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Factors influencing student's absenteeism

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Abstract

Colleges and institutions have a frequent challenge with student absence. Absenteeism among university students may have a severe impact on academic achievement and cause a slew of social issues. The prime aim of the study is to investigate the factors affecting the student 'absenteeism and what are the various strategies to overcome the absenteeism of students. For the purpose of this study primary data is collected from the students of Gobindgarh Public College, Alour, Khanna. A survey questionnaire was design to collect data from a sample of 60 students. What is the main cause of student' absenteeism is also investigated by this paper. The paper concludes that among all the causes presented, physical factor is the primary reason why students are absent from their classes. Flu/Fever is the leading culprit in this category. Home related factors, teachers related factors and personal factors follow in that order.

Keywords: Student' absenteeism, culprit, Flu/Fever, strategies

Introduction

Absenteeism is "chronic absence." Chronically absent students are at disadvantage both socially and academically. One of the most annoying experiences for teachers like me is when students are absent. We prepare lesson plans with the objective that 100% of the class will learn from the day's lecture and it is most satisfying when all the students are present on that day. That's why I conducted an action research to understand them better. It is in this context that this action research was undertaken, that is, to identify the factors why students absent themselves from classes. Absenteeism in school refers to the practice of not attending lessons without presenting a valid or reasonable excuse. Absenteeism is a sort of truancy that has a detrimental impact on school achievement ^[8]. A child's absence from school can be caused by a variety of factors, including family health or financial worries, a poor school environment, drug and alcohol abuse, transportation issues, and varying community views about education. This is not a good environment for a youngster to learn in.

Scope of the research:

- The action research is conducted on 60 students who are not regular in their classes.
- The research is restricted to Gobindghar Public College.

Objective of research

- To Know the causes & factors which influencing the student 'absenteeism.
- To know the strategies to prevent the problem of absenteeism.
- To Know what are the most common causes of the absenteeism.

Tools for analysis

All the data was organized, tallied, tabulated and presented in a series of table. Frequency counts, percentage weight values and mean were used in the analysis and interpretation of data.

The responses were analyzed using a five- point likert scale with the following equivalent:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Very often
- always

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Sources of data

- **Primary data:** Questionnaire was prepared and filled by the students who are not regular in their class.
- **Secondary data:** Records and attendance register of students are collected from college.

Limitation of research

The following constraints are certain to have an impact on the study's conclusions:

- The results and findings are based on the respondents' opinions, hence they cannot be generalized.
- Research is restricted to 60 students only.

Review of literature

Many scholars have looked at the causes of absenteeism among students. Assessment demands, poor lecture delivery, lecture schedule, and employment responsibilities are all prominent factors stated by students for non-attendance, according to a research by Newman-Ford, Lloyd, and Thomas. In Uganda's Universal Secondary Education Schools, Osuu (2014) [5] explored the key causes of student absence and potential remedies. The top ten causes of student absenteeism in schools were found to be an absence of scholastic prerequisites, domestic chores, disinterest in education, appetite at school or absence of mid-day meals, sexual harassment at school, long distance to school, illness or disease, loss of parent or close relative, peer influence, and harsh punishment at school. [5]. Student attitude and enthusiasm for learning, according to Paisey and Paisey and Kottosz, is a crucial determinant in student absenteeism. Academic failure, low university effort, and past grades all predicted student

absence, according to Watkins & Watkins. Several researches on the association between class attendance and academic achievement have been undertaken. Phillips, 2010 [7] evaluated the elements that influence student attendance and determined if a proposed incentive scheme would encourage high school students to attend school more frequently. At this school, the adoption of an incentive scheme to boost student attendance enhanced attendance during the third grading period. Administration and instructors assessed student opinions regarding the value of school attendance, as well as academic and environmental aspects. According to Cook and Ezenne, 2010 [2] the impact of personal, educational, and community variables on student absence from school in selected primary schools in Jamaica to find the fundamental cause of absenteeism. The data imply that absenteeism is caused by variables that originate not just in the family, but also in schools, communities, and students themselves. These variables combine to increase primary school absenteeism in Jamaica's rural communities.

