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A Study on Absenteeism and Inactiveness in Online Classes

Dr. Usman Mohideen K.S, Hema Malini K, Ramya Sri P

Associate Professor, Sri Sairam Institute of Management Studies, Sri Sairam Engineering College, Chennai, India

Scholar, Sri Sairam Institute of Management Studies, Sri Sairam Engineering College, Chennai, India

Scholar, Sri Sairam Institute of Management Studies, Sri Sairam Engineering College, Chennai, India

ABSTRACT: This study examines the causes and consequences of absenteeism and inactivity among students enrolled in online classes. With the increasing adoption of digital education, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, students faced new challenges that affected their learning consistency and engagement. The study surveyed 121 students to understand technological, psychological, and pedagogical barriers. Key findings highlight poor internet connectivity, lack of digital devices, low motivation, time management issues, and feelings of isolation as major factors contributing to absenteeism and disengagement. Statistical tools, including the Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal-Wallis H test, correlation, and chi-square tests, were used to analyse the data. Results show that while students value the flexibility and access to recorded lectures, these benefits often do not outweigh the barriers they encounter. The paper concludes by suggesting that improving digital infrastructure, enhancing student-teacher interaction, and providing mental health support can reduce absenteeism and increase active participation in online classes.

KEYWORDS: Absenteeism, Inactiveness, Online Classes, Student Engagement, E-learning, Virtual Learning, Participation, Academic Performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

The fast pace of technology advancement has revolutionized almost all aspects of human existence, and learning is no different. With the incorporation of computer systems and learning management systems, learning has been shifting from conventional ways to online and blended forms, seeking to enhance accessibility, flexibility, and accommodation for students across the globe. The global COVID-19 pandemic, however, served as a principal driver of the abrupt and extensive use of e learning. As schools, colleges, and universities worldwide had to close their doors to stop the virus from spreading, the transition from offline classroom learning to online classroom environments took place in an unprecedented manner. Although the change provided for continued education during times of global uncertainty, it also brought to the forefront many previously unexamined challenges. Of these challenges, absenteeism and inactivity are also the most critical issues that undermine the effectiveness of remote learning.

These expectations can be daunting, particularly for younger students or those who lack experience in independent learning settings. For most students, the absence of direct supervision and discipline offered by a brick-and-mortar classroom means irregular attendance, unfinished assignments, and passive participation during lectures. Adding to these problems are the distractions of home settings in the form of household chores, shared space with others, and sometimes even the responsibility of working or caring for others part-time. Technological barriers also expand the gap in participation, and students in low-income households usually lack access to high-speed internet, the latest digital 2 technology, or a quiet and comfortable space for study.

1.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Caitlin Cassidy (2025). This article discusses the shift towards online learning in Australian universities and its impact on educational standards. The transition to online platforms, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to empty lecture halls and concerns about declining educational quality.

Bulsara, H.P., & Bagdi, H. (2024). This literature review synthesizes existing research on student engagement in online learning within higher education. Bulsara and Bagdi analyse various factors affecting engagement, including technological challenges, instructional design, and student motivation.

Pham, H.H., & Nguyen, L.M. (2024). Pham and Nguyen investigate how students' beliefs about their capabilities (expectancy) and the value they assign to tasks (task value) mediate engagement in online learning environments.

Catherine Nabiem Akpen et al. (2024). This systematic review examined the impact of online learning on student performance and engagement, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Utilizing databases such as PubMed, ScienceDirect, and JSTOR, the study focused on articles published between 2019 and 2024.

Amir Mohammad Rahmani et & al. (2024). This systematic literature review explored the multifaceted reasons behind student dropout rates in online higher education. The study categorized dropout factors into five major dimensions: demographic factors, course-related factors, technology-related factors, motivational factors, and support-related factors.

1.2 NEEDS OF THE STUDY

With the rapid adoption of online learning—especially post-pandemic—educational institutions face growing challenges related to student engagement. High rates of absenteeism and inactivity hinder learning outcomes, student satisfaction, and academic performance. Understanding the underlying causes is crucial to designing effective interventions.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

➢ To assess the frequency and extent of absenteeism and inactivity in online classes.
➢ To identify key factors contributing to student disengagement.
➢ To evaluate the impact of absenteeism and inactivity on academic performance.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on identifying the reasons for student absenteeism and inactiveness in online classes, examining patterns across different age groups, disciplines, and socio-economic backgrounds. It also explores the role of digital infrastructure, motivation, and teaching methods. The findings will guide institutions in improving virtual learning environments.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the patterns, causes, and impacts of absenteeism and inactivity in online classes. A structured and systematic methodology was adopted to ensure the collection of reliable, relevant, and meaningful data to support the research objectives.

Data Collection:
Primary Data: Structured questionnaire via Google Forms
Secondary Data: Journals, articles, reports, previous studies

Questionnaire Description:
Demographics
MCQs on challenges (e.g., device access, workload)
Likert scale to rate motivation, engagement, etc.

Sampling Design:
Population: Students from various education levels
Sample Size: 121 students
Sampling Technique: Convenience Sampling

Statistical Tools:
Kruskal-Wallis H Test

II. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

2.1.1 KRUSKAL-WALLIS H TEST A Kruskal-Wallis H test, a non-parametric alternative to one-way ANOVA.
It is used to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in the medians of more than two independent groups.

H_0: There is no significant difference in difficulty focusing across the different age groups. H_1: There is a significant difference in difficulty focusing among at least one of the age groups.

KRUSKAL-WALLIS H TEST BETWEEN STUDENT AGE AND HARD TO FOCUS

Test statistic	AGE
Kruskal-Wallis H	10.422
Df (degree of freedom)	4
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	0.034

INTREPRETATION

The Kruskal-Wallis H test result shows a test statistic of 10.422 with 4 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is $0.034 < 0.05$; we reject the null hypothesis. There is a statistically significant difference in the ability to focus among different age groups.

III. FINDING

➢ 34.8% agree they are easily distracted.
➢ 34.8% report difficulty focusing.
➢ 32.2% feel less motivated.
➢ 28.1% feel overwhelmed by assignments.
➢ 38.8% find it hard to manage time.
➢ 38.8% perceive an increased workload.

IV. SUGGESTION

● Improve access to reliable internet and digital tools
● Enhance teacher training and instructional design
● Provide academic and emotional support systems
● Incorporate interactive tools and frequent feedback

V. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

❖ Small sample size, not widely generalizable
❖ Self-reported data may introduce bias
❖ Excludes perspectives from teachers or institutions
❖ Does not account for external factors like home environment
❖ Limited time frame for data collection and analysis

VI. CONCLUSION

The study on absenteeism and inactiveness in online classes provides a comprehensive understanding of the multiple factors affecting student participation and engagement in virtual learning environments. The findings reveal that technological barriers, such as unstable internet connections and a lack of proper digital devices, are among the most common challenges students face. These technical issues often prevent students from attending classes regularly or participating actively in discussions and learning activities. Furthermore, the study highlights the psychological impact of online learning. Many students reported experiencing low motivation, difficulty focusing, and a sense of disconnection from their peers and instructors. The absence of a structured classroom environment and reduced face-to-face interactions contributed significantly to feelings of isolation and disinterest, which in turn led to higher rates of absenteeism and inactivity. Another important factor identified was the overwhelming workload and the struggle to manage time effectively.

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