



**ABSENTEEISM AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG
GRADE VIII STUDENTS IN DR. JUAN A. PASTOR
INTEGRATED NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
TALAIBON, IBAAN, BATANGAS**

EVELYN C. VALENCIA
Head Teacher I

I. ABSTRACT

This action research was undertaken, that is, primarily, to identify the factors that cause pupils' absenteeism from their classes, to provide information on the incidence of learner absenteeism in the school, to provide an analysis of the systems that exist in reducing learner absenteeism and monitoring school record-keeping, and to examine the implications of student absenteeism and how does it affects with their academic performances. This action research examined the factors that cause absenteeism of the Grade VIII students of Dr. Juan A. Pastor Integrated National High School for the school year 2021-2022. During first and second grading periods, most number of absentees were recorded. The data gathered was based from the school register (SF1) that was recorded, kept and filled up by the class adviser every day. At the beginning of the third grading period, some of the pupils were still frequent absentees. Because of this scenario, this research was undertaken. It has been responsibility of the teacher to correct such undesirable pupil behavior. Based on the findings, methods/strategies were recommended to minimize, if not eradicate absenteeism or truancy.

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The most common causes of absenteeism can be used as basis of the teachers, parents and administrator in determining the kind of assistance to be given as well as in assessing the impact of frequent absences to academic performance of the pupils

II. INTRODUCTION

Student absenteeism is a serious issue in public education. Concerted efforts have been expended aimed at engaging students and promoting active learning, but schools are still full of “clock -watchers”. Many high schoolers regularly skip classes and to, according some inside reports, “the hallways are virtually empty some Friday afternoons.”

Student absenteeism is a major concern for lecturers at institutions of higher learning. Absences create a dead, tiresome, unpleasant classroom environment that makes students who come to class uncomfortable and the lecturer irritable. Absenteeism disturbs the dynamic teaching-learning environment and adversely affects the overall well-being of classes. In quality terms, absenteeism is a waste of educational resources, time and human potential. Student absenteeism also causes rework and wasted time for lecturers. Lecturers who spend class time re-teaching lessons take instructional time away from students who attend class regularly, and the extra time spent going over absentee homework and class assignment stakes time away from lecturer planning periods and time needed to provide individual assistance. When students are

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absent from class, they miss valuable information resulting from peer-lecturer interaction and the benefits of the specific examples lecturers use to clarify difficult concepts

Going to school regularly is crucially important for a student's education and social skills. Chronically absent students are at a disadvantage both socially and academically. They miss out on critical stages of social interaction and development with their peers, while simultaneously limiting their academic progress. This can result in low self-esteem, social isolation, and dissatisfaction that could well have precipitated non-attendance in the first place.

School absenteeism is an alarming problem for administrators, teachers, parents, society in general, and pupils in particular. Unaccepted absences have a negative effect on peer relationships, which can cause further absences. Teachers identified the effects of absenteeism on students as:

- Academic under-achievement.
- Difficulty in making friends which could lead to boredom and loss of confidence.
- Prolonged absence can have deleterious effects for the child in later life.
- Students who are absent from school are at the greatest risk of dropping out of school early.

Absenteeism also affects the teacher's ability to present classwork in a sequential and organized way. This can have an effect on the progress of all the students in the class. It is the

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aim of every school to lessen, if not eradicate, absenteeism among its students. One way of addressing this problem is to identify the causes of truancy. Once they are singled out, understood, and analyzed, these issues may be addressed with specific actions and measures. This will eventually result in the better performance of the students, teachers, and the school in general.

While other families have limited resources for schooling, there are also parents who give more than what their children need, especially parents who work abroad and the children are left to the care of the "yayas". Since children have nobody to cling to in times of trouble, they join their "barkadas" for protection. Some spend most of their time in the computer houses and internet cafes. The lures of computer games entice these children to give more time in playing rather than staying in school. Over time, schooling is neglected.

Since, evaluation is an integral part of the educative process and forms the basis for decisions as to the nature of the next experience needed by the learner while the attendance of the pupils really affects their scholastic ratings, teachers must do something in order for these pupils to come to school and attend their classes regularly.

It is often argued that the effects of absenteeism are profoundly negative both for the involved individuals and the communities in where pupils live. It is argued that learners who are frequently absent are at risk of not achieving their educational, social or psychological potential and their future career prospects are limited. These learners may become socially isolated, place

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themselves at risk of harm during periods of absence, involve themselves in socially unacceptable and/or illegal activities, have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of basic concepts, feel insecure in the school environment, leave school early, be over-represented in the juvenile justice system and victimize of bullying and harassment.

