

The Effects of Various Modes of Absenteeism Problem in School on the Academic Performance of Students in Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This article highlights some of the major research findings regarding the problem of school discipline such as truancy and demonstrates why it is important that schools and communities work to prevent and reduce absenteeism. Beside that this article demonstrated the types of truant and activities done during truant against academic achievement among the lower secondary students.. The respondents for this study were 80 students from form 1, 2 and 3. They were randomly chosen as respondents through simple random sampling. The data collected is analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Science for Windows (SPSS 11.5) to find the mean, frequency and standard deviation by using descriptive statistics. The findings showed that the causes of truant are at the medium level and types of truant are at the low level. Activities done during truant such as helping the family, joining the negative groups, crime are at the low level and working part-time together with loafing are at the medium level.

Keywords: Truant ,academic achievement, helping the family, joining the negative groups, and crime

Introduction

Educational attainment is an important determinant of diverse health outcomes. Truancy among adolescents jeopardizes chances of achieving their educational goals. Truant behaviors are also

associated with various psychosocial problems. There is however limited data on the prevalence and factors associated with truancy among adolescents in Malaysia.

Educational attainment is a crucial predictor of several health-related lifestyles and premature mortality. However truant behaviours have potential to curtail possibilities of meaningful academic achievement. Truancy is a predictor of multiple health risk behaviours among adolescents. Truant adolescents have been reported to engage in risky sexual practices, illicit drug use, alcohol drinking and cigarette smoking [1-4]. Henry [5] has suggested that the unsupervised time that adolescents have when they are truant allows them to initiate and maintain unhealthy behaviours.

Truancy in childhood may be associated with adverse social and health outcome later in life. Studies have reported that adults who were truant as adolescents were more likely to experience marital or job instability and psychosocial maladjustment when compared to their counterparts who were not truant as adolescents [6-8].

A 1990 study by Obondo and Dhadphale reported that about 10% of school non-attendance by children in Kenya was due to truancy [9]. Olley studied 169 street youths in Ibadan, Nigeria [10] and about 47% of these had a history of truancy. These studies suggest an association between truancy and being on the streets as well as that truancy is an important contributor of non-attendance at school.

Other factors that have been reported as associations with truancy are level of parental education, amount of adolescents' unsupervised time, poor school grades and illicit drug use [5]. In order to highlight the significance of truancy in the social discourse in developing countries, there is need to estimate its prevalence and associated factors. There is however limited information about the prevalence of truancy among adolescents in Africa. We believe knowledge about this estimate and associated factors will inform public health and educational policies. We therefore conducted a secondary analysis of the Swaziland Global School-Based Health Survey (GSHS) in order to obtain estimates of prevalence and correlates of truancy among adolescents.

Students are the future heir to the country. Their activities have been the hot topics of discussions and were given warm attention from the whole society. Mass media often broadcast many news and stories about the hoax of the students and various social problems that surrounded them. According to Bettelheim (1950), social problems and criminal acts involving students are coming to an alarming state. At student stage, an individual experiences a very rapid change, either physically, emotionally or socially.

The students' notoriousness are not only confined to smoking cigarettes, fighting with each other or behaving obscenely, but also involving dumping babies, school truancy, running away from home, free sex and mingling. According to Bettelheim (1950), now they even dare to commit serious criminal acts such joining bad syndicate and become gangsters, murder, with or without firearm burglar, rape, prostitution, gambling, vandalism, drug abuse, alcoholic, pornography, and so forth as the main activity when they are playing truant. Problems such as these not only happen in town and urban schools, but also take place in the rural schools. Students who often violate discipline or misbehave in schools are referred as deviant students.

According to Rozumah Baharudin (2003), movement of students from one class to another class provides some of the students the opportunity not to go to the class and this give pleasure to the students and eventually make them dare to play truant. Truancy among school students often apply to students of non-working mothers. Mahadzir also urged the schools' management that in overcoming this problem, efforts should be made to ensure schools become enjoyable places for their students. In addition, the intimate relationship between teachers and students, facilities that encourage their attendance to school and concerns from parents and community could well be the factors that may solve the problem. According to Hishammuddin Tun Hussein (2004), there are many other factors that contribute to school truancy. His Ministry realizes that school truancy is not only caused by the "incompetent of teacher as claimed" and the lay out period of useful activities after examinations season.

Truancy has been labeled one of the top ten major problems in this country's schools, negatively affecting the future of our youth. In fact, absentee rates have reached as high as 30 percent in some cities. The statistics speak for themselves.

