

Research Article

Absenteeism Factors of Grade 11th Students: a Case of Jimma Town, Ethiopia Preparatory School

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Abstract

The present study was aimed to investigate the major factors that affect student's attendance in grade 11th students at Jimma preparatory school and aimed to deal with the improvement of student's absenteeism. The aims of this research are to investigate school environment-related factors, affecting student's absenteeism from class, to identify family-related factors affecting student's absenteeism from class and to investigate student's related factors affecting student's absenteeism from class. The sample of the study was taken on 60 students of grade 11 Jimma preparatory school. These study attempts were made to assess the factors that contribute to student's absenteeism and their impact on the teaching & learning process. According to the presentation, interpretation, and analysis, the following points were concluded. The main factors for student absenteeism were multidimensional, that was, problems from the teacher, from the school administration, from parents, from students themselves and due to cause of home school distance. Due to the case of this absenteeism, at the end of the academic year or final exam, they score the lowest result. Therefore, attending class continuously is very important to their academic achievement. Working coordinately by all responsible bodies like teachers, directors, parents, and students themselves was found significance for thing class presentational. To minimize those factors it is better to take attendance in the class, motivating students while teachers teach, taking a measurement for the absentees and making them focus their education only rather rural work (parent help).

Keywords: Jimma preparatory students; Absenteeism; Investigation; Environmental factor.

Introduction

Absenteeism can be defined as persistent, habitual, absence from school. Chronic absenteeism occurs when a student is absent without reason more of school time [1]. According to Auditor General Victoria's this nominal figure is consistently identified regardless of the specific circumstances of the absenteeism [5]. He also identified those four major dimensions of absenteeism truancy, school refusal, the school with a drawl, and early leaving. It important to identify the different dimensions of absenteeism in taking the problem and this requires different interventions. However, the most part truant students tend to spend their away from school and home; time away from home is used to conceal absences from their parents [6]. Truancy, where students arrive late, leaves early or spend away from school. School refusal differs from truancy in

that children refuse to attend school even in the fact of persuasion and punitive measures from parent and school. This form of absenteeism is widely associated with social factors and medical disorders involving persistent non-attendance of school [2].

Several studies show that school refusal is an important dimension in understanding students absenteeism reason for students refused to go to school to avoid fear or anxiety-producing situations to escape from adverse social or evaluative situations, or gain positive tangible reward, missed school to gain parental attention or receive tangible rewards (positive reinforcement) and hadn't specific reason for not attending school. School withdrawals children are absent from school because their parents keep them away from school and frequent basis because of the parent's needs and priorities. This does necessarily equate to approved, absentee

can only be approved by the school is given a reasonable excuse [3]. The study revealed that teachers like absenteeism because of significant problem claim arguing that school absenteeism results in several severe short term consequences beyond declining grades, which include, legal; difficulties, social alienation, family conflict, and individuals distress, making the exploration of truant and absence in the school environment especially significant. The reason student for missing classes that they linked three strongest correlation, why students, and where parents income (greater than income the more they missed classes, time studying (the more time the study the less they missed class) time staying (the more stay, the more missed class, and it is difficult to carry out the education process students irregular attend in the actual classes [7]. Students should full fill the following points. Students should attend class according to the academic program without being absent under unsustainable reasons: Students should make cooperate and learning smooth co-existence with other student [4].

Research design and methodology

Research aims

- i. To investigate school environment-related factors affecting students' absenteeism from class.
- ii. To identify family-related factors affecting students' absenteeism from class.
- iii. To investigate student-related factors affecting students' absenteeism from class.
- iv. To find out the mitigating solutions for student absenteeism.

Generally the aim of this study is to assess the absenteeism factors of grade 11 students for Jimma preparatory school.

Research questions

1. What is school environment-related factors affecting student's absenteeism from class?
2. What are family-related factors affecting students' absenteeism from class?
3. What are student's related factors affecting student's absenteeism from class?
4. What are the solutions that mitigate student absentees?

