



A STUDY ON STUDENTS ABSENTEEISM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CUDDALORE DISTRICT

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Abstract:

The study has been conducted on students absenteeism in secondary schools in Cuddalore district. Students Absenteeism Scale constructed and validated by Dr. G. Visvanathan, Dr. M. Govindan and Mrs. Jothilakshmi (2008). Normative survey method has been used in the present investigation. Simple Random sampling technique has been used in the selection of 250 secondary students studying in Cuddalore District, Tamilnadu, India. Findings revealed that the level of absenteeism of secondary school students is high. There is no significant difference in the absenteeism of secondary school students with regard to gender and medium of study. There is significant difference in the absenteeism of secondary school students with regard to locality of the school and type of school management.

Key Words: Students Absenteeism, Gender, Medium of Study, Locality of the School, Type of School Management and Secondary School

Introduction:

Ubogu (2004:25) identified illness permitted leave, voluntary absenteeism, as common forms of absenteeism. Identified causes of absenteeism include: illness, financial hardship, age, social class, geographical area, truancy and institutional influence. School related factors, such as; teachers' attitude, poor administration, high cost of education, illness due to weather condition such as cold, temperature grey days causes absenteeism among students. Harsh school rules and regulations could cause absenteeism i.e. corporal punishment; families where children prepare themselves for school and parent to work.

Truancy among students is caused by school-related reasons. Bullied by school staff, boredom, dislike of teachers and avoidance of tests. These are without parents' knowledge (Susan Kirk 2003). School authorities authorized absence for ailments, medical and death in the family. Parent particularly in rural areas keep their children at home for domestic activities on market and community festival days. In crises areas, student absence from school for safety reasons.

Need for the Study:

Absenteeism is a major and continuous administrative problem among secondary school students in developing countries. It has long been recognized that high rates of absenteeism in middle and high school are significant problems, but low attendance rates in elementary schools are often overlook. Studies have found that chronic absenteeism usually begins in the elementary grades and that efforts to change attendance patterns become more difficult as students age. Early chronic absenteeism disrupts classroom instruction, reduces the amount of funding schools receive from the state, and is associated with lower levels of academic achievement in later grades, chronic absenteeism in later grades, and higher dropout rates. Research suggests that one in 10 students younger than grade three nationwide is considered chronically absent, defined as missing 10% or more of the school year, however, rates of chronic early absence vary widely across districts and schools. Causes of absenteeism include a variety of family risk factors including poverty, inconsistent parenting, singly parent homes, high rates of mobility, and parent health problems. Hence, He investigator aptly select the topic "A study of students absenteeism in secondary schools".

Operational Definition:

Absenteeism:

Absenteeism in school is the habit of staying away from school without providing a genuine or any reason for not attending classes. Absenteeism is a truant behavior that negatively affects the performance among students.

Secondary School Students:

A student studying 9th to 10th standard in the regular academic stream of education.

Objectives of the Study:

- To find out the level of reasons for absenteeism among secondary school students.
- To find out if there is any significant difference between the boys and girls in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.
- To find out if there is any significant difference between the Tamil medium and English medium

students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

- To find out if there is any significant difference between the rural and urban school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.
- To find out if there is any significant difference between the government and private school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Hypotheses of the Study:

- The level of reasons for absenteeism among secondary school students is average.
- There is no significant difference between the boys and girls in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.
- There is no significant difference between the Tamil medium and English medium students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.
- There is no significant difference between the rural and urban school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.
- There is no significant difference between the government and private school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Method and Sample of the Study:

Normative survey method has been adopted for the present investigation. A random sample of 250 students studying in secondary schools located in Cuddalore district was selected.

Scoring Procedure:

Scoring was done based on the response of the samples for each item. The respondents were requested to put a tick mark against only one of the responses. Yes or No. The Yes response is given 1 mark and No response is given 0. The maximum score is 45 and the minimum score is 0.

Analysis of Data:

Hypothesis 1: The level of reasons for absenteeism among secondary school students is average.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Reasons for Absenteeism among Secondary School Students

Variable	N	M	SD
Reason for Absenteeism	250	24.36	3.32

From table 1, the calculated mean and standard deviation for absenteeism scores of the entire sample is found to be 24.36 and 3.32 respectively, which indicates that the higher than the mid score (23). Therefore hypothesis 1 is rejected and it is concluded that the level of reasons for absenteeism among secondary school students is high.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the boys and girls students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Table 2: 't' Value Reasons for Absenteeism among Secondary School Students in respect of their Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Level of Significance
Reasons for Absenteeism	Male	138	24.53	3.30	0.32	Not Significant
	Female	112	24.38	3.65		

It is inferred from the above table that the 't' value calculated is 0.32, which is lesser than the table value 1.96 at 0.01 level. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the boys and girls in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the Tamil medium and English medium students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Table 3: 't' Value Reasons for Absenteeism among Secondary School Students in respect of their Medium of Study

Variable	Medium of Study	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Level of Significance
Reason for Absenteeism	Tamil	166	24.71	3.91	1.59	Not Significant
	English	84	23.98	2.23		

It is inferred from the above table that the 't' value calculated is 1.59, which is lesser than the table value 1.96 at 0.01 level. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the Tamil medium and English medium students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference between the rural and urban school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Table 4: 't' Value Reasons for Absenteeism among Secondary School Students in respect of their Locality of the School

Variable	Locality of the School	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Level of Significance
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Reasons for Absenteeism	Rural School Students	151	24.97	3.35	2.88	Significant
	Urban School Students	99	23.70	3.48		

It is inferred from the above table that the 't' value calculated is 2.88, which is higher than the table value 1.96 at 0.01 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is significant difference between the rural and urban school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant difference between the government and private school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Table 5: 't' Value Reasons for Absenteeism among Secondary School Students in respect of their Type of School Management

Variable	Type of School Management	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Level of Significance
Reason for Absenteeism	Government School	159	24.99	3.63	3.26	Significant
	Private School	91	23.54	2.91		

It is inferred from the above table that the 't' value calculated is 3.28, which is higher than the table value 1.96 at 0.01 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is significant difference between the government and private school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Findings of the Study:

- The level of reasons for absenteeism among secondary school students is high.
- There is no significant difference between the boys and girls in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.
- There is no significant difference between the Tamil medium and English medium students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.
- There is significant difference between the rural and urban school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.
- There is significant difference between the government and private school students in respect to the level of reasons for absenteeism.

Conclusion:

The present study is a study on students absenteeism in secondary schools in Cuddalore district. It is concluded that the level of reasons for absenteeism among secondary school students is high. There is no significant difference in the absenteeism of secondary school students with regard to gender, medium of study and there is significant difference in the absenteeism of secondary school students with regard to locality of the school and type of school management.

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