- In New York City, about 150,000 out of 1,000,000 students are absent daily. School officials are unsure what portion of the absences are legitimately excusable.
- The Los Angeles Unified School District reports that 10 percent of its students are absent each day. A mere half of these students return with written excuses.
- Detroit's forty public school attendance officers investigated 66,440 truant complaints during the 1994-95 school year (Ingersoll and LeBoeuf 1997).

This Digest examines some of the ways truancy affects both individuals and society, and identifies factors that may place students at greater risk of becoming truant. Guidelines for creating effective attendance policies are considered, and various responses to the problem are described, with the goal of making it easier for districts to implement policies that work for them.

What Are Some of the Consequences of Nonattendance?

Student nonattendance is a problem that extends much further than the school. It affects the student, the family, and the community.

The Los Angeles County Office of Education identifies truancy as the most powerful predictor of delinquency. Police departments across the nation report that many students not in school during regular hours are committing crimes, including vandalism, shoplifting, and graffiti. When Van Nuys, California, officials conducted a three-week sweep for truants on the streets, shoplifting arrests dropped by 60 percent (Garry 1996).

Absenteeism is detrimental to students' achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and employment potential. Clearly, students who miss school fall behind their peers in the classroom. This, in turn, leads to low self-esteem and increases the likelihood that at-risk students will drop out of school.

In a longitudinal study of African-American males, Robins and Ratcliff (1978) found that of those students who were often truant in elementary school and truant in high school, 75 percent failed to graduate. Failure to graduate, in turn, is associated with diminished earning potential in adulthood and other poor outcomes.

What Are Some of the Causes of Truancy?

Before determining the most effective means of controlling unexcused absences, the causes of truant behavior must be understood. Not only may the cause vary from individual to individual, but school staff and students may disagree about the underlying causes. Although many teachers may be empathetic and willing to help students, this difference in opinion may create a barrier of understanding between teacher and student.

In one survey, students cited boredom and loss of interest in school, irrelevant courses, suspensions, and bad relationships with teachers as the major factors in their decision to skip school. On the other hand, most of the school staff believed truancy to be related primarily to student problems with family and peers (ERIC/CEM and Linn-Benton Education Service District 1992).

Are There Guidelines for Creating Effective Attendance Policies?

The National Association of Secondary School Principals makes several recommendations concerning attendance policies that work:

- The policies should be strong. Schools that invest thought and effort into solving the problem make the most headway.
- Participation in the formulation of the attendance policies should be broadly based.

- Attendance expectations, as well as consequences of good and poor attendance, should be specified in writing.
- Policies should be well publicized.
- Policies should be consistently enforced at every level--by teacher, counselor, and principal.
- Absences should be followed up by a telephone call or a letter (cited in Bartlett and others 1978).

Solutions can be divided into four categories: strict laws and regulations, in-school programs, computer technology, and community solutions (Gullatt and Lemoine 1997). Each solution addresses a different set of risk factors; therefore, specific categories or combinations of solutions should be considered when creating an attendance policy.

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Can Truancy Be Controlled from within the School?

Yes, definitely. Peers have an undeniable influence on students' decision to become truant. One study reported that 84 percent of the interviewed truants said their friends skipped school. Antitruancy programs that expose truants to other peer groups and other methods of interaction may be effective in reducing truancy.

After school sports or other programs at the school site give students a chance to make new friends, experience a positive atmosphere, and feel a sense of accomplishment, which, in turn, may reduce their likelihood of skipping school.

The learning environment is also important to student performance. Teachers must arrive on time, give students frequent praise, interact with the entire class (preferably asking open-ended questions), minimize verbal reprimands and other forms of punishment, and deemphasize competition in the classroom (Rohrman 1993).

A Kentucky high school "requires" that teachers compliment marginal students as well as offering them opportunities to succeed daily (Rohrman).

The Osiris School Administration Program, a software package that allows administrators to maintain accurate, up-to-date, detailed information on each student, is being adopted nationally. The program contacts parents of absent students on a daily basis. After the fifth and ninth absence, warning phone calls and computer-generated messages are sent, totaling thirteen contacts to the families. The number of contacts made by the program may be altered to adhere to state or local attendance policies (Gullatt and Lemoine).

Statement of Problems

Truancy is one of the discipline problems that have become more unbecoming in schools. More and more primary and secondary students are inclined to play truant. Busy working parents do not have much time for their children. Are parents going to be held as the main factor for the existence of school truancy problem? Do not be surprised if there is school truancy driven by their parents themselves,

especially those students who are from the primary schools. This is especially obvious on additional classes on Saturdays and after examinations.