Questionnaire

Questionnaires were prepared well and distributed to 60 students of grade 11th social and natural students and to three teachers. The

students and teachers questionnaire has both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires. For respondents, a brief oral orientation on how they will fill the questionnaires appropriately was given. Both the respondents (Students and teachers were filled with all the questions.

1. Do your students attend their class regularly?
2. If your answer for question number 1 is "B" why?
3. Do you take attendance at every day?
4. Please, write the measures that should be taken by the school responsible body's to minimize students absenteeism.
5. If your answer for question number 3, is "B" what is the reason?
6. How frequently do you advice and encourage students to always attend
7. If your answer for question number 3, is "A" what measures have been taken when one students, is absent for many days.
8. Do your students attend their class regularly?
9. If your answer for question number 1 is "B" why?
10. Do you take attendance at every day?
11. Please, write the measures that should be taken by the school responsible body's to minimize students absenteeism.
12. If your answer for question number 3, is "B" what is the reason?
13. How frequently do you advice and encourage students to always attend
14. If your answer for question number 3, is "A" what measures have been taken when one students, is absent for many days.
15. Age, sex and background of sample students
16. Teachers response for the closed ended question
17. Do you take attendance at every day?
18. Based on item number "3" if your answer is "sometimes" why?
19. Do you advice and encourage students to always attend in the class.
20. Student's response to their parent's economic activities.
21. student's response to their regular attendance
22. Response of students in their punctuality
23. Students response to reasons of missing class
24. Students response on measurement of attendance
25. Students response to teachers taking attendance
26. Students response on the taking measurement on absenteeism
27. Students response on success fullness of measurement

Data collection and experimental design

Unstructured interviews with the homeroom, teachers were made to get tangible data about the rate of students' absenteeism that in addition to the structured question would be asked by him. The interview (teacher) was voluntary to respond

to all questions that forward or would be asked by the interviewer (researcher). And he was given me relevant information about students' condition in the classroom

Study parameters

The researchers have been conducted the study in Jimma preparatory school in the case of Jimma grade 11 students. The researcher had selected the preparatory school as the study area because the school is model one and, did not have obtained psychological and social support as well as the other researcher gavel's emphasis to that preparatory school.

The target population of the study

This study is intended to investigate the underline reasons that critically cause students absenteeism. And it is difficult to deal with every individual of the population (Students) in Jimma preparatory school by the researcher because of time and resource constraints. The target populations of this study were focused on students' absenteeism from class. The total target population of the study was Jimma preparatory grade eleven social students.

Sampling and sampling techniques

The researchers were used for this study, 60 students (i.e. 40 male and 20 female students) and three (3) teachers were selected from grade 11 students from Jimma preparatory school. The researcher used a simple random sampling technique to select the representative of the population (all students), because, and students in grade 11th class have the same behavior regarding absenteeism. The researcher also used purposive sampling to select the sample teacher, because those teachers are homeroom teachers, English teachers and heads of the English department. Then, the researcher considered that those three teachers have knowledge about students' absenteeism in grade 11th.

Design of the study

In this study, the researcher used a mixed research design quantitative and qualitative research design with a descriptive survey. This provides a greater opportunity for the presented difference views. The most important reasons why the researcher wanted to do, this research in mixed research design is that using qualitative research to identify the issue not obtained that qualitative survey, to generate hypotheses. From

the qualitative research to be tested through quantitative research and will be used qualitative research to understand unanticipated results from quantities and verifying or rejecting the result from quantitative data used to qualitative data. Therefore qualitative and quantitative research design as the study will be intended to describe the excised problem students of absenteeism from classes.

