ABSENTEEISM: FACTOR AFFECTING STUDIES

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Absenteeism in school is a common problem faced by educators. Some schoolchildren tend to be absent from school most of the time and fall into a pattern of repeated absence. Most of them are willfully absent because they feel uncomfortable to classrooms. This feeling may be due to poor academic achievement, family problems or behavioral causes.

Unfortunately, even some parents refuse to cooperate with teachers in terms of encouraging their children to defy absenteeism. That is why, most schools see the need to build the partnership between parents and the school by providing alternative programs, intervention, and strategies to cure absenteeism. These strategies, however, will not be effective unless the root cause of absenteeism is not analyzed and addressed.

From the dictionary, absenteeism is defined as the practice of regularly staying away from school or work without valid reason. In the school setting, chronic absenteeism is missing ten percent or more of school days. Analyzing our school setting nowadays, we can safely say that absenteeism is indeed, a problem that we should solve immediately. Unauthorized and deliberate absence should be the teacher’s concern because of the valuable educational time which will be lost.

Different types of absenteeism are said to be directed towards different factors. The most common cause, according to studies, is the family’s economic status.

Most students, especially those who are enrolled in barrio schools, tend to be absent from school because they have to work. To augment the family’s meager income, even children at school age have to earn. In addition to that, poor students find it hard to reach schools due to the fact that they do not have enough money for transportation. Moreover, the lack of money leads to poor academic performance because their ability to learn is hindered by hunger, thirst and uncomfortable clothes and footwear.
Another cause of absenteeism is the lack of interest. Teachers know the fact that there are students who are economically able but lacks the motivation to finish schooling. They will enter school during the first few months, but will eventually fall into the habit of absenteeism a few months later. They find it difficult to concentrate on school activities and to be attentive to class discussions. These kinds of students are often the ones who misbehave in class and give teachers a headache. The tendency, though, is to stay away from school most of the time.

Regardless of the cause, a teacher should be able to provide solutions to this compelling problem. Since school absenteeism significantly affects the students’ performance, it is hereby suggested that teachers adopt strategies that will eliminate the said dilemma. Home visitations and frequent parent-teacher conference may sound very traditional but it is proven effective at all time.

The teacher may also look for teaching methods that will catch the interest and curiosity of the learner. The teacher must see to it that the student’s perception of the classroom is a venue that will provide him with worthwhile activities. The learner must perceive the classroom as a place where he can enjoy learning, where he can study and play at the same time. Once and for all, the teacher should eliminate the stigma that is associated with the four corners of the classroom.

In terms of the student’s economic profile, it is always best to seek the support of the community, especially the government officials. There are schools who has provided free public transport for students who came from far-flung areas. In the morning, students are fetched from their barrio and send to the school. They will be transported back to their homes after class hours.

The problem in absenteeism in school may be an all-time dilemma but the tactics and schemes to eradicate it is countless. At the end of the day, educators should see to it that there is no single Filipino that is not educated.
Finally, the reward of every educator is to see their students ready to face the future, with hands full of dreams and eyes determined to fulfill those dreams. Students who are present in all of the life’s trials yet absent during the time of fear.