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**Abhisek Chakraborty**  
P.G Diploma Student in  
Guidance, Psychological  
Counseling and Family  
Therapy, Special Education  
& HEPSN Cell, Jadavpur  
University.

## Truancy: Threats of Education

**Abhisek Chakraborty**

### Abstract

Research on the truancy from school suggest that a range of factors such as family, ethnicity, the quality of relationship between students and teachers, hobbies and the nature of the classroom environment impact on students' attendance in schools. Data were collected using interview schedule and three interviews. The findings from this study suggest that a number of factors affected students. The behavior of parents, family members and the school environment were found to affect the students. Consistent with the findings in other studies on truancy, this study found that a range of influences such as a lack of support from community, students' perceptions of their performance, the nature of the classroom environment, family structure, lifestyle factors and cultural contributed to students' truanting behavior.

**Keywords:** Truancy, Truanting behavior, Threat, Education

### 1. Introduction

Communities across the nation are taking a renewed interest in the problem of poor school attendance. Without explanation it is not entirely clear what is meant when a student is said to be "truant." For purposes of clarification, it is important to distinguish the term truant from the term absent. According to Teasley (2004) <sup>[10]</sup>, absenteeism can be defined as any event when a student does not attend school. Absenteeism can be affected by any number of factors such as lack of community support, dysfunctional family life, severe weather, personal illness, family illness, physical limitations or any other reason why a student may not attend school on a given day (Teasley). Truancy on the other hand, can be defined as unexcused and unlawful absence from school; typically without parental knowledge or consent. According to Lee and Miltenberger (1996) <sup>[3]</sup>, students that are truant typically spend the time they are out of school away from their home and tend to conceal the absences from his or her parents. Truancy then, is a form of absenteeism that is unexcused and without guardian consent.

Many studies have already been done about truancy, such as Baker, Sigmon & Nugent (2001) <sup>[11]</sup> showed that truancy reduction and keeping students in school. McAra (2004) <sup>[6]</sup> comparison between truancy, school exclusion and substance misuse. Results indicate that truants have a significantly higher incidence of illegal drug use, underage drinking and smoking than non-truanting pupils and rates of substance misuse increase over time. Lasater & Robinson (2007) <sup>[4]</sup> considered comprehensive truancy prevention project. Baleinakorodawa (2009) <sup>[2]</sup> investigate the causes of truancy from mainstream education suggest that a range of factors such as poverty, ethnicity, the quality of relationship between students and teachers, and the nature of the classroom environment impact on students' attendance in schools. Sanchez (2012) <sup>[8]</sup> discussion about truancy and chronic absence.

But in West Bengal especially at Howrah district not a single study was found on the truancy. Therefore present study dug in that corner.

### Objectives of the Study

Present study attempts at:

- ❖ To study the home environment and motif of relationship with family members has any part to do in making a child truant.
- ❖ To finding the effects of the squint group in inspiration a child to be a truant.
- ❖ To investigate the neighborhood has any role to influence in restorative a child to be a truant.
- ❖ To investigates the connection between academic achievement, school environments and truants.
- ❖ To examine the hobby of the truants has any role to play get away from the school.

**Correspondence**  
**Abhisek Chakraborty**  
P.G Diploma Student in  
Guidance, Psychological  
Counseling and Family  
Therapy, Special Education  
& HEPSN Cell, Jadavpur  
University.

**2. Methods**

**Sample:** The sample consists of 30 students from schools in Howrah District. Students were selected purposely. Among 30 students, 25 were male and 5 were female students. The

sample (N=30) which was incidental in nature and matched on the basis of age (11-14 years) and class (VI to IX). Detailed demographic data of respondents were shown in the following table:

Sex	No. of students	Age	No. of students	Class	No. of students
Male	25	11 year to 12 year 5 month	13	VI to VII	10
Female	5	12 years 6 months to 14 years	17	VIII to IX	20
Total	30	Total	30	Total	30

**Tool:** The study was conducted with the following tool.

**Interview Schedule:** It was originally developed and standardized by George Mathew Parampukattil and translated

in Bengali by the present researcher (Chakraborty, 2013). The total schedule has 95 items.