An instrument of data collection

The researchers have used both primary and secondary's data. Primary data come in this would like individuals interviews, direct observation and also the researcher used secondary data from different source reports to document the red and note papers. The researcher would also use quantitative design, survey questionnaire and qualitative design key informant interview and observation method. Survey questionnaires were designed both close-ended and open-ended questions and the key informant interview was structured questions. Therefore major tools that will use to access the information from the sampling population are questionnaires for both teachers and students interview with homeroom teacher and classroom observation.

Method of data analysis

The data gathered from the different sources were edited, analysis and use of a table, percentage the researcher used to analyze and interpret at descriptive method and also the researcher use to analyze and interpret of data obtained through a questionnaire, interview and observation from students and teacher. A numerical data table was used from the close-ended questions of the students and qualitative description or discussions would also be used for students an open-ended question. Teachers question interview, and observation.

Generally, the researcher used to present analysis and interpret the collected data from different sources, and followed the following procedures. Presenting all the student's responses in manner tabulating by using simple analysis technique the numbered responses and percentage of the students will be interpreted and discussed quantitatively (to close-ended question). The teacher's response to the student's response (open-ended questions) unstructured interviews with homeroom teacher and classroom

observation will be discussed in detailed qualitatively.

Results and discussion

This part of the study deals with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data obtained through questionnaire interviews and observation from the students and teachers. The numerical data table is used for the closed-end question of students and qualitative descriptions or discussions were also used for student’s open-ended questions, teacher’s question, and interviews and observations.

From the table 1, we can understand that the majority of the respondents of this study were male students whose age is less than seventeen years old which is 25(62.5%) followed by female students whose age is less than seventeen years old 14(70%). While the remaining are male students whose ages are less than 17 years 15(37.5%) and female students whose age is less than 17 years old this is 6 (30%).

Table 1. Age, sex and background of sample student

| Grade | Age | Sex | | Number of Respondents | | | |
|----------|-------|-----|------|-----------------------|-----|-------|----|
| | | M | % | F | % | Total | % |
| Eleventh | <17 | 15 | 37.5 | 6 | 30 | 21 | 35 |
| | 17-20 | 25 | 62.5 | 14 | 70% | 39 | 65 |
| | >20 | - | - | - | - | - | - |

As have seen in the table 2 the residence of parents and the socio-economic activity of their parents the major for students to learn and not to learn. As briefly described or presented in the above table 55% of students soon both sexes have parents with poor agricultural economic activities that were faced students for difficulties to learn. The distance has also a significant contribution to the student’s absenteeism. Because as we observed on the table, about a total of 55 % of both sexes are come from rural area parents also more influential to the student’s attendance. Because most of the students were uneducated.

Table 2. Students’ responses to their parent’s economic activities

| No | Item | Frequency | Respondents | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|------|---|----|------|------|
| | | | M | % | F | % | Tot. | % |
| 1 | Residence of parents | A. Rural | 10 | 25 | 6 | 30 | 16 | 55 |
| | | B. Urban | 12 | 30 | 2 | 10 | 14 | 40 |
| | | C. Other | 5 | 12.5 | - | - | 5 | 12.5 |
| 2 | Your parent’s economic Activities | A. Trade | 3 | 7.5 | 2 | 10 | 7 | 17.5 |
| | | B. Farming | 4 | 10 | 8 | 40 | 12 | 50 |
| | | C. Governmental employee | 3 | 7.5 | - | - | 3 | 7.5 |
| | | D. Daily employee | - | - | 2 | 10 | 2 | 10 |
| | | E. Other | 3 | 7.5 | - | - | 3 | 7.5 |

On the table 3, 50% of student’s respondents that they did not attend class regularly, while some of the respondents (30%) respond that students attend class only sometimes. Therefore, generally, as information is given above depicts that almost half of the sampled students did not attend class regularly. The students are key elements to determining their task the power is their hand, to know whether meeting their goal or not unless they faced strong difficulties. Similarly, such patterns show on their attending classes. Generally, students’ more or less important factors that influence their task by their carelessness, constraints faced or unknowingly did. Such

reasons probably associated with their absenteeism.

