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New evidence on absenteeism and presenteeism

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Abstract

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Notes

1. Conc
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Research and Higher Education. We proceeded in two steps. We first searched the

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following keywords (and their derivatives) in the titles and abstracts of the articles issued between 1970 and 2009: 'absenteeism', 'absence', 'sickness', 'illness' and 'attendance'. Then, if in doubt, we read the abstract of the article to ensure that absenteeism was really the main subject.

2. Employees holding a position equal or beyond the fifth hierarchical level, who in addition are responsible for a business unit, are considered as workers with 'high responsibilities'. It includes heads of department and heads of agency.

3. However, salary elements are rarely relevant for absenteeism/presenteeism studies. The salary is indeed a composite variable: it depends on hierarchical level, age, seniority, gender, etc. As all of these variables also play a role in predicting absences, salary can no longer be introduced as an explanatory variable.

4. By default, absences for illness are recorded as 'short-term illness' absences. When employees suffer from a serious disease, they can claim from a commission for being considered in 'long-term illness'. If so, it provides them additional advantages (especially a larger wage compensation). But, as long as the commission did not pronounce itself, these employees still remain considered in 'short-term illness'. As a consequence, they can show 'short-term' absences longer than 100, 150 or even 200 business days per year. Obviously we must exclude them from an

absenteeism study. For absences longer than 100 business days per year, we consider them as 'long-term illness' absences.

5. For each employee, we compute the following variables: as age, seniority, gender, etc. (find) such a variable is linked to the absence. But (absences), link

6. Technical differences between the two variables (and the real absence) are taken into account, therefore, employees exhibiting a significant difference in the frequency of absences (elements of the explanatory variables), the probability of presenteeism is computed for each employee,



whatever his absence value is. Therefore (and as defined), an employee with a high presenteeism probability can exhibit a positive (and potentially large) absence value. In our data set, even if we assume the strong hypothesis that only individuals with a probability higher than the third quartile value are presenteeists, we find that 26% of the presenteeists do not have a nil absence value.

7. Employees benefit from five days off if they have to look after their ill child. Thus, they are supposed not to take 'short-term illness' leave in that case. These days are fully compensated.

8. The effect depends on the values taken by all the variables. Nevertheless, for an 'average' worker (a 40-year-old man, working full time and without 'high responsibilities'), the gap is about 20 points.

9. The effect is about 15 points for an 'average worker' (see previous note).

10. As underlined previously, the effect depends on the values taken by the variables. For a 40-year-old man, working full time, without 'high responsibilities', the gap is about three days. It means that fixed-term contract workers have absences approximately cut by a third.

11. This effect goes from three days (level 5) to seven days (level 9). It means a cut in absence is even smaller (level 9). There is no diff

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