Data analysis

Physical factors: In physical factors F_1 used as house is far from college where as F_2 is used as nobody accompanies in going to college.

Interpretation: Among the items cited, the distance of their house to the college has response mean of 4.5. It has highest response. It is followed by nobody accompanies in going to college, with an average of 2.5. This mean house far from college is the main reason for them to be absent from college.

Table 1: Demonstrate the effect of Physical Factors

Parameter	X	F ₁	XF ₁	F ₂	XF ₂
Always	5	52	260	9	45
Very often	4	0	0	9	36
Sometimes	3	1	3	9	27
Rarely	2	2	4	9	18
Never	1	5	5	24	24
Total		$\sum F_1 = 60$	$\sum XF_1 = 272$ MEAN=272/60 =4.53	$\sum F_2 = 60$	$\sum XF_2 = 150$ MEAN=150/60 =2.5

Health factors

In health factor f_3 is used as headache problem, f_4 is used as Down with Fever/Flu, f_5 is other disease like Diarrhoea etc.

Interpretation: In the items cited above revealed that the highest common factor is Fever and Flu with an average of 4.25, followed by Headache with an average of 2.83 and least factor is other diseases with an average of 1.

Table 2: Demonstrate the effect of Health Factors

Parameter	X	F ₃	XF ₃	F ₄	XF ₄	F ₅	XF ₅
Always	5	10	50	0	0	0	0
Very often	4	12	48	0	0	0	0
Sometimes	3	12	36	5	15	0	0
Rarely	2	10	20	5	10	0	0
Never	1	16	16	50	50	60	60
Total		$\sum F_3 = 60$	$\sum XF_3 = 170$ MEAN=170/60 =2.83	$\sum F_4 = 60$	$\sum XF_4 = 75$ MEAN=75/60 =1.25	$\sum F_5 = 60$	$\sum XF_5 = 60$ MEAN=60/60 =1

Personal attitude: In this F_6 is taken as not interested in studies, whereas F_7 is used as didn't wake up early, F_8 Friends influence, F_9 can't concentrate, F_{10} no Friends in class.

reason of students for being absent. It has the highest response average of 2.41. Another reason commonly cited is they can't concentrate in studies and didn't wake up early with same average of 2. Having no Friends in class is also a reason for being absent with an average of 1.26.

Interpretation: Friends influence is the most common

Table 3: Demonstrate the effect of Personal Attitude

Parameter	X	F ₆	XF ₆	F ₇	XF ₇	F ₈	XF ₈	F ₉	XF ₉	F ₁₀	XF ₁₀
Always	5	0	0	8	40	12	60	5	25	3	15
Very often	4	0	0	2	8	5	20	5	20	0	0
Sometimes	3	7	21	10	30	10	30	10	30	2	6
Rarely	2	0	0	2	4	2	4	5	10	0	0
Never	1	53	53	38	38	31	31	35	35	55	55
Total		$\sum F_6=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_6=74}{MEAN=74/60=1.23}$	$\sum F_7=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_7=120}{MEAN=120/60=2}$	$\sum F_8=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_8=145}{MEAN=145/60=2.41}$	$\sum F_9=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_9=120}{MEAN=120/60=2}$	$\sum F_{10}=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_{10}=76}{MEAN=76/60=1.26}$

Teacher Related Factors: In this F₁₁ is used as Teachers Scolded, F₁₂ is can't understand Teacher's lesson and F₁₃ is as don't like the Teacher.

reason for being absent is that student can't understand their Teachers lesson with the average of 2.71, It has been followed by scolded by Teachers and don't like Teachers with the average of 1.23 and 1.1 respectively.