Table 3. student’s response to their regular attendance

| No | Item | Frequency | Respondents | |
|----|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----|
| | | | Num | % |
| 3 | Do you attend class regularly? | A. Yes | 8 | 20 |
| | | B. No | 20 | 50 |
| | | C. Some times | 12 | 30 |

As clearly seen in the table 4, concentrating on the student’s attendance, they respond that only 21% of the students never come late or they arrive at the actual and right

time. But, based on the responses of the students above (34.21 % of students come late usually. While a large number (44.73 %) of the sample students come late some times. This all shows that there is unrespectable of time (not be punctuality) before class begins class to end and even at break is common on most of the students in the actual classroom.

Table 4. Response of students in their punctuality

| No | Item | Frequency | Respondents | |
|----|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------|
| | | | Number | % |
| 4 | Have you ever come late? | A. Yes | 13 | 34.21 |
| | | B. No | 8 | 21 |
| | | C. Some times | 17 | 44.73 |
| | | D. Always | - | - |

Therefore, from the table 5, we can conclude that the major reason for the students' absenteeism or not attend at punctuality time in the classes are student's carelessness, the workload at their home and preferred study themselves.

Table 5. Students response to reasons for missing class

| No | Item | Frequency | Respondents | |
|----|---|--|-------------|-------|
| | | | Number | % |
| 5 | If your answer for question number 3 is "No" what are the four reasons? | A. Carelessness | 14 | 27.45 |
| | | B. Parent influence and workload at home | 12 | 23.53 |
| | | C. I come from rural | 15 | 29.41 |
| | | D. I Prefer to study myself than attend class. | 10 | 19.60 |

The above Table 5 indicates, the major reason for the students that for mostly not attend in the class, because of their carelessness (27.45%) participates were come from rural (29.41%) respondents though there is some contribution for their carelessness and from rural or traveling long distance is factor for exposed students Absenteeism and parental influence (workload at home some contributions for

students absenteeism from classroom as they explained above in the table. Moreover, coming from rural, they also affected by socio-economic and cultural influences.

The table 6 According to most student's responses if either any of the above measurements were taken (given test accidentally or giving value or make to the attendance this is so important to students to attend class completely. The school administration has not that much measure to rules. Based on student's respond on table 6 we can summarize giving test, unfortunately, taking measurements by the administration and giving value for attendance are respectively important to students to attend class completely.

Table 6. Students response on measurement of attendance

| No | Item | Frequency | Respondents | |
|----|---|---|-------------|-------|
| | | | Num. | % |
| 6 | If your answer to Question Number 3 on table 4.1.3 is sometimes what do you think the best way to students attends in class completely? | A. Giving test accidentally | 14 | 48.28 |
| | | B. Taking measurement to be school administration | 10 | 34.48 |
| | | C. Giving value for attendance | 5 | 17.24 |
| | | D. Giving other measurement use. | — | — |

As the table 7 show that 40% of students respond as teachers not take the attendance always while only a few or 30% of students respond teachers take attendance always and 10% of students respond teachers not given attention. Generally based on student's response teachers did not all most every day take attendance As Clearly seen from the above table 4.1.8 55% of students responded as no attention given by the school administration, they don't take any measurement over the absentees. Whereas 15% of students respond to some measures taken by the school administration. This all shows no control is taken that problem

enhances the problem of students on class attendance.

Table 7. Students response to teachers taking attendance

| No | Item | Frequency | Respondents Num. | % |
|----|---|---------------------------|------------------|----|
| 7 | How often your teacher takes attendance and motivates students? | A. Yes | 12 | 30 |
| | | B. No | 16 | 40 |
| | | C. Some times | 8 | 20 |
| | | D. Not attention is given | 4 | 10 |

As one can understand from table 9, students respond is mostly or above half of the students (60%) response to some extent, some measurements taken over absenteeism could not be made them attend a regular class. This also shows that an unsuccessful weakling measurement because of some administration problems. School administrative persons have taking a measurement for a person who is unusual, for instance, is the case student's absenteeism Encourage school –parent relation for the necessary involvement of parents on their child problem.

