Study of Students’ Attendance In Relation To Their Academic Achievement and the Reasons behind Their Absenteeism

Ms. Takshashila Jadhav
Assistant Professor K.J. Somaiya Comprehensive College of Education, Training And Research

Abstract: Attendance is the most important element in teaching learning process in Teacher Education as it teaches the fundamentals of responsibility and dedication. The paper is the retrospective study of two years attendance of K.J. Somaiya B.Ed. students of the year 2013-14 and 2014-15 to identify whether there is any relationship between students’ attendance and their academic achievement, also attendance scores are tested with the placements of the students in different schools and also efforts are taken to identify the reasons behind such delinquency among students. The findings indicates that there is a weak relationship between attendance and achievement and also with that of placements of students in different schools. The final pages show the flaws in the program and also some measures for improvement of the same.

If we get our attendance up, around three million, things could change.

Tom Hicks

The Absenteeism and irregular attendance not only hampers students understanding of the topic but also mars the teacher’s effectiveness. Regular attendance improves a person’s sense of responsibility and personal accountability for his/her role at work, if attendance is a person’s priority it affects his motivation to work hard and improve the quality of his work. A person well-groomed in the traits of responsibility and dedication is the one who is sought after and valued by the employer.

Over the years of schooling attendance is given utmost importance however this importance gradually reduces in higher education. If we look back during Vedic period education was treated as one of the holy institution and students seeking admission to these institutions were considered fortunate, as only the chosen few upper caste people use to get this opportunity. As the time passed it was considered that education is the fundamental right of every citizen and thus should be imparted to all without any religious or gender barrier. Though it took many centuries to see this happen, today in our education institution it is seen that students are least worried to attend the classes, this is generally seen in higher education.

Bachelor of Education is a degree course. degree wherein students’ seek admission to become teachers. Teaching profession requires a lot of commitment and persistent efforts to continually improvise the methodology of teaching in order to benefit the students’. Keeping this in mind the course is designed wherein 50% weightage is for theory and 50% for practicum. The tenure for this course is one year as it is a professional course the students have to first clear the CET. K.J. Somaiya Comprehensive College of Education, Training and Research is a private college so it has Association CET which generally is after the Government CET. The Government CET takes place in the month of July and by the time the association CET is conducted August arises and students starts coming from the month of September. For the completion of the course requirements one year is very less over that because of the delaying procedure of CET the course condenses to just 9 months. In these 9 there is 20 days diwali vacation and one week Christmas vacation the teacher educators have to groom the students’ in magnanimous Teaching learning theories and dense practicum, the practicum part alone comprises-

Microteaching - wherein 5 essential elements of teaching are taught,

Lesson Planning - Here students are guided and instructed on the nuances and requirements of making a lesson plans

Practice Teaching- Here the students after the requisite knowledge of first two phases are sent to schools to give lessons.

Internship- In this phase students are sent 15 days to schools wherein they get they get the feel of performing the various roles of a teacher.
For such a compact course the university has mentioned 75% compulsory attendance in the attendance mandate, here if the student misses out on attendance even for a day then he or she misses out many important things which would have served instrumental in shaping the personality of the student. The Primary mode of curriculum delivery at K.J. Somaiya Comprehensive College of Education, Training and Research is full-time, contact lectures, supported by self-directed learning, problem based learning and practice sessions. This mode implies that students should regularly attend face-to-face activities. The academic year of B.Ed College 2013-14, 2014-15, university examination is semester pattern. Despite this students remain absent and give various reasons for their absenteeism which at times are indigestible. So a retrospective study was undertaken over the period of two years in order to see whether there is any relationship between students’ attendance and academic achievement and also to delve into the reasons for high absenteeism the researcher has done some analysis out of the leave applications submitted by the students. For this the required data of students’ attendance, internal assessment and university grades was acquired from the student data base, records and documents of university results.

“Objectives”

• To compare students’ attendance with their academic achievement.
• To compare attendance scores with that of placements of the students in different schools.
• To analyze the leave applications of students to find out the recurring reasons for absenteeism

“Hypothesis”

• There is no significant relationship between students’ attendance and their academic achievement.
• There is no significant relationship between students’ attendance scores and their placements in different schools.

“Research Questions”

-What are the reasons for students’ absenteeism?
-What measures were undertaken to curb students’ absenteeism?

