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A STUDY ON RURAL AREA'S PUPIL ABSENTEEISM IN SCHOOL EDUCATION IN BIRBHUM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT:

Student absenteeism is a perennial problem of all teachers. Every curriculum year, it is one of the problems that they have to contend to. It is not only the teachers who are concerned with this problem but the school administrators as well. This action research examined the causes of absenteeism of the Grade VIII & IX rural area students of Goyal para tayandra vidyalaya for the school year 2018-2019. When they were in Grade VII & VIII, they were the class which has the most number of absentee's every day. This was gathered from the data contained in the daily attendance record being passed around and kept by the teacher-leader's office every day and is regularly filled up by the teachers in each grade level for the whole year. Now that they are in Grade VII, some of them are still frequent absentees. It is for this reason that this research was undertaken. It has the end in view of understanding and correcting such undesirable pupil behavior. Based on the findings, methods/strategies were recommended to minimize, if not eradicate absenteeism or truancy.

Key word: Rural area, Pupil, Absenteeism, School Education.

INTRODUCTION:

Absenteeism, means students are absence in school activity. In the context of the school it is the habitual or intentional failure from going to school. It cannot be denied that every now and then, students may miss some school activities and lessons. But it becomes a problem if the student will be away from school for many days. Going to school regularly is crucially important for a student's education and social skills. Chronic absentee students are placed at a disadvantage both socially and academically. They miss out on critical stages of social interaction and development with their peers and at the same time impacts negatively on their academic progress. This can result to 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 and the society in general, as well as for the pupils in particular. Unaccepted absence has a negative effect on peer relationship which could cause absence. According to Malcolm, Wilson, Davidson and Kirk (2003) teachers identified effects of absenteeism on children as: academic under-achievement, difficulty in making friends which could lead to boredom, loss of confidence. Also, 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 present class work in a sequential and organized way. This can have an effect on the progress of all the students attending the class.

The families of habitual absentees can also suffer. For a poverty-stricken family, it may mean a continuation of the poverty and unemployment cycle that may run in the family. This also contributes to family conflicts.

The society also suffers as the children of school age hang around in the streets. They can be found just gallivanting around. Since they have nothing to do, they resort to petty crimes like stealing other people's belongings and properties. Others may resort to drug addiction and other behavior that is detrimental to society. Thus, if the student keeps on being away from school for too long, he may grow up to be a liability of his community and of his country as a whole. It is the aim of every school to lessen, if not eradicate absenteeism among its students. One way of addressing this problem is to identify the causes why students become truant from school. Once they are singled out, understood and analyzed, specific actions and measures can be undertaken. This will eventually redound to the better performance of the students, teachers and the school in general. It is in this context that this action research was undertaken, that is, to identify the causes why the Grade VI students in this school absent themselves from their classes.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES:

1. Dhakal, B.R (2016); Absenteeism in Secondary Level: Reasons and Remedies: This action research study has improved my understanding of absenteeism in secondary education. He have gained insight into the multifaceted reasons students are absen. Systemic solutions to attendance problems will originate from a system that is made up of teachers and administrators who understand the importance and interconnectedness of supporting climate, significant relationships, engaging and challenging content and instruction, and rules, policies and procedures.

2. M. Akenji, (2010); Action Research on Absenteeism in School: Among all the causes presented, health is the primary reason why students are absent from their classes. Flu/fever is the leading culprit in this category. Classroom atmosphere, personal attitude, teacher factor and home-related reasons follow in that order. The least reason they give is related to their physical environment. It's done in primary section of school. But present research conduct on class VIII & IX.

3. Michel, (2009); A Qualitative Research Study on School Absenteeism Among College Students. School absenteeism is an alarming problem for administrator teacher and parents and society in general as well as for the student in particular it's indicated low performance of college students, lack of academic and non-academic coordination and as factor influencing lack of reinforcement in particular area. This study conduct in college absenteeism but researcher conduct research on school absenteeism of students.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY: when researcher went to the school for the purpose of taking experience of school engagement as in our part of school internship, researcher follows that some students are absent in every class in this school basically they are belong in particular areas . It is serious problem of this various rural institutions in school education. So researcher consider student's absentness of school as a research topic. Which is help to school to reduce student's absentness in class as well as also help to take appropriate strategies to stop the absenteeism in class which is also fruitful for stop the wastage and stagnation in school education and manage the human resource as well as material resources in effective manner.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM: On the basis of review of related literatures researcher conduct the research on rural area's pupil absenteeism in school education in Birbhum district. Here the pupil absenteeism is major issue in school education that why research focus area is pupil absenteeism.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS:

RURAL AREA: Those area are geographically located outside town and cities as well as low population density and it's come under the panchayat area under the block development office.

