

# Educational Management for Pupils with Absenteeism Behaviour Disorders

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## ABSTRACT

Problems affecting students' academic performance in Nigeria include absenteeism which is one of the behavior pupils exhibited that deviate from the social norms of the school. It caused serious problems to the smooth running of the school system, for the progress of the pupils and also the overall education program. There are a lot of effects of absenteeism on the child and society in general. This paper identifies the concept, types, causes, educational management, effects and possible solutions of absenteeism. However, anomie theory which shows the relationship between absenteeism and academic performance were also discussed therein.

Keywords: Education, Management, Pupils, Absenteeism and Behaviour disorders

## INTRODUCTION

Education has been recognized globally as one of the universal ways of survival and improvement of wellbeing of individuals and society at large. Consequently, no nation, government, organization or family will makes effective impacts and lasting success in their daily affairs without having educated citizens. However, it's of no doubt that several factors have posed restriction to the trend of the rapid development in education for which was caused by the presence of different behavior disorders of pupils at schools among them were absenteeism. Many factors were caused students absenteeism in schools which affects their academic performance and leads to other conduct related issues. For the above reasons, it's of great important to make an investigation on the intervention strategies for pupils with absenteeism behavior disorders in the primary schools so as to find out way out to be eliminated or reduced it.

### Concept of Absenteeism

Absenteeism refers to a student being absent from school, it can be motivationally based (i.e. poor relationships with other students, academic failure) and structurally based (i.e. having to work during school hours, taking care of a sick family member). Absenteeism has been documented to have various negative impacts on a student's academic outcomes [1]. Again, the term absenteeism and truancy were used interchangeably for the purpose of this study

because they are similar in meaning although they differ slightly in their contextual application. Another concept closely related to learner absenteeism is school phobia. School phobia refers to unwillingness to attend school and staying at home with the knowledge of the learner's parents. School phobia includes fear of failure and concern about the health and welfare of learners by parents, an example of school phobia is a child's sudden fear of attending because the learner is subjected to criticism by other learners and teachers [2].

### Causes of student's absenteeism

The causes for student absences are diverse and interrelated. Absenteeism can often flare up and subside; however, students may become caught in a cycle of non-attendance. Within the academic literature. Spencer [3] outlined the causes for absenteeism tend to be split into three categories:

1. the school
2. the absentee's family
3. the absentee

The causes for absences are numerous and can arise both from within and outside of the school. Absenteeism can be motivationally based, where a student may not wish to attend; these absences are generally a voluntary and deliberate decision. Whereas, other absences are structurally based, where pupils must miss school due to their life conditions (i.e. having to move frequently), and are

thus, beyond a student's control and are an involuntary decision. Student's absenteeism often begins in elementary school (Grades 1-8), but majority of absenteeism occurs when youths are in secondary school, as this is where students have more autonomy over the decision to be present or absent [1].

### **Effect of Absenteeism**

The consequences of absenteeism are quite diverse, and can include: lowered academic performance, suspensions/expulsions, and dropping out of school [4]. Due to the serious repercussions of absenteeism, educational researchers and policymakers have recommended a number of solutions aimed at reducing its prevalence. These suggestions include: creating tighter links between the absentee and the school, making the curriculum more engaging for students, and even prosecuting parents/guardians and absentees for non-attendance [4]. The causes of absenteeism, the consequences are extensive. Students who are frequently absent tend to perform poorly academically, and some have to repeat a grade level. Absentees tend to have lower academic aspirations and a lack of connection to the school. Many schools often punish students for non-attendance through detentions, suspensions and expulsions [5].

Absenteeism has also been identified as one of the leading precursors to students dropping out of school, which is one of its most commonly cited and grave consequences [5]. There are significant repercussions to leaving school prior to graduation, and school dropouts have been documented to earn less life-time income, depend more heavily on governmental assistance, and are more likely to commit a crime [3]. Many absentees may become locked in this pattern and slowly disengage from their schooling, which may result in leaving school before graduation [4].

### **Factors influencing School Absenteeism**

A number of factors contribute to school non-attendance, schools and their curricula contribute to student absenteeism. Some students avoid school due to boredom with school work, and teacher absenteeism. Lack of challenging and interesting lessons contribute to school non-attendance. If relationships with students and staff are not positive attendance rate is lower. Conflicting relationships with teachers lead students to absent themselves from school [2]. corporal punishment breeds hostility and creates low self-esteem in learners resulting in school absenteeism and also, Sexual relationships where for instances teachers sexual abuse students lead to school-absenteeism [6].

In high poverty environments, students experience absenteeism seeking for part time employment instead of applying themselves fully to their studies. Some parents do not understand importance of

regular school attendance [7]. Parents' inability to promote dedication has an adverse effect on their children's attitude towards school attendance. Girls may absent themselves due to menstruation periods. Peer influence also leads to school absenteeism. Truant individuals are influenced by their peers not to attend school and engage in activities outside the school [7].