The poor attendance could be seen when students from a few classes are combined into one for facilitating teaching purpose. Isn't it the attitude of some of the parents who encourage their children not to attend school has given an unhealthy teaching to their own children? Later in the secondary the students themselves will find various reasons that may excuse them from attending schools. Eventually, they would find that going to school is a burden. These students will then begin to plan with friends to play truant and resort to deviant and lingering at other places.

Students who do not have any self-awareness will perform criminal activity and begin to violate school rules in a way to show their aggressive attitude. The question is, if the parents are responsible to mould the character and behavior of their children, why does the student discipline problem still exist in the school surroundings? Patterson (1989) says that the attitudes of children and destructive family surroundings may not be restored if they do not get assistance from the responsible parties. Therefore, a study was carried out with the aims to identify what are the causes of school truancy, types of truancy and activities that take place at the time of truancy and its influence on the students' academic achievement.

Research Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to identify the aspects that are associated with truancy problem in schools in the district of Skudai, Johor Bahru.

1. Identify the main causes which caused major truancy problems in school such as the influence of the peers, parents, disliking of teachers, disliking of subjects, not completing school work and also family problem among lower secondary schools students in the Skudai District, Johor Bahru.
2. Identify the main types of truancy in schools such as school truancy, class truancy, and co-curriculum truancy among lower secondary schools students in the Skudai District, Johor Bahru.
3. Identify the main types of activities undertaken at the time of truant such as doing part-time job, helping the family, mingle, accompanying bad groups and doing criminal activities among lower secondary schools students in the Skudai District, Johor Bahru.

Methodology of Research

This study utilized surveying methodology. It was aimed at identifying truancy problems that were happening in the secondary schools. According to Mohd Najib (2003), review is only conducted with the objective to get as clear a pattern, something about the widespread phenomenon. The results obtained were of high validity and reliability because the social behavior polar could not change drastically.

The method used in data collection from the respondents was through questionnaire. This method was used because it saved the time of collecting the data in a short period of time. The questionnaire consisted of 4 parts, that is Part A, Part B, Part C and Part D. Part A consisted of questions about the background of students, Part B consisted questions regarding the causes of truancy, Part C consisted questions about types of truancy and Part D were questions concerning the activities undertaken at the time of truancy. Data collected from the questionnaire would be analyzed by using the *Statistical Package for Social Science for Windows (SPSS 11.5)*.

According to Azizi et al. (2007), there are two types of analysis that is descriptive analysis and inference analysis. Descriptive analysis is mean, t-test, percentage, frequency and also the standard deviation. Whereas inference analysis is Pearson Correlation. In this study, the data would be analyzed

using descriptive analysis of mean, standard deviation, percentage and frequency. In addition, inference analysis Pearson correlation was also used in the study to test the hypothesis.

Result of Study

Research Question 1: What are the main causes of truancy such as the influence of the peers, parents, disliking of teachers, disliking of subjects, not completing school work and also family problem among lower secondary schools students in the Skudai District, Johor Bahru?

Table 1: Respondents Distribution Based On Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation for Cause of Influence of Peers

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I played truant because of friend's invitation	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	36 (45.0)	44 (55.0)	4.55	0.501
I played truant because I was being bullied by friends	10 (12.5)	40 (50.0)	14 (17.5)	16 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	2.45	0.953
I played truant because I was being threatened by friends	2 (2.5)	46 (57.5)	16 (20.0)	16 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	2.58	0.839
I played truant because I was often being stolen by friends	15 (18.8)	46 (57.5)	10 (12.5)	9 (11.3)	0 (0.0)	2.16	0.863
I played truant because I was afraid of my friends	7 (8.8)	39 (48.8)	10 (12.5)	18 (22.5)	6 (7.5)	2.71	1.138

Overall mean = 2.8900

Overall Standard Deviation = 0.46104

1: Strongly not agreed

2: Not agreed

3: Undecided

4: Agreed

5: Strongly agreed

Table 1 shows respondents distribution based on percentage, mean and standard deviation for causes on influence of friends. The result of study shows that the item 'I played truant because of friend's invitation' has the highest mean score of and standard deviation 0.501. A number of 36 respondents which is 45 percent agreed with this item, whereas 44 respondents equivalent to 55 percent strongly agree with this item. No respondents who are strongly not agreed, not agreed and undecided with this item.

The item that has the fifth highest mean score is 'I played truant because my things were always stolen by my friends' which is 2.16 and the standard deviation is 0.863. A number of 15 respondents which comprises 18.8 percent strongly disagreed with this item, whereas 46 of the respondents (57.5%) percent disagreed with this item. A number of 10 respondents of which are 12.5 percent are undecided with this item. A number of 9 respondents (11.3%) agreed with this item.

The overall mean is 2.8900 whereas the overall standard deviation is 0.46104. This shows that the academic achievement is at the average level.