Table 8. Students response on the taking measurement

| No | Item | Frequency | Respondents Num. | % |
|----|--|---------------|------------------|----|
| 8 | Does the school regulation take any measurement over the absenteeism | A. Yes | 6 | 15 |
| | | B. No | 22 | 55 |
| | | C. Some times | 12 | 30 |

Analysis of student's response to an open-ended question

Here, the researcher also prepared one open-ended question to give change for students to express their information. What do you think about the school administrative bodies do to improve this problem?

The students suggest that school administration, teachers and parents should co-operate to

overcome this problem by providing different services for students in order to attend class regularly. And the school administration should take measurements seriously on the absenteeism.

Table 9. Students response on success fullness of measurement

| No | Item | Frequency | Respondents Num. | % |
|----|---|-------------------|------------------|----|
| 9 | If there is any measurement Taken does it successfully? | A. Yes | 12 | 30 |
| | | B. No | 4 | 10 |
| | | C. To some extent | 24 | 60 |

Table 10. Teachers response to the closed-ended question

| Item | Response of teacher | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Teacher one | Teacher two | Teacher three |
| 1. Do your students attend regularly? | Some times | Some times | Yes |
| 2. If your answer is "sometimes" based on question number "1" why? | Administration problem | Weakness of students | Administration problems |
| 3. Do you take attendance every day? | Some times | Some times | No |
| 4. Based on item number "3" if your answer is "sometimes" why? | Over workload by parents | Over workload by parents | Over workload by parents |
| 5. Do you advice and encourage students to always attend the class. | Always | Always | Some times |

Analysis of teachers' response to the closed-ended question

The researcher also prepared the following closed-ended question in order to know students attendance, problems associated with teachers these are:-Out of the three teachers, two of them respond as students attend their class some times while one response that attends yes. From the above item "1" we can conclude that all students are not always attended is their class due to different reasons. Based on table 3 Teacher response for item "2" is that two teachers respond there as on for students attend

sometimes is due to administration problems that take serious measurements for the absenteeism and one of them also responded that the reasons were due to the weakness of students themselves. For the above question “3” on table 3, two of the three teachers respond that they take attendance some times while one of them responds that he doesn’t take any attendance of every day. For the item “4” above teacher response regarding the reason for teachers take attendance only. For sometimes they were almost similar. Both sample teachers respond that work is the main reason. For not taking attendance. Therefore, we can conclude that there was an over workload between teachers and administration in general. On the base of item 5, teacher response was there is no more motivation to students by the teachers because of workload on teachers, this shows that almost low motivation only to some extent and this affects the student’s attendance.

Analysis of teachers responded to the open

The researcher also prepared one open-ended question to those three teachers to freely express their ideas. Please, write the measurement that should be taken by the school responsible bodies to minimize students’ absenteeism? Those selective teachers gave the following three important ideas. First of all advice for all students before taking any action for the absenteeism and they call their parents to discuss the issue to gather. Finally, the administrator should take serious major for those absentees. Principals, teachers, students, and parents should coordinate to minimizing the number of students per class and another. The responsible bodies should minimize the workload teachers for the week of seriously follow up and take attendance every day. From the above response, we can understand that the workload on the teacher’s parent’s influence on students, and lack of cooperation among all responsible bodies are the main reason for student’s absenteeism.

