administrative capabilities.	0.700	0.000
38	My direct manager Does not solve the work problems in a convincing way.	0.605	0.000
39	My direct managers deliberately create problems within the work.	0.621	0.000
40	My direct manager criticize the staff in front of colleagues and beneficiaries.	0.550	0.000
41	My direct manager deliberately always negatively criticism the staff	0.655	0.000
42	Direct manager does not motivate me when I do well.	0.641	0.000
43	My direct manager discriminates between staff.	0.710	0.000
44	My direct manager has no confidence in the staff	0.742	0.000

45	My direct manager help to create a conflict atmosphere between staff (divide and rule).	0.852	0.000
46	My direct managers unable to make decisions.	0.626	0.000
47	My direct manager does not operate to create motivating atmosphere for workers.	0.682	0.000
48	My direct manager does not make me share him decision making.	0.618	0.000
49	my direct manager does not operate to achieve justice among staff.	0.724	0.000
50	My direct manager does not respect or appreciate colleagues.	0.869	0.000
51	My direct manager does not work on improving the team spirit among staff.	0.766	0.000
52	My direct managers does not discuss the annual appraisal report with me.	0.436	0.005
53	My direct manager does not share me my social and family events.	0.401	0.010

**Table(7.1)the correlation coefficient between each paragraph of (organization characteristics) in the field and the whole field.**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Person correlation coefficient</b>	<b>p-value</b>
54	The system of incentives within the agency unfair.	0.473	0.002
55	Monthly salary of non-sufficient.	0.449	0.004
56	Promotion system unfair within the agency	0.433	0.005
57	There is a shortage of staff within the agency	0.420	0.007
58	There is no adequate tools and equipment within the agency.	0.585	0.000
59	Number of emergency leave days inadequate.	0.494	0.001
60	Equivalent end-of-service inadequate.	0.398	0.011
61	Agency laws inappropriate to reduce absenteeism.	0.590	0.000

62	Annual Upgrading System not enough (step per year).	0.326	0.040
63	Period of sick leave provided by law in the agency is inadequate.	0.614	0.000
64	System to deal with disease cases with the agency unfair.	0.672	0.000
65	The number of days of annual leave holidays inadequate	0.326	0.040
66	The staff member dose not participate in a central agency decision.	0.559	0.000

Annex 3

UNITED NATIONS  
RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR  
PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST



NATIONS UNIES  
OFFICE DE SECOURS ET DE TRAVAUX POUR LES  
REFUGIES DE PALESTINE DANS LE PROCHE-ORIENT

P.O. Box 61, Gaza City  
Or  
P.O. Box 781, IL- Ashqelon

وكالة الأمم المتحدة  
لإغاثة وتنفيذ اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في الشرق الأدنى

Tel: (00972-8) 824-508  
6777 333  
Fax: (00972-8) 6777 444

GAZA FIELD OFFICE

Private and Official

Employee Number: 6293

19 June 2006

Dear Mr. Abu Shammala,

I refer to your letter of 11 June 2006 to the Chief Field Health Programme, Gaza and copied to the Director of UNRWA Operations, Gaza, requesting approval to undertake a Master's thesis research that focuses on absenteeism in UNRWA. Whereas the Agency does not in principle object to supporting staff that wish to undertake thesis project that touch on its practices, there are fundamental issues that staff, including you, are expected to adhere to.

These issues include:

- That this being a private project and solely a partial fulfillment of your Master's studies, you undertake not to use the Agency's name.
- That should you choose to involve UNRWA staff as participants, you will obtain their express consent and provide assurance that you will maintain confidentiality of information obtained.
- This being a private project, it will be undertaken outside UNRWA working hours and should not under any circumstance be carried out at the expense of your work with UNRWA.

Your request is approved on condition that you understand and undertake to adhere to these issues.

I wish you good luck in your academic endeavours.

Sincerely

Ali Na'ami

OiC Administration Department, Gaza

Mr. Raja Abu Shammala  
Senior Staff Nurse  
Thru' CFHP/G

cc. CFHP ✓  
OiC/UOG