Table 2: Respondents Distribution Based On Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation For Cause Of Parents

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I played truant because my parents did not love me	15 (18.8)	49 (61.3)	5 (6.3)	11 (13.8)	0 (0.0)	2.15	0.887
I played truant because my parents were always busy	3 (3.8)	22 (27.5)	0 (0.0)	45 (56.3)	10 (12.5)	3.46	1.136
I played truant because my parents often absent from work	17 (21.3)	52 (65.0)	3 (3.8)	6 (7.5)	2 (2.5)	2.05	0.884
I played truant because my parents did not concern about me	1 (1.3)	16 (20.0)	3 (3.8)	47 (58.8)	13 (16.3)	3.69	1.014
I played truant because my parents loved my siblings more than I	24 (30.0)	51 (63.8)	0 (0.0)	5 (6.3)	0 (0.0)	1.83	0.725

Overall mean = 2.6350

Overall Standard Deviation = 0.37757

1: Strongly not agreed

2: Not agreed

3: Undecided

4: Agreed

5: Strongly agreed

Table 2 shows respondents distribution based on percentage, mean and standard deviation for the cause of parents. Result of study shows that the item 'I played truant because my parents did not bother about me' has the highest mean score of 3.69 and standard deviation 1.014. Only one respondent which is 1.3 percent strongly disagreed with this item whereas a number of 16 respondents which are 20 percent not agreed with this item. A number of 3 respondents which are 3.8 percent are undecided with this item. 47 respondents which are 58.8 percent agreed with this item. 13 respondents which are 16.3 percent highly agreed with this item.

The fifth highest mean score item is 'I played truant because my parents love my other brothers and sisters more than me' which are 1.83 and the standard deviation 0.725. A number of 24 respondents which are 30 percent strongly not agreed with this item, while 51 respondents which are 63.8 percent not agreed with this item. 5 respondents which are 6.3 percent agreed with this item. None of the respondents are undecided and strongly agreed with this item.

The overall mean is 2.6350 and standard deviation is 0.37757. This shows that the academic achievement is at the average level.

Table 3: Respondents Distribution Based On Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation for Cause Of Disliking The Teachers

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I played truant because the teachers were fierce	0 (0.0)	23 (28.8)	1 (1.3)	41 (51.3)	15 (18.8)	3.60	1.098
I played truant because the teachers canned pupils	0.0 (0.0)	22.0 (27.5)	4.0 (5.0)	44.0 (55.0)	10.0 (12.5)	3.53	1.031
I played because the teachers absented often	4 (5.0)	39 (48.8)	3 (3.8)	25 (31.3)	9 (11.3)	2.95	1.211
I played truant because the teachers did not teach well	13 (16.3)	36 (45.0)	11 (13.8)	19 (23.8)	1 (1.3)	2.49	1.067
I played truant because the teachers were not fair	21 (26.3)	47 (58.8)	4 (5.0)	8 (10.0)	0 (0.0)	1.99	0.849

Overall mean = 2.9100

Overall Standard Deviation = 0.43621

1: Strongly not agreed

2: Not agreed

3: Undecided

4: Agreed

5: Strongly agreed

Table 3 shows the respondents distribution based on percentage, mean and standard deviation for the cause of disliking teachers. Result of study shows that the item 'I played truant because of fierce teachers' has the highest mean score of 3.60 and standard deviation 1.098. A number of 23 respondents which are 28.8 percent not agreed with this item. One respondent which is 1.3 percent was undecided with this item. A number of 41 respondents which are 51.3 percent agreed with this item while 15 respondents which are 18.8 percent strongly agreed with this item. There was no respondent who strongly not agreed with this item.

The item that has fifth highest mean score is 'I played truant because the teacher is not fair' which is 1.99 and standard deviation 0.849. A number of 21 respondents which is 26.3 percent strongly not agreed with this item, whereas 47 respondents which are 58.8 percent not agreed with this item. Four respondents which are five percent are undecided with this item. A number of eight respondents which is 10 percent agreed with this item. There was no respondent strongly not agreed with this item.

The overall mean is 2.9100 and standard deviation is 0.43621. This shows that the academic achievement is at the average level.