### **Educational Management for pupils with**

#### **Absenteeism Behavior Disorders in Schools**

Research studies conducted by Twings [8] on ways of reducing absenteeism or on the treatment of absenteeism in Nigeria schools show that the most popular treatment given to pupils with absenteeism in the school system is "corporal punishment", which in most cases involves cutting of grasses, scrubbing of floors, sweeping of school compound, planting and watering of flowers etc. this approach however, has been referred to as the traditional approach and non-functional.

Counseling can also be used in assisting truants to give up absenteeism. To this effect, when absenteeism is identified, school counselors should ensure that they counsel the students so far identified as absenteeism. Parents should also try to provide some of the basic requirements their children need at school within their meager resources [9]. due to the fact that absenteeism is a difficulty that not only affects the pupils but also the pupil's family, school and the entire society, [10] suggested five primary elements of educational strategy to combat absenteeism, they include;

#### **1. Involvement of Parents in All absenteeism Prevention Activities**

According to this element, parents play the fundamental role in the education of their children, nobody else commands greater influence in getting young persons to go to school every day and recognizing how a good education can be defining his future than the parents.

#### **2. Establishing on-going Absenteeism Prevention Programmed in School**

[10] have reviewed that, absenteeism is a symptom of a much larger problem. In order to curb this bad incidence, school should address underlying needs of each child to ensure that truancy is not re-occurring behavior. Also, pupil's basic educational needs such as good teaching and learning environment, adequate instructional materials and other academic facilities like library, workshops etc. should be provided for pupils so as to help attract their regular school attendance.

#### **3. Ensure that Students Face Firm Sanctions for absenteeism**

For effective reduction of absenteeism, school must communicate to pupils' and families that absenteeism will not be tolerated from any pupil and that any

pupil found in this act must face punishment from related school authorities [11].

**4. Avoid Negative Attitudes Towards Pupils with Absenteeism or Any Special Needs Children**  
Negative attitude towards pupil with absenteeism from home, school and community is another because of their deviant behavior and going wrong way which result in regret later in life. According to [11] Sometimes family members would wish the child is not part of them (Special needs faced problems a times) They are treated differently from the way siblings are treated. She recommended that equal treatment should be provided among the children both the so-called-normal and the special needs in the home, school and environment.

#### **5. Create Meaningful Incentives for Parental Responsibility**

Following this principle, the school should create incentive programmed for both parents and children, such as participation in public funded activities and cash awards to be given to any parent who plays positive role in truancy reduction among students. On the other hand, negative sanctions like fines and imprisonment should be administered to parents who are not care about their wards irregular attendance to school. All this will help to promote parental responsibility towards the reduction of truancy [10]. It is also required of educational administrator in special education to have excellent, interpersonal, leadership, organizational and motivational skills, he/she would need to be able to communicate clearly with students, staff, parents and outside agencies. Understand the issues and challenges that his/her students face and keep up to date with regulation affecting special needs education at federal and state level, he added that there is also need for the National Policy on Special needs education in Nigeria to be implemented in our government and private schools [12].

Absenteeism behavior disorder of pupils in school is caused by different factors which included school, family and absentee factors. Also, the absenteeism of pupils leads to low, poor academic performance and different behavioral issues. Again, this paper presents the educational intervention for pupils with absenteeism behavior disorders in school among them were, Involvement of Parent in All absenteeism Prevention Activities, Establishing on-going absenteeism Prevention Programmed in School, Ensure that Students Face Firm Sanctions for absenteeism, Avoid Negative Attitudes towards

#### **Another intervention strategies to Absenteeism in the school**

1. achieving a closer bond is through reducing the number of students in a classroom and creating smaller schools
2. having an empathetic staff
3. school to hire counselors and social workers to help students navigate their often-difficult life conditions.
4. The parents/guardians of absentees need to be encouraged to become more involved in their children's schooling. By establishing contact between the school and the absentee's family there can be a closer supervision of when and why a student is absent.
5. create a deterrent to absenteeism, absentees and their families should be prosecuted for non-attendance
6. providing psychiatric support for students exhibiting emotional and/or behavioral problems, as well as assisting youths who are experiencing academic difficulties.
7. researchers have advocated that mainstream schools are not equipped to meet the needs of absentees, and that these students require a different schooling structure - one that is aware of their often-challenging circumstances [13].

#### **Recommendations**

1. Regular attendance to school should be encouraged by parents and teachers.
2. Regular attendance register should be done
3. Reward for regular attendance should be done and punishment to those with absenteeism behavior disorders.
4. Enough and uncongested class room should be maintained by the authorities concerned.
5. Teachers should communicate with the absentees and their parents so as to intervene the issues identified.
6. Enough learning materials should be provided to children in schools.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Pupils with absenteeism or Any Special Needs Children, Create Meaningful Incentives for Parental Responsibility , It is also required of educational administrator in special education to have excellent, interpersonal, leadership, organizational and motivational skills, he/she would need to be able to communicate clearly with students, staff, parents and outside agencies. However, there is also need for the National Policy on Special needs education in Nigeria to be implemented in our government and private schools to intervene behavior and cognitive related issues.

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