PUPILE: those study in class viii and ix under the lower secondary education under the school education system in West Bengal here they are consider as a pupils.

ABSENTEEISM: irregularity in class/ school consider as absenteeism and those who are not attaining the class they are also come under this process.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

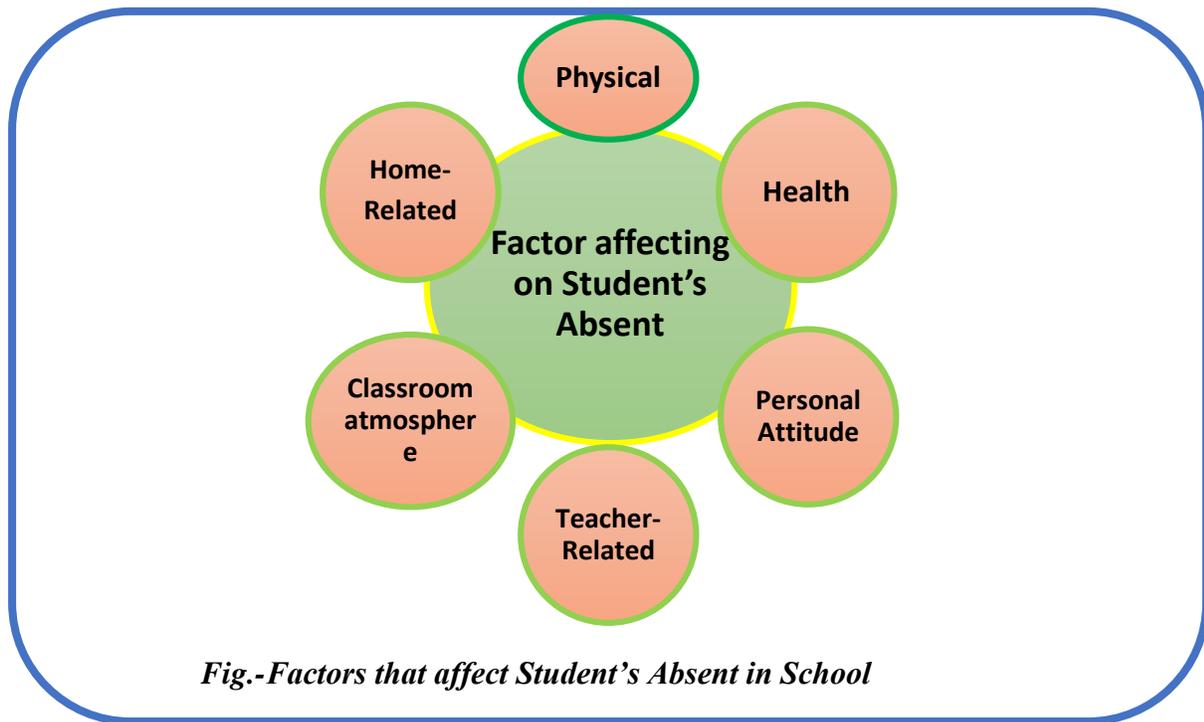
1. To find out the cases of rural area's pupil absenteeism in class.
2. To find out the prevention and strategies to minimize absenteeism of rural area students.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

1. What are the causes of rural area's pupil absenteeism in their classes?
2. What are the prevention and strategies to minimize rural area student absenteeism?

RESEARCH DESIGN:

Researcher consider different factors for the collection data, which are influences to student absenteeism In school. Those factors are showing below in diagrammatic structure-



DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

This study was limited to the causes of absenteeism among rural student of VIII & IX Grade pupils of Goyal Para Tayandra Vidyalaya for school year 2018-2019 in Birbhum District in West Bengal.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY:

METHOD: In this study researcher used descriptive method.

POPULATION: All the students studying at Goyal Para Tayandra Vidyalaya, considered as population in this study.

SAMPLE: Research considered 50 students as a sample who are absent in class VIII & IX.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE: For this research work researcher considered the purposive sampling technique for selection of sample from class VIII & IX.

TOOLS & TECHNIQUES:

A questionnaire was used to determine the causes of absenteeism among the students and also consider school attendance record, participant observation.

OBJECTIVE-1

FINDINGS ON THE CAUSES OF STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

A. PHYSICAL FACTORS

Among the items cited, the distance of their house to the school and the danger posed by walking to the school has the same response average or a mean of 1.04. It means that both are not reasons for them to be absent from school.