**3. Analyses of Data**

Variables		Number of Respondents	Percent ages
Types of house	Katcha	15	50%
	Pacca	5	16.6%
	Semi Pacca	10	33.3%
Number of rooms in the house	2	15	50%
	3	5	16.6%
	4	9	30%
	5	1	3.3%
Views about type of accommodation	Satisfied	16	53.3%
	Not Satisfied	14	46.6%
Recreational faculties at home	Radio	5	16.6%
	T.V	15	50%
	V.C.D	6	20%
	All of these	4	13.3%
Respondent's view about amenities at home	Sufficient	10	33.3%
	Not Sufficient	20	66.6%
Ecology of Respondents	Rural	14	46.6%
	Semi Urban	10	33.3%
	Urban	6	20%
Relationship with the father	Good	10	33.3%
	Bad	6	20%
	So- So	14	46.6%
	Good	21	70%
Relationship with the mother	Bad	2	6.6%
	So- So	7	23.3%
	Good	7	23.3%
Relationship with the brother	Bad	9	30%
	So- So	14	46.6%
	Good	16	53.3%
Relationship with the Sister	Bad	6	20%
	So- So	8	26.6%
	Good	12	40%
Relationship with other family member	Bad	10	33.3%
	So- So	8	26.6%
	Liking	14	46.6%
Views about the rules and regulation in the family	Disliking	16	53.3%
	Abiding	25	83.3%
Views of respondents	Not abiding	5	16.6%
	Yes	19	63.3%
Views of respondents about compulsion	No	11	36.6%
	Yes	18	60%
Views about their father as a strict disciplinarians	No	5	16.6%
	Not caring	7	23.3%
	Yes	6	20%
Views about their mother as a strict disciplinarians	No	21	70%
	Not caring	3	10%
	Yes	22	73.3%
Opinion about parents point out wrongs	No	8	26.6%
	Yes	21	70%
Respondents opinion about corrective measure by parents	Yes	21	70%

	No	9	30%
Respondent's response when corrected by parents	Yes	25	83.3%
	No	5	16.6%
Respondents emotional reaction to parents when corrected	Yes	22	73.3%
	No	8	26.6%
Views regarding staying with parents, brother and sister	Yes	14	46.6%
	No	16	53.3%
Respondents view regarding staying outside home	Yes	21	70%
	No	9	30%
Respondents view regarding deprivation of things they liked	Yes	18	60%
	No	12	40%
Respondents views of expressing protest	Yes	6	20%
	No	24	80%
Parents behavior when crimes committed by their children	Approve	12	40%
	Disapprove	18	60%
Respondents opinion whether parents provide minimum requirement of their education	Yes	13	43.3%
	No	17	56.6%
Respondents view regarding parents capability to provide	Yes	18	60%
	No	12	40%
Respondents opinion whether parents neglect their children	Yes	6	20%
	No	24	80%
Respondents opinion whether parents love them	Yes	22	73.3%
	No	8	26.6%
Respondents opinion whether their family disorganized	Yes	9	30%
	No	21	70%
views about the relationship existing in the family	Good	20	66.6%
	Bad	10	33.3%
Respondents parents addiction to drinks, drugs& gambling	Yes	14	46.6%
	No	16	53.3%
Parents behavior towards each other	Good	25	83.3%
	Bad	5	16.6%
Economic status of neighborhood of respondents	Poor	12	40%
	Rich	5	16.6%
	Middleclass	13	43.3%
Association of respondents family	Poor	12	40%
	Rich	5	16.6%
	Middleclass	13	43.3%
Rating of association with neighborhood	Very good	17	56.6%
	Satisfactory	11	36.6%
	Bad	2	6.6%
Views of existence of anti social elements in neighborhood	Yes	27	90%
	No	3	10%
Imitation of antisocial elements by respondent	Yes	4	13.3%
	No	26	86.6%
Participation in social function	Yes	25	83.3%
	No	5	16.6%
Surrender to peer pressure	Yes	9	30%
	No	21	70%
Friendship of the respondents	Good sociable peer	26	86.6%
	Bad anti social peer	4	13.3%
Views of respondents to liking the school	Yes	19	63.3%
	No	11	36.6%
Views of respondents to liking of teacher	Yes	12	40%
	No	18	60%
Respondents experience unpleasant with teacher	Yes	14	46.6%
	No	16	53.3%
Respondents views to quality of best teacher	One who teaches well	15	50%
	One who is qualified	4	13.3%
	Good character	7	23.3%
	No comment	4	13.3%
Respondents having intimate friend	Yes	21	70%
	No	9	30%
Common areas of interest of friendship of respondents	Reading	4	13.3%
	Playing	6	20%
	Social work	9	30%
	Music	8	26.6%
	General discussion	3	10%
Respondents quarrelling their friends	Yes	18	60%
	No	12	40%