Table 4: Respondents Distribution Based On Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation for Cause Of Disliking The Subjects

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I played truant because did not like certain subjects	16 (20.0)	33 (41.3)	0 (0.0)	23 (28.8)	8 (10.0)	2.68	1.348
I played truant because did not like to remember	3 (3.8)	32 (40.0)	6 (7.5)	35 (43.8)	4 (5.0)	3.06	1.095
I played truant because everyday learned the same subjects	25 (31.3)	38 (47.5)	1 (1.3)	13 (16.3)	3 (3.8)	2.14	1.145
I played truant because of less practical works	6 (7.5)	22 (27.5)	8 (10.0)	37 (46.3)	7 (8.8)	3.21	1.166
I played truant because did not understand the subject taught	6 (7.5)	30 (37.5)	5 (6.3)	28 (35.0)	11 (13.8)	3.10	1.259
I played because everyday learned the same subjects	25 (31.3)	38 (47.5)	1 (1.3)	13 (16.3)	3 (3.8)	2.14	1.145

Overall mean = 2.8125

Overall Standard Deviation = 0.51346

1: Strongly not agreed

2: Not agreed

3: Undecided

4: Agreed

5: Strongly agreed

Table 4 shows the respondents distribution based on percentage, mean and standard deviation for the cause of disliking the subjects. Result of study shows that the item 'I played truant because there were less practical work' has the highest mean score of 3.21 and standard deviation 1.166. A number of 6 respondents which is 7.5 percent strongly disagreed with this item, whereas 22 respondents which are 27.5 percent not agreed with this item. Eight respondents which are 10 percent were undecided with this item. A number of 37 respondents which is 46.3 percent agreed with this item. Seven respondents which are 8.8 percent strongly agreed with this item.

The item that has fifth highest mean score is 'I played truant because the subjects learnt every day were the same' which is 2.14 and standard deviation 1.145. A number of 25 respondents which are 31.3 percent strongly not agreed with this item, whereas 38 respondents which are 47.5 percent not agreed with this item. One respondent which is 1.3 percent was undecided with this item. A number of 13 respondents which is 16.3 percent agreed with this item. Three respondents which are 3.8 percent strongly agreed with this item.

The overall mean is 2.8125 and standard deviation is 0.51346. This shows that the academic achievement is at the average level.

Table 5: Respondents Distribution Based On Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation for Cause Of Homework

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I played truant because a lot of homework	5 (6.3)	24 (30.0)	2 (2.5)	39 (48.8)	10 (12.5)	3.31	1.208
I played truant because a lot of difficult homework	9 (11.3)	37 (46.3)	8 (10.0)	20 (25.0)	6 (7.5)	2.71	1.182
I played truant because there was no one to guide me on doing homework	10 (12.5)	39 (48.8)	5 (6.3)	22 (27.5)	4 (5.0)	2.64	1.161
I played truant because I did not like homework	12 (15.0)	32 (40.0)	3 (3.8)	27 (33.8)	6 (7.5)	2.79	1.270
I played truant because I could not complete my house work	15 (18.8)	46 (57.5)	0 (0.0)	16 (20.0)	3 (3.8)	2.33	1.111

Overall mean = 3.0250

Overall Standard Deviation = 0.48509

1: Strongly not agreed

2: Not agreed

3: Undecided

4: Agreed

5: Strongly agreed

Table 5 shows the respondents distribution based on percentage, mean and standard deviation for the cause of doing homework. Result of study shows that the item 'I played truant because there were less practical work' has the highest mean score of 3.31 and standard deviation 1.208. A number of 5 respondents which are 6.3 percent strongly not agreed with this item, whereas 24 respondents which are 27.5 percent not agreed with this item. Two respondents which are 2.5 percent were undecided with this item. A number of 39 respondents which is 48.8 percent agreed with this item. 10 respondents which are 12.5 percent strongly agreed with this item.

The item that has fifth highest mean score is 'I played truant because everyday learned the same subjects ' which is 2.33 and standard deviation 1.111. A number of 15 respondents which is 18.8 percent strongly not agreed with this item, whereas 46 respondents which are 57.5 percent not agreed with this item. There was no respondent undecided with this item. A number of 16 respondents which is 20.0 percent agreed with this item. Three respondents which are 3.8 percent strongly agreed with this item.

The overall mean is 3.0250 and standard deviation is 0.48509. This shows that the academic achievement is at the average level.

Table 6: Respondents Distribution Based On Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation for Cause Of Family

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I played truant because my family members often quarreled	16 (20.0)	58 (72.5)	2 (2.5)	4 (5.0)	0 (0.0)	1.93	0.652
I played truant because of financial problem	16 (20.0)	22 (27.5)	0 (0.0)	28 (35.0)	14 (17.5)	3.03	1.467
I played truant because quarreling with my siblings	0 (0.0)	5 (6.3)	2 (2.5)	45 (56.3)	28 (35.0)	4.20	0.770
I played truant because I felt being neglected by my family	10 (12.5)	24 (30.0)	5 (6.3)	29 (36.3)	12 (15.0)	3.11	1.331
I played truant because I did not emphasize on education	13 (16.3)	32 (40.0)	4 (5.0)	24 (30.0)	7 (15.0)	2.75	1.288