Generally, some of the common factors that cause absenteeism of pupils from their classes are: pupils' boredom on the teacher's teaching style, students' poor physical health condition, school's geographical location from their houses, students' lack of interest, conduciveness of classroom atmosphere and family problem like separation of parents, domestic violence and mostly poverty.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The most common causes of absenteeism can be used as basis of the teachers, parents and administrator in determining the kind of assistance to be given as well as in assessing the impact of frequent absences to academic performance of the pupils. Based on the findings, methods/strategies were recommended to minimize, if not eradicate absenteeism or truancy.

This study aimed to determine the factors that cause absenteeism and effects on their academic performance among the Grade VIII pupils of Dr. Juan A. Pastor Integrated National High School.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How frequent do respondents absent from class during the first quarter?

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2. What are the factors that cause absenteeism of Grade VIII students of Dr. Juan A.

Pastor Integrated National High School in terms of the following variables such as:

- 2.1 physical,
- 2.2 health,
- 2.3 personal attitude,
- 2.4 teacher-related,
- 2.5 classroom atmosphere, and
- 2.6 Home -related factors?

3. Is there any significant relationship between numbers of absences in their academic performance?

4. What strategies can be proposed to minimize, if not totally eradicate absenteeism among the pupils?

This study was limited to the factors that cause the absenteeism among the Grade VIII students of DJAPINHS for school year 2021-2022. All of the 50 Grade VIII students were the respondents. They were asked to answer the questionnaire.

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (mixed methodology). A quantitative approach was adopted in order to allow the researcher to gather more precise and quantifiable information on the causes and effects of absenteeism. The qualitative methodology was also appropriate to this study because it allowed the researchers to

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get the data directly from the subjects themselves by sitting with the respondents and hear their views, voices, perceptions and expectations in detail. Thus, the researcher recognized several nuances of attitude and behavior that could escape researchers using other methods. The research design used in this study was the descriptive survey method. Babbie and Mouton (2007) define the descriptive survey as the method of research that simply looks with intense accuracy at the phenomena of the moment and then describes precisely what the research sees. Descriptive survey is probably the best method which is available to use in collecting data for the purpose of describing a population large enough to observe directly. Such surveys are also excellent vehicles for the measurement of attitudes and orientations prevalent in a large population.

The main instrument that was used to solicit information was the questionnaire. Self-administered questionnaires with questions to be rated as 1-5 were used for data collection. Interviews were also held with some of the students. Through the use of interviews, the interviewer was able to elaborate on issues and questions as well as clarifying the meaning of statements, answers or questions that may not have been clear to the interviewee.

All the data gathered from the respondents were organized, tallied, tabulated and presented in a series of tables and graphs. Frequency counts, percentage weight values and weighted mean will be used in the analysis and interpretation of data. The responses of the pupils were analyzed using a Likert Scale.

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It was noted that the questionnaire given to pupils were written in their native dialect in order for them to understand and answer the questionnaire better; thus, giving more chances of accurate responses.

The rounding of figures was done to signify classification of responses. The measure of central tendency specifically the mean was used to determine the average value of response or response average of the pupils.

Regarding the output of the action research, the relationship between the daily attendance and academic performance was determined by T-test of independence. However, the profile and performance of the students were evaluated through frequency count and ranking.

Since absenteeism has been one of the most alarming problems in schools over-all performance due to following reasons: physical factors, health, personal attitude, teacher-related, classroom atmosphere and home-related, the researcher made questionnaire as his main data gathering instrument. The questionnaire dealt on the factors that cause absenteeism of the respondents.

To make the content of questionnaires reliable, the researcher sought help from the adviser to accurately check the grammar, style and content that were quite necessary for corrections and revisions. After the adviser's approval, the researcher finalized the draft of the questionnaire.

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The gathered data were tallied, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using appropriate tools. Among all the causes presented, health was the primary reason why students were absent from their classes. Flu/fever was the leading culprit in this category. Oral health, which according to the Department of Education was the main reason why pupils were absent, was just followed in rank among the reasons cited in the said category by the Grade VIII students studying at Dr. Juan A. Pastor Integrated National High School for the school year 2021-2022.

IV. SOLUTIONS UNDERTAKE

The most disturbing thing was that the habitually absent student eventually dropped out of class no matter what the reason or reasons is/are. In line with this, the researcher and his colleagues did their best to prevent such incidence from occurring. But there were things that were beyond their control and they can only do so much. Teachers can only hope that these pupils will go to school next year, change their ways and realize that whatever hindrances in their studies they encounter, their teachers and parents are behind them.

In view of this, the following solutions were made by the researcher to limit the pupils' absenteeism and to prevent its occurrences:

1. Ask the help of the barangay officials to resolve the problem on road going to school to lessen its impact to the pupils' absenteeism.