Respondents Changing school	Changing	10	33.3%
	Not changing	20	66.6%
Any bad treatment from your friends	Yes	14	46.6%
	No	16	53.3%
Respondents having intimate friend	Yes	21	70%
	No	9	30%
Respondents view about boring in the classroom	Yes	9	30%
	No	21	70%
Respondents view about inducement of friends	Yes	8	26.6%
	No	22	73.3%
Respondents interest in study	Yes	16	53.3%
	No	14	46.6%
Reason for disinterest in study	Lack of comprehensive capacity	8	26.6%
	To do work at home	22	73.3%
Reading extracurricular book	Yes	18	60%
	No	12	40%
Kind of books respondents read	Novel	3	10%
	Comics	21	70%
	Other	6	20%
Views about getting good result in every examination	Yes	9	30%
	No	21	70%
Respondents Position in examination	Yes	1	3.3%
	No	29	96.6%
Respondents who failed the examination	Yes	14	46.6%
	No	16	53.3%
Views about causes for failure in examination	Not getting text books	2	6.6%
	Parents negligence	5	16.6%
	Sickness	8	26.6%
	Not getting good coaching	10	33.3%
	Not getting time to study because involvement in agriculture	4	13.3%
	Any other	1	3.3%
Respondents aspiration of life	Yes	28	93.3%
	No	2	6.6%
Respondents ambition of achieving something	Govt. service	9	30%
	Business	3	10%
	Teacher	5	16.6%
	Doctor	4	13.3%
	To be educated	7	23.3%
	Nil	2	6.6%
Parent's expectation for their children	Govt. service	12	40%
	Business	8	26.6%
	Teacher	6	20%
	Doctor	2	6.6%
	To be educated	1	3.3%
	Nil	1	3.3%
Respondents opinion about fulfilling parents expectations	Yes	22	73.3%
	No	8	26.6%
Hobbies of respondents	Plaing games	5	16.6%
	Seeing cinema	12	40%
	Music	3	10%
	Business	0	0%
	Helping the poor	2	6.6%
	Working at home	6	20%
	Painting	2	6.6%
	Nil	0	0%
Respondents attitude to cinema	Like cinema	19	63.3%
	Do not like cinema	11	36.6%
Frequency of viewing cinema	Once	14	46.6%
	Twice	3	10%
	Thrice	6	20%
	Four times	2	6.6%
	More than four	3	10%
	Nil	2	6.6%
Liking violence of cinema	Yes	22	73.3%
	No	8	26.6%
Respondents like to imitate	Yes	18	60%
	No	12	40%
Liking obscene picture	Yes	16	53.3%

	No	14	46.6%
Extracurricular activities of respondents	playing	16	53.3%
	Doing business	1	3.3%
	Farming and cultivation	4	13.3%
	Social work	3	10%
	Reading books	2	6.6%
	Painting pictures	1	3.3%
	Nil	1	3.3%
Reasons for fleeing from school	By mistake	3	10%
	To satisfy his free will and to avoid punishment	6	20%
	To help father	5	16.6%
	To play	4	13.3%
	Feeling bored	4	13.3%
	Teachers absent	2	6.6%
	Due to lack of proper school environment	6	20%
Activities of respondents after fleeing from school	Going to movies	3	10%
	Gossiping with friends in hotel	2	6.6%
	Playing cards	7	23.3%
	Wandering aimlessly	10	33.3%
	Going home	8	26.6%
Source of money of respondents	stealing	4	13.3%
	From parents	18	60%
	From friends	6	20%
	Not applicable	2	6.6%
Involvement in stealing and pick pocketing	Yes	4	13.3%
	No	26	86.6%
Friends using respondents as tools in intimidating others	Yes	16	53.3%
	No	14	46.6%

### Findings

- Most of the truants are from nuclear families. Larger the families lesser the chance of being truants.
- Almost all the truants live in their own homes.
- The parent’s of truants are engaged in agricultural activities, government service and business.
- Lack of proper accommodation and proper amenities for study as well as recreational facilities at home inspire truancy.
- Most of the students are addicted to cinema and many of the students are not having any extracurricular activities.
- The students who fail to adjust in the school environment become truants.
- Most of the truants are more interested in physical pursuits such as playing games etc than in academic pursuits.
- Neighborhood of the same economic status promotes truancy.
- From the above important findings, we cannot say that social, economic, psychological factors play absolute role in regard to the development of truancy. We also say that that a child becomes truant from such and such family and home environment. We can only tell that a particular type of home and family environment tend to promote truants. So also, the case of the other variables.

### 4. Conclusion

It should be noted that many of the existing truancy studies have methodological shortcomings that make evaluating the effectiveness of the programs across larger populations, varying contexts, and differing time spans difficult. Oftentimes findings are based on limited sample populations that do not necessarily produce results that can be generalized to diverse populations of students. It seems that existing studies do not clearly present a theory of change with well-defined components. There seems to be a large mix of various causes’ ideas that are effective with very specific populations. More research on the efficacy of truancy that generalizes to

broader populations should be explored. Truancy is a complex, multifaceted, and serious issue that merits further research.

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