Overall mean = 2.6050

Overall Standard Deviation = 0.47731

1: Strongly not agreed

2: Not agreed

3: Undecided

4: Agreed

5: Strongly agreed

Table 6 shows the respondents distribution based on percentage, mean and standard deviation for the cause of doing homework. Result of study shows that the item 'I played truant because fighting with my siblings' has the highest mean score of 4.20 and standard deviation 0.770. There was no respondent strongly not agreed with this item. A number of 5 respondents which is 6.3 percent not agreed with this item. Two respondents which are 2.5 percent were undecided with this item. A number of 45 respondents which is 56.3 percent agreed with this item. A number of 28 respondents which is 35.0 percent strongly agreed with this item.

The item that has fifth highest mean score is 'I played truant because the family members often quarreled' which is 1.93 and standard deviation 0.652. A number of 16 respondents which is 20.0 percent strongly not agreed with this item, whereas 58 respondents which are 72.5 percent not agreed with this item. Three respondents which are 2.5 percent were 'undecided' with this item. A number of four respondents which is five percent agreed with this item. There was no respond strongly agreed with this item.

The overall mean is 2.6050 and standard deviation is 0.47731. This shows that the academic achievement is at the average level.

Research Question 2

2. What are the main types of truancy in schools such as school truancy, class truancy, and co-curriculum truancy among lower secondary schools students in the Skudai District, Johor Bahru?

There are 3 types of truancy that have been done by the respondents in this study namely school truancy, class truancy and Co-Curriculum truancy. The result of this study shows that a number of 64 respondents which is 80 percent never play truant to school and 16 respondents which is 20.0 percent had never been schooling. Meanwhile 28 respondents which is 35 percent had played truant to class and 52 respondents which is 65 percent had never been to class. The result of this study also shows that a number of 10 respondents which is 13 percent had never played truant to Co-Curriculum and 70 respondents which are 87 percent had never attended Co- Curriculum.

3. What are the main activities undertaken by the students at the time of truancy such as doing part-time job, helping the family, lingering, accompany bad groups and doing criminal activities among lower secondary schools students in the Skudai District, Johor Bahru?

Table 7: Respondents Distribution Based On Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation for The Activity Of Doing Part-Time Job

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I played truant because I worked at shopping centre	8 (10.0)	20 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	36 (45.0)	16 (20.0)	3.40	1.327
I played truant because I worked at food stall	23 (28.8)	50 (62.5)	0 (0.0)	7 (8.8)	0 (0.0)	1.89	0.795
I played truant because I worked at sundry shop	33 (41.3)	44 (55.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (3.8)	0 (0.0)	1.66	0.674
I played truant because I worked at entertainment centre	38 (47.5)	42 (52.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1.53	0.503
I played truant because worked at fast-food restaurant	4 (5.0)	24 (30.0)	0 (0.0)	38 (47.5)	14 (17.5)	3.43	1.230

Overall mean = 2.3800

Overall Standard Deviation = 0.40827

1: Strongly not agreed,

2: Not agreed,

3: Undecided,

4: Agreed,

5: Strongly agreed

Table 7 shows the respondents distribution based on percentage, mean and standard deviation for the cause of doing part-time job. Result of study shows that the item 'I worked in the fast food restaurant' has the highest mean score of 3.43 and standard deviation 1.230. A number of 4 respondents which are 5.0 percent strongly not agreed with this item, whereas 24 respondents which are 30.0 percent not agreed with this item. There was no respondent undecided with this item. A number of 38 respondents which are 47.5 percent agreed with this item. A number of 14 respondents which are 17.5 percent strongly agreed with this item.

The item that has fifth highest mean score is 'I worked at entertainment centre' which are 1.53 and standard deviation 0.503. A number of 38 respondents which are 47.5 percent strongly not agreed with this item, whereas 42 respondents which are 52.5 percent not agreed with this item. There was no respondent undecided, agreed and strongly agreed with this item.

The overall mean is 2.3800 whereas the standard deviation is 0.40827. This shows that the academic achievement is at the average level.