Analysis of teacher’s response to the interview

This interview was aimed to identify a condition in the classroom and recognize the influential factors to the student’s absenteeism as a base source of data from homeroom teachers of grade 11th. Thus, the researcher wanted to know the homeroom teacher’s suggestion to the pattern of students in the classroom through the suggestion based questions. How often do you take

attendance? Have you observed any difference factors on the number of students in a classroom across a class time difference (from to month or from semester to semester)? What do you think the major factors of the variation rate of student’s absenteeism? The result of the interview is discussed below. The teachers respond that he takes attendance for only some times because of over workload. Deference in large student’s numbers in class varies. With the variety of time (Month to month and semester to semester from week to week and across the Five days, the reason is unclear. But the variation in rate of students absenteeism on the difference is, in the month” December” and Numbers “may” June” especially the rural areas a large number of students do not attend class, because session autumn and spring are over workload on the farmer and since most of the students are preferable to help parents relatively in male students than females students, and peer pressures. Based on the teacher’s suggestions, shifts learning process (morning and afternoon class affects student’s interest to learn, and those who absent for this reason are not few in number.

Analysis of personal classroom observations

The classroom has suggested as the main source of information on student absenteeism, i.e. factors may available in the classroom to that problem. Accordingly, the researcher has observed the following problem that exists in the classroom. A greater range of difference in the rate of student’s absenteeism is cross the school days and both mooring evening shifts. The students form man-day to Thursday in a class were almost proportional, while on Friday the number of students is very low. Because of a large number of students under depression, peer oppression. And in the afternoon class many students are absent, because of the weather condition is not comfortable in the afternoon, it is relatively very hot.

The main factors for students absenteeism’s malty dimension, that is problems form the teachers, from the school administration, from the parent, from the student themselves (carelessness) and due to cause of home-school distance students not be punctual) even at break is common on most of the students on the actual classroom.

It consistent students absenteeism has been placed in many areas, individual delinquency, poor parenting, deviant peer influence, problematic school environments, school maladjustment, teach and administrator attitude, disciplinary techniques emotion states, workload patterns, family conflict, financial resources, availability of job, lack motivation, and lower intelligence [7].

According to cook, and Ezene [6] the Root uses identified four causal factors of student absenteeism Parental factors: several of the communities experience high levels of unemployment this has resulted in parents' inability to find bus fare and lunch money for their children. Students' factors: truancy, students; indiscipline, and illness .Community factors lack of water, lack of electricity and poor transportation. School factors non-critical activities Fridays school the administrative person to have a great role in the educational process in the school when they press their duties and responsibilities. And they are significant in: Monitoring the teachers' activities monitoring student's task.

The students suggest that school administration, teachers and parents should cooperate to overcome this problem by providing different services for students in order to attend class regularly. And the school administration should take measurement seriously on the absentees. First of all advice for all students before taking any action for the absenteeism and then call their parents to discuss the issue together.

Principals, teachers, students, and parents should co-ordinate to minimizing the numbers of students per class and others. The responsible bodies should minimize the workload teacher for sleek seriously follow up and take attendance every day. Working coordinately all responsible bodies like teachers, directors, parents, and students themselves are significance for their class presentation.

It consistent according to Harrison (1998:10) states that students should fulfil the following points. Students should attend class according to the academic program without being absent under unsustainable reasons. Students should attend attentively the lesson in and in out the class offered by teachers. Students

should make cooperate and learning smooth co-existence with other students.

Conclusions

In the present study, attempts were made to assess the factors that contribute to student's absenteeism and their impacts on the teaching& learning process. According to the presentation, interpretation, and analysis, the following points are concluding. The main factors for student absenteeism are multidimensional, that is, problems from the teacher, from the school administration, from parents from students themselves and due to cause of home school distance. Due to the case of this absenteeism, at the end of the academic year or final exam, they score a lowest result. Therefore, attending class continuously is very important to their academic achievement. Working coordinately all responsible bodies like teachers, directors, parents and students themselves significance for thing class presentational. For example, taking attendance in the class, motivating students while teachers teach, taking the measurement for the absentees and making them focus their education only rather rural work (parent help).

Conflict of interest

Authors declared no conflict of interests.

Acknowledgement

The authors' wish to give sincere thanks to Jimma Preparatory School of grade 11 students for allowing us to fill the questioner.

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