“Literature Review”

There is extensive literature on college attendance and their challenges. A thorough historical review is beyond the scope of this study. This literature review focuses on the gradual dip in the college attendance and its effect on the academic achievements of the students. Some researches focus on the Meta analysis of the class attendance in college and college grades reveals that attendance has strong relationships with both class grades and Grade Point Average. However they show relatively weak relationship with student characteristics such as conscientiousness and motivation. Some researches raise questions on whether forming policies for attendance really worth drawing students to the class. Other focuses on how the policies can enable an individual to become accountable for their delinquency. Other researches focuses on the reasons for falling attendance in colleges such as mushrooming of higher education institutions, Internet based universities. The variables tested here were-Median household income, race and Internet access. Some researchers focused on the change in the attitude of the students over the years and through it formulated some procedures and strategies which increased the attendance of the students. Some others investigated whether having a graded attendance policy would have an effect on course attendance despite mixed findings with regard to educational values and beliefs about the implementation of such policies. On the other hand some papers investigates the socio-economic determinants of school attendance in India, and the possible causes of disadvantage faced by the girl child, here the main concern of the researcher was to highlight the socio-economic determinants of school attendance in India. The present paper focuses on students’ attendance and their academic achievement

“Sample Size”

This is a retrospective study undertaken in order to indirectly explore a relationship, if any between attendance and achievement. The sample used here are B. Ed students for the year 2013-14 and 2014-15

Table-1 Year wise distribution of Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Methodology”
The present study is descriptive wherein the major focus of the researcher is to analyze the students’ attendance and the reasons behind the absenteeism of the students. Here the researcher used quantitative approach to find the relationship of attendance with that of achievement and in order to find reasons behind students’ attendance; qualitative analysis was done with the help of leave applications submitted by the students.

“Tool”

Students ‘Attendance record, University result sheets and Leave applications submitted. Here the major concern was to see whether there is any relation between attendance and students’ achievement and also to understand their problems regarding their absenteeism.

“Analysis”

Following is the year wise analysis of achievement and attendance scores of students’.

**Year 2013-14**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Name</th>
<th>Overall att</th>
<th>Att percentage</th>
<th>Sem I</th>
<th>Sem II</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Salary range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhanushali</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>89.89</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>25000 to 30000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gandhi</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>95.51</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>861</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows that the students’ who had 70 % to 95 % attendance fall in both the slabs one slab shows the highest salary group and the other the lowest salary group.

The researcher in order to identify the reason for absenteeism also analyzed the leave applications of the students. The common reasons that came out were as follows:

- Family outing-get together
- Sibling’s Wedding
- Grant parent’s death
- Cousin’s Engagement
- Uncle or Aunt’s death
- ATKT papers
- Other Courses exam date coincided with the B.Ed. prelim exams, etc.

Conclusion: After careful analysis of the students absenteeism and their reasons for remaining absent Disciplinary measures were taken by the institution to increase the attendance of the students. To make the students aware of their loss defaulters list was taken out every month. It constituted the list of absent students along with the days for which they remained absent. For instilling in them good values constructive punishments were given, like, giving a book review, preparing answers from university question paper, helping the librarian to keep the record of the books, to read the newspaper and then in the assembly to read out the news and give reflection on any one news of their interest.

“Findings”

1) There is no significant relationship between the attendance and achievement scores of the students. Therefore Null’s hypothesis is accepted.

2) There is no significant relationship of attendance scores and academic result scores of students: The result proves that as the students seeking admission to this course are already graduate and some are also post graduate. So they already have the prerequisite knowledge and understanding of the study skills and study habits which they have developed over the period of their schooling years.

3) There is no significant relationship between attendance scores and placement of the students: The institution provides placement facilities however the placements happen towards the end of the course i.e., after completing the course requirements. So having acquired the necessary skills and talents it depends upon the students to secure their position in the placement.

“Recommendations”

Today’s need is a band of quality teachers who would bear the values of punctuality, sincerity and have the necessary skills, intellect and knowledge to shape the future of their students in a right way.
For this the standard of the course should be raised. The time required for the completion of the course should be increased to two years, necessary course requirements such as Microteaching, Practice Teaching and Internship should be given more emphasis. Theories also need to be equally stressed because skills which are tested and which has strong base are much more long lasting and impactful to implement in classroom situations than the skills which have little or no base.

However in order to get quality product out of the training colleges NCERT has made some sweeping changes from the year 2015-16 in increasing the duration of the bachelors of degree course from one to two years and also changing the curriculum to suit the present needs of the society. Not only this but the attendance requirement has been changed from 75% to 80% for regular college and 90% for Internship. By inducing such a massive change the duration of the course in true sense would be of five years, as the minimum eligibility of the course is three year undergraduate program. It was felt that the course will enjoy the solemnity like other professional courses such as BE (four years) and MBBS (five and a half years).

However the other major change of keeping only one common entrance test for government as well as private colleges and keeping the entire admission procedure through internet, the admission procedure instead of being quick has been delayed. The admission for 2017 has been delayed till September and immediately after the admission the First year exam will be in the month of January so again the time left will be insufficient for completing the course requirements.

Such are the flaws of the system, therefore measures should be taken by the apex educational bodies to curb the delay of the admission procedure and work in order to minimize the weaknesses and maximize the strengths of the program. Though the path is new and hurdles are more we should continue our journey forward looking with the belief to find solutions to the problems and become victorious in our aim of producing quality teachers.

“References”