Table 8: Respondents Distribution based on frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation For Helping The Family

n: 80

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I helped my family	0 (0.0)	4 (5.0)	3 (3.8)	53 (66.3)	20 (25.0)	4.11	0.693
I took care of my siblings	16 (20.0)	36 (45.0)	2 (2.5)	17 (21.3)	9 (11.3)	2.59	1.328
I took care of my unwell family	9 (11.3)	30 (37.5)	0 (0.0)	35 (43.8)	6 (7.5)	2.99	1.258
I help my family by collecting recyclable things	0 (0.0)	6 (7.5)	2 (2.5)	47 (58.8)	25 (31.3)	4.14	0.791

Overall mean: 2.3438

Overall standard deviation: 0.41026

Strongly not agreed

Not agreed

Undecided

Agreed

Strongly agreed

Table 8 shows the respondents distribution based on percentage, mean, standard deviation for activities to help family. Based on the search, 'I played truants because I helped my family by collecting recyclable things' shows the highest mean score of 4.14 and standard deviation is 0.791. No respondent was 'strongly not agreed' with this items. Six respondents which are 7.5 percent were 'not agreed' with it. Two respondents which are 2.5 percent were 'undecided' with this item. Three respondents which are 3.8 percent 'Agreed' with this item. 47 respondents which are 58.8 percent agreed with this items meanwhile 25 respondent which is 31.3 percent 'Strongly agreed'.

The fourth highest mean is 'I help by taking care of my siblings' which is 2.75 and standard deviation is 1.288. 16 respondents which are 20 percent 'strongly not agreed' with this item while 36 respondents which are 45 percent not agreed with it. Two respondents with

2.5 percent were 'undecided' with this item. 17 respondents which are 21.3 percent strongly agreed with this item while nine respondents which are 11.3 percent strongly agreed with this item.

The overall mean is 2.34338 whereas the standard deviation is 0.40827. This shows that the academic achievement is at average level.

Table 9: Respondents Distribution based on Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation For Mingling Activities

n: 80

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Mingle at shopping complex	3 (3.8)	16 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	41 (51.3)	20 (25.0)	3.74	1.156
Just round in town	9 (11.3)	25 (31.3)	2 (2.5)	42 (52.5)	2 (2.5)	3.04	1.185
Playing games at cybercafe	7 (8.8)	12 (15.0)	0 (0.0)	43 (53.8)	18 (22.5)	3.66	1.232
Stay at home	23 (28.8)	44 (55.0)	0 (0.0)	13 (16.3)	0 (0.0)	2.04	0.974
Mingle at public places	12 (15.0)	44 (55.0)	5 (6.3)	19 (23.8)	0 (0.0)	2.39	1.013

Overall mean: 2.9725

Overall standard deviation: 0.60273

1: Strongly not agreed

2: Not agreed

3: Undecided

4: Agreed

5: Strongly agreed

Table 9 shows respondent distribution on percentage, mean and standard deviation for mingle activity. Based on the study, 'Mingle in shopping complex' shows the highest mean which is 3.74 and standard deviation is 1.156. Three respondents which are 3.8 percent strongly not agreed with this item and 16 respondents which are 20 percent not agreed. No respondent voted for 'undecided'. 41 respondents which are 51.3 percent agreed. 20 respondents which are 25 percent strongly agreed.

The fifth highest mean is 'Stay at friend's home' which is 2.04 and standard deviation is 0.974. Twenty-three respondents which are 28.8 percent strongly not agreed with this item whereas 44 respondents which are 55 percent not agreed with this item. No respondent voted for 'undecided'. 13 respondents which are 16.3 percent agreed with it. No respondents were 'Strongly agreed' with it.

The overall mean is 2.9725 while standard deviation is 0.60273. This concludes that the academic achievement is at average level.

Table 10: Respondents Distribution based on frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation For Involvement In Negative Group

n: 80

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Involved in secret society	36 (45.0)	44 (55.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1.55	0.501
Involved in gangsters	34 (42.5)	41 (51.3)	4 (5.0)	1 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	1.65	0.638
Involved in 'Along' group	40 (50.0)	40 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1.50	0.503
Involved in vandalisme	28 (35.0)	49 (61.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (3.8)	0 (0.0)	1.73	0.656
Involved in 'Mat Rempit'	30 (37.5)	35 (43.8)	0 (0.0)	15 (18.8)	0 (0.0)	2.00	1.067

Overall mean: 1.6850

Overall standard deviation: 0.31466

1: Strongly not agreed,

2: Not agreed,

3: Undecided,

4: Agreed,

5: Strongly agreed

Table 10 shows the respondents distribution according to percentage, mean and standard deviation for involving in negative group. Based on the search, 'Involved in Mat Rempit' shows the highest mean which is 2.00 and standard deviation 1.067. A number of 30 respondents which are 37.5 percent 'strongly not agreed'. Meanwhile, 35 respondents which are 43.8 percent not agreed with this

item. A number of 15 respondents which are 18.8 percent agreed with it. No respondent was undecided and strongly agreed with this item.