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2. Suggest to the school head to involve PTA Officers in school improvement planning so they can be partners in encouraging parents to continue supporting their children's studies and prevent frequent absenteeism.
3. Teach and advise pupils on how to take care of their overall well-being like practicing oral hygiene, avoiding communicable diseases, disseminating information about proper hand washing which is the main source of germs and bacteria among children and giving an over-all body wellness.
4. Encourage pupils to develop proper eating habits and inform parents the importance of eating. Since most of the children in the school come from poor families, the researcher stressed out to them the cheap but healthy foods. The researcher may submit the list of his pupils to the school nutrition coordinator so they can be included in the school feeding program.
5. Make classroom conducive to learning and noise-reduction among pupils were prioritized as these really affect them. Older children like the Grade VI pupils tend to have louder voices so it inculcated in them how to speak softly and without needing to shout. Proper disciplinary measures have become the key of the researcher to minimize the problem. The researcher made sure that pupils are comfortable and have no other concerns except the lesson at hand during the teaching-learning process. There is a lively interaction between the teacher and the pupils but the teacher sees to it that it is in modulated voices

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so as not to impair the hearing of the students due to too much noise when doing classroom activities.

6. Include proper room ventilation and lighting so as not to distract pupils from their learning.

7. Inform the parents about the benefit of keeping their children in school at all times when there are classes. Emphasize to parents that if they keep on asking their children to be absent, this will set a bad precedence to the child. During rainy seasons, parents should accompany their children going school for safety. Explain to parents that if they, themselves request their child not to go to school, the pupils will be having the mentality that household concerns are more important than their education. Thus the children will take for granted their coming to school regularly and suffer its consequences.

8. Refrain from scolding the erring pupils although it can't be avoided that the teacher gets peeved with pupils' bad behavior. As much as possible, remind pupils of their wrong doing in a most diplomatic manner. Self-control as a virtue should be observed in the course of the teachers' work.

9. Give extra attention to those who are left behind the lessons. Tap the bright pupils to help their slow learner classmates, for all we know, these slow pupils might learn/understand better if persons of their same age are the ones explaining to them. In other words, cooperative learning is one of the best strategies to be practiced in the teaching-learning process. Once a slow student fully understands the lesson, he/she can keep up with

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his/her other classmates, thus self-confidence is gained. In that way, they will be more motivated to come to school regularly.

10. Imbibe in the mind of the children that their academic success is very much dependent on their attitude towards school, so they will be looking forward in attending their classes regularly. Encourage those who wake up late to have an alarm clock and practice of not scolding the pupils who come late. Give them a time-table to change their sleeping habit for the better and tell them that studying before retiring to bed instead of watching TV should be prioritized and be a habit.

11. Visit the pupils to see the real scenario or environment at home, so that the teacher may have ideas on how to help the learner.

The researcher has cautioned all the parents out there. One of the rules that the researcher has implemented in his class regarding pupil absenteeism was that the parent or guardian should write an excuse letter explaining the reason for the child's absence. Many of them complied. But there were times when a pupil asked other people to write an excuse letter for them, conniving and pretending that they were the parents/guardians. When this happened, the researcher called and informed the parents about it. It was only then that they became aware of the child's absence from class. Some of the parents scolded their child. This kind of incident gave the researcher an insight into pupil's life at home.

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V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings the following conclusions were drawn:

1. There was no student fell under the category of never been absent.

2. Factors that Causes Absenteeism

2.1 Student who do not attend classes increases when students feel unsafe or threatened by the school community or its environment/surrounding going to school.

2.2 Absenteeism related to asthma can be aggravated by different factors including age, poverty, medical care and living environment

2.3 Decreased levels of students' involvement can turn into lack of interest of students in their studies, thus have been associated with reduced attendance.

2.4. Students are less likely to attend school when they perceived their classes are boring or irrelevant; feel unsupported or disrespected by teachers and other school staff.

2.5 The conditions of the school facility, particularly the classroom's ventilation system can be associated with student attendance.

2.6 The parents are very supportive to their children's studies.

3. There is a significant relationship between numbers of absences in their school performance of 50 students.

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VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Some points for the pupils to ponder on in missing their classes are:

1. The parameters dealing with attendance as indicated in the DepEd Manual, the pupils should have enough knowledge regarding the number of absences allowed for the whole year. Further, the consequences should be clearly explained to them
2. Teachers must check the attendance regularly. The total number of absences incurred by the pupils should be reflected in their report cards (Dep Ed Form 138-E) and in their permanent records (DepEd Form 137-E). Further, the teacher should inform the pupils of the total number of absences they incurred per month.
3. The incentives are one of the best ways in order to encourage the pupils to come to school. Simple rewards like school materials mean a lot to them. During the closing program activities, students may be recognized for perfect attendance by giving medals or certificates.
4. The significance of the lessons for the day, the pupils must be given a clear view that every discussed lesson in the class is very significant in their day-to-day living. If they missed something, they would never had the chance to learn the previous lesson.
5. Effects of being absent on the scholastic rating, let the pupils know that every day, the teachers observe their class performance which will be used as a bearing in giving high or low grades in their performance or recitation.

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