Interpretation: Above table shows that the most common

Table 4: Demonstrate the effect of Teacher Related Factors

Parameter	X	F ₁₁	XF ₁₁	F ₁₂	XF ₁₂	F ₁₃	XF ₁₃
Always	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very often	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sometimes	3	5	15	51	153	2	6
Rarely	2	4	8	1	2	2	4
Never	1	51	51	8	8	56	56
Total		$\sum F_{11}=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_{11}=74}{MEAN=74/60=1.23}$	$\sum F_{12}=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_{12}=163}{MEAN=163/60=2.71}$	$\sum F_{13}=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_{13}=66}{MEAN=66/60=1.1}$

Home related factors: In Home Related Factors F₁₄ is used as Parents ask to be Absent from class, F₁₅ is used as Too occupied with household work and F₁₆ is used as Parents don't care about studies.

Interpretation: Students who say they are too occupied with household work has the highest Mean of 4.18. Parents who ask students to be absent from classes and don't care about their studies have the same response average of 1.13.

Table 5: Demonstrate the effect of Home Related Factors

Parameter	X	F ₁₄	XF ₁₄	F ₁₅	XF ₁₅	F ₁₆	XF ₁₆
Always	5	2	10	42	210	2	10
Very often	4	0	0	4	16	0	0
Sometimes	3	0	0	5	15	0	0
Rarely	2	0	0	1	2	0	0
Never	1	58	58	8	8	58	58
Total		$\sum F_{14}=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_{14}=68}{MEAN=68/60=1.13}$	$\sum F_{15}=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_{15}=251}{MEAN=251/60=4.18}$	$\sum F_{16}=60$	$\frac{\sum XF_{16}=68}{MEAN=68/60=1.13}$

Conclusion

The continuity of a student's learning process is ensured by their attendance in class. Absenteeism from class has a negative impact on a student's academic performance. This is because repeated absences can cause students to miss important information, facts, and directions, resulting in a lack of grasp of a topic, unfinished work, and poor participation in class activities.

Among all the causes presented, physical factor is the primary reason why students are absent from their classes. Flu/Fever is the leading culprit in this category. Home related factors, teachers related factors and personal factors follow in that order.

Of all the factors cited, the top 10 reasons of Student's absenteeism are as follows

- House is far from college.
- Flu & Fever.
- Preoccupation with household work.
- Headache.
- Can't understand teacher lessons.

- Friends influence to be absent from classes.
- Nobody accompanies in going to college.
- Can't wake up early.
- Teachers scold.
- Have no friend in class.

**Strategies can minimize absenteeism
Communicate attendance expectations**

The first step in increasing attendance is to make school attendance standards apparent to students and their families, for example, in the student handbook, on the school website, and in face-to-face meetings. Make sure to emphasize the significance of punctuality and being on time for school. Set a quantifiable attendance target in the school improvement plan if attendance is a school or district-wide concern, and track progress toward that objective on a regular basis.

Keep an eye on the positive ratio

Many schools have procedures in place for recording discipline offences, which generally implies that only negative behaviors are being documented. Negative

reinforcement, such as a verbal scolding for a bad conduct, tends to linger with kids longer, and getting a child back on track requires a lot of positive reinforcement. Teachers can use a 3:1 positivity ratio to guarantee that pupils receive adequate positive reinforcement during the school day. Establish a school-wide expectation that before recording a bad conduct, instructors would acknowledge or recognize at least three good student behaviors. This aids instructors in maintaining a positive mindset and fostering closer relationships with their pupils ^[3].

Make a more pleasant environment

Ensure that school is a place where students are excited to be one of the best ways to get ahead of chronic absenteeism. Students are more engaged in school when they are physically and emotionally happy and safe. This not only leads to increased attendance, but also to improved academic performance. Create an exciting and instructive schedule of events that encourages kids to come to school and engage in interesting activities. To assist instructors in keeping kids on track and acting constructively, establish uniform school and district-wide behavior requirements. Implement PBIS, social and emotional learning, and other culture-focused initiatives. Create goal-oriented incentives to encourage students to attend class and behave well ^[3].

Other measures

- Educate the students on how to take care of their overall well-being.
- Inform parents about the benefits of keeping their children in college.
- Refrain from scolding misbehaving.
- Emphasize that academic success is very much dependent on student attitude towards college.

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