The item with fifth highest mean is ‘Involved in ‘Along’ group’ which is 1.50 and standard deviation 0.503. A number of 40 respondents which are 50 percent strongly not agreed with this item whereas 40 respondents which are 50 percent not agreed with this item. None voted for ‘undecided’, ‘agreed’ and ‘strongly agreed’ with this item.

The over all mean is 1.6850 while standard deviation is 0.31466. This shows that academic achievement is at the average level.

Table 11: Respondents Distribution based on frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation For Criminal Acts

n: 80

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Stealing	20 (25.0)	29 (36.3)	0 (0.0)	22 (27.5)	9 (11.3)	2.64	1.407
Destroying public property	43 (53.8)	31 (38.8)	6 (7.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.51	0.799
Robbing	38 (47.5)	42 (52.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.99	0.503
Raping	36 (45.0)	44 (55.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.24	0.501
Gambling	23 (28.8)	48 (60.0)	0 (0.0)	9 (11.3)	0 (0.0)	1.94	0.862
Illegal racing	0 (0.0)	12 (15.0)	0 (0.0)	45 (56.3)	23 (28.8)	4.53	0.948
Drug Tracfficing	43 (53.8)	37 (46.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.46	0.502
Drug Distributing	34 (42.5)	45 (56.3)	1 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.16	0.636

Overall mean: 1.7828

Overall standard deviation: 0.3205

1: Strongly not agreed,

2: Not agreed,

3: Undecided,

4: Agreed,

5: Strongly agreed

Table 11 shows respondents distribution according percentage, mean and standard deviation for criminal act. Based on search, ‘Illegal racing’ shows highest mean which is 4.53 and standard deviation is 0.948. A number of 12 respondents which are 15 percent not agreed with this item. A number of 456 respondents which are 56.3 percent agreed while 23 respondents with 28.8 percent strongly agreed with this item. No respondents were ‘Strongly not agreed’ and ‘Undecided’ with it.

‘Gambling’ has the highest mean score which is 1.94 with standard deviation 0.862. A number of 23 respondents which are 28.8 percent strongly not agreed with this item whereas 48 respondents which are 60 percent not agreed with this item. Nine respondents which are 11.3 percent agreed with this item. No respondent was ‘undecided’ and ‘strongly agreed’ with this item.

The overall mean is 1.7828 while the standard deviation is 0.32054. This shows that the academic achievement is at average level.

Discussion

Overall, ‘doing homework’ is at an average level. This is similar with^[8], who cited that the influence of peers, drug abuse, bully, bored, dislike some of the teachers, trying to skip from exam and unstable family, all contributes to absenteeism problems in school. As a whole, these three types of truants are at the lower level. This is very similar to report^[9] which noticed missing from the class and truant in school comprises the highest percentage of students’ misconduct among the students. The Education

Ministry's target towards 'Zero Defect' will never achieve if both these problems are not solved immediately. This finding is identical to^[10] which said that the latest number of students who involved in truant problems is 34628 students.

Overall, 'doing part-time job' and 'mingling' are at the moderate level. Whereas helping the family and taking part in criminal activities and joining bad groups are still at the lower level. Based on study^[3], most of the students who played truant loved wasting their time by going to entertainment places. Students who played truant would be left behind in study and worst of all, some of them might instead involved in negative activities such as drug abuse, vandalism, gangsters, gambling, mingling, alcoholism and free sex^[11].

Recommendation

Based on the result, discussion and review that have been made, the researcher has some suggestion to put forward:

1. The result shows that disliking the teachers makes truant in low level. Thus, teachers are advised to try to study about as reason to play truant is at moderate level. Therefore, teachers have to understanding the socio-economy and family background of the students in order to know the factors that influenced them. This may be able to help the teachers in understanding the failure or the behavior of the student who played truant. Teachers who are considerable should give reasonable amount of homework based on students' learning level so that the students can complete the work well.
2. The study also shows that parents are also the main reason that leads to absenteeism problems among students. Thus parents should get together with teachers to overcome the absenteeism problem by organizing more short or long courses to increase parental knowledge.
3. The result of this study also found that school, class and co-curriculum absenteeism are on the low level. However, the best way to overcome these problems is to stricken the school rules. Severe punishment such as suspension and expulsion from school should been taken against undisciplined students.
4. In mingling activities parents should pay more attention to their children in schools and spend more time with them as possible. Parents must also pay due attention and control over their children social life to avoid them from picking up the habit of playing truant from school.

Conclusion

In conclusion, all parties should give their cooperation in order to make the dream comes true. Drastic steps should be taken if we are to produce a new and useful generation. Action from one party alone will never make a difference, as such we must stand and work together in order to overcome this problem.

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