B. HEALTH

Fever/flu is the most common reason of students for being absent. It has the highest response average of 2.4. It is followed by headache with an average response of 1.67. Other diseases like diarrhea come in third with 1.61 average responses. The least common reason for them for being absent is stomachache with 1.39 averages.

C. PERSONAL ATTITUDE

Students are not interested in school education, that's the most common reason why he/she is absent. This accounts for 1.91 mean. Another reason commonly cited is that they can't concentrate on their studies and that they were not able to study their lessons. This resulted from 1.45 and 1.37 mean respectively. Feeling lazy and playing computer games also keep them away from school. The former has a response average of 1.26 while the latter has 1.22.

D. TEACHER-RELATED

When the students are scolded for their bad behavior by the teacher, this tends to make them be absent from their classes. It has the highest average response of 1.38 while the reason that they can't understand their lessons follows close behind with 1.32 mean.

E. CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE

The highest mean of 1.77 was accorded to classroom infrastructure is not good which means that this is the primary reason why they tend to be truant. Bullying by fellow student follows with 1.39 response average.

F. HOME-RELATED

"My parents ask me to be absent from school" reason resulted to the highest mean of 1.52. Household chores come second with a response average of 1.47. The other reasons ranged from 1.08 to 1.39 include having no money to spend for snacks and other small expenses in school, no breakfast/food, and that their parents quarreled.

The response average or the mean was computed by multiplying the percentage of responses by the equivalent value of each frequency and then adding them all.

OBJECTIVE -2

PREVENT & STRATEGIES TO MINIMIZE ABSENTEEISM:

The following are strategies to limit the students' absenteeism and prevent their occurrences:

1. Educate the students on how to take care of their overall well-being. Emphasis should be given to oral health and over-all body wellness. Teach them how to avoid communicable diseases as well. Give them information on how to properly wash their hands which is the main source of germs and bacteria among children.

Let them develop proper eating habits. Since most of the children in the school come from poor families, point out to them the cheap but healthy foods. Ask them to pass on this information to their parents.

2. Time and again, classroom atmosphere should be made conducive to learning. Noise-reduction among students should be a priority as this really affects them. Older children like the Grade VI students tend to

have louder voices so it should be inculcated in them how to speak softly and without needing to shout. The key here is discipline. The teacher must also see to it that the students are comfortable and have no other concerns except the lesson at hand. There should be a lively interaction between the teacher and the students but the teacher should see to it that it will be in modulated voices so as not to impair the hearing of the students due to too much noise when doing classroom activities.

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

3. During parents conferences, inform the parents about the benefit of keeping their children in school at all times when there are classes. Emphasize to them that if they keep on asking their children to be absent, this will set a bad precedence to the child. If the parents themselves will be the one to keep them away from school, they will think that household concerns are more important than their education, thus the children will take for granted their coming to school regularly and suffer the consequences of it.

4. Although it can't be avoided that the teacher gets peeved with pupils' bad behavior, he/she should refrain from scolding the erring pupils. As much as possible, remind them of their wrong doing in a most diplomatic manner. Self-control should be a virtue which the teacher should practice in the course of her teaching every day of the school week.

5. Give extra attention to those who are left behind in the lessons. Tap the bright pupils to teach their slower 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 should be practiced in the teaching-learning process. Once a slow student fully understands the lesson, he/she can keep up with his/her other classmates, thus self-confidence is gained. This way, they will be more motivated to come to school regularly.

6. Imbibe in the mind of the children that their academic success is very much dependent on their attitude towards school. Motivate them so they will be looking forward to attending their classes regularly. For those who wake up late, encourage them to have an alarm clock. Do not scold the pupils who come late. Give them a time-table to change their sleeping habit for the better. In line with this, studying before retiring to bed instead of watching TV should be prioritized and instilled to the pupils.

FINDINGS:

1. In this school maximum student are 1st generation learner that why their parents are not so much aware about education.
2. Class room are not suitable for better teaching-learning process in school.
3. Need to give extra attention those are first generation rural learner or pupils.
4. Teacher behavior also one of the reason for student absenteeism so need to established good teacher pupils relationship for betterment of classroom teaching.

CONCLUSIONS:

Among all the causes presented, health is the primary reason why students are absent from their classes. Flu/fever is the leading culprit in this category. Oral health, which according to the Department of Education is the main reason why pupils are absent, is just third among the reasons cited in the said category by the Grade VIII & IX students studying in Goyal Para Tayandra Vidyalaya for the school year 2018-2019. Classroom atmosphere, personal attitude, teacher factor and home-related reasons follow in that order. The least reason they give is related to their physical environment.

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