

# EFFECTIVENESS OF POSITIVE DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUE IN THE ABSENTEEISM RATE AMONG PUBLIC ELEMENTARY PUPILS

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## ABSTRACT

This action research aimed to determine the effectiveness of Positive Discipline Technique (PDT) as an intervention among public elementary pupils' absenteeism rate. The researcher used an action research mixed-method evaluative research design. The pupils with the highest rate of absenteeism during the first semester of S.Y. 2018-2019 and their respective subject teachers from a public elementary school in Caloocan City were voluntarily participated in the study. According to the gathered demographic profile of the pupil participants, it revealed that pupils who have the highest absenteeism rate were male. It showed that majority of the pupil participants have grades of 76-79%. Furthermore, it revealed that families who earned less have the most numbered of pupil participants who were always absent in the class. The researcher tried to categorize the most shared theme reflected by each participant's response to the interview that purposely asked. After the implementation of PDT, there was a marked of improvement on the area of pupils' attendance based on the pupils' attendance form and assessment made by their respective subject teachers. The particular intention of this action research is to enhance the attendance of public elementary pupils by employing PDT. Using this technique will help teachers maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning and support an inclusive learning environment that eventually creates a positive school climate.

**Keywords:** absenteeism rate, absences, attendance, behavior, discipline technique, positive discipline

## INTRODUCTION

School absenteeism is an alarming problem not only for teachers but also for the school administrators, and parents, as well as for the pupils in particular. Unaccepted absence has a negative effect on peer relationship which could cause pupils' absenteeism (Murcia, 2015). According to Malcolm, Wilson, Davidson and Kirk (2003), most of the absenteeism consequences identified by the teachers are low academic achievement; pupils' social isolation; loss of self-esteem; and increase the chance of dropping out from the school early. Moreover, prolonged absence can have deleterious effects on the pupils in later life.

In the Philippines, based on the records of Commission on Higher Education (CHED), out of 100 Grade 1 pupils, only 66 finish Grade 6. Only 58

of the 66 go on to secondary education and only 43 finish high school. Of the 43 who finished high school, only 23 enroll in college and only 14 graduate by chance (Muzones & De Jesus, 2009). According to Department of Education (DepEd), the habits of absenteeism and dropouts among pupils are quite an epidemic nowadays that needed to be addressed directly (Ramos, 2016).

As stated by Murcia (2015) and DepEd, among all the causes of pupils' absenteeism, health is the primary reason why pupils are absent from their classes. Aside from health, there also top factors that affect pupils' absenteeism, such as: preoccupation with household chores, and no money to buy snacks in school. Furthermore, classroom atmosphere, personal attitude, and the teachers' aggressive manners were also some reasons that contributes to pupils' absenteeism (Aleken, 2016). Through positive discipline, absenteeism can be corrected. Love, consideration, understanding,

encouragement, and giving consequences rather than punishment reinforce good behavior of pupils. This can also help the teacher as well as the parents, to straighten their delinquent and identify the cause of their frequent absenteeism (Padilla, 2013).

The study showed that poor performance strongly associates by being absent for three days in a month (Sparks, 2012). Credé, Roch, and Kieszcynka (2010) also concluded that class attendance is the most accurate known predictor of academic achievement. The findings also showed that previous academic achievement predict current absenteeism. There are different views on the association between absenteeism and academic performance in the related literature. Some authors focused the impacts of students' absenteeism on academic performance (Klem & Connell, 2004; Korir et al., 2014; McCluskey et al., 2004; Moonie et al., 2008; Nichols, 2003). These studies revealed that pupils who attend class regularly and punctually have higher academic performance than pupils who are always absent in the class (Balkis, Arslan, & Duru, 2016).

Concerns pertaining to high absenteeism rate of the pupils is one of the major concerns being faced by teachers, school administrators, pupils, and parents, since it is associated to poor academic performance. Positive Discipline is a technique that schools can use to improve pupils' absenteeism rate, academic performance, and behavior. It also helps schools decide how to respond to a child who always absent in school and misbehaves. In line with this context, the researcher was compelled to employ positive discipline technique as an intervention to high absenteeism rate of Grade 5 section Kanlaon in Bagumbong Elementary School Main. Moreover, this action research focused on identifying the effectiveness of employing Positive Discipline Technique (PDT) in enhancing pupils' compliance on the school attendance policies.

### ***Implementation Theory***

This study is also anchored to Motivational theory of Maslow Hierarchy of Needs (1943). In order to limit or eliminate absenteeism, it is recommended that teachers in cooperation with the parent should take priority on the lower needs of the pupils such as foods, water, and mental health (health). If pupils are hungry, they won't go to school. In this theory, pupils can do higher things, until they have the lower things. Furthermore, this theory also suggests that pupils must be shown that they are recognized, valued, and respected by the teachers inside and out

of the classroom. Teachers also must create positive and supportive environment because pupils with low self-esteem will not be able to progress academically until their confidence is strengthened (McLeod, 2018).

## **METHODS**

### ***Research Design***

The researcher utilized an action research mixed method research design wherein the study focused on the current condition. The purpose of this action research was to identify the effectiveness of PDT before and after of its implementation. Effectiveness of PDT was assessed by the subject teachers. This study also sought to answer if the demographic profile of the participant, such as gender, latest grades, and family income contribute to pupils' absenteeism rate.

### ***Research Local/Participants/Sampling***

A total of identified thirteen (13) Grade Five (5) section Kanlaon pupils of Bagumbong Elementary School, North Caloocan City enrolled during School Year 2018-2019 were involved in the study. These were the pupils who committed three (3) or more absences in a month from June up to July of 2018. Interview with the thirteen (13) parents was also done by the researcher during home visit and FDG. Seven (7) subject teachers who were teaching in Grade 5 section Kanlaon were also voluntarily participated in the study. The participants were selected using Purposive Sampling. The PDT was implemented from last week of July up to October of 2018.

### ***Procedure***

The instrument used in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire based on related literatures, school rules and regulations, and DepEd Order (D.O.) No. 18, S. 1991, entitled: Policy on Absenteeism and Tardiness. A draft was made by the researcher to gather the comments and suggestions of the subject teachers who were involved in the study. This was followed by validation of the experts. Prior to the actual conduct of the study, the researcher sought the permission of the principal. Letter of consent was given to the parents of identified participants. Letter of consent to the subject teachers was affixed on the questionnaire. In the event that the participants had a question, the research made herself available. Survey questionnaires were retrieved after the interview made

by the researcher during home visit. Strict monitoring of the implementation of PDT was done by the researcher during its implementation stage. Evaluation of the effectiveness of PDT was based on the pupils' attendance form, the Focus Group Discussion (FDG) done by the researcher among the subject teacher participants, and subject teachers' post-assessment.

### **Ethical Consideration**

The Grade 5 section Kanlaon subject teachers uphold ethical standard to help promote a safe school environment and protect confidentiality among the pupils they work with. The subject teachers of Grade 5 section Kanlaon keep information confidential unless disclosure is required to prevent clear and imminent danger to the pupil or others or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed. In the process, the researcher sought the consent with the parents of identified pupil participants. Informed consent is the legal and ethical principle that explains how the teacher inform the pupils of the risks, benefited and alternatives to counselling program.

### **Data Analysis**

The researchers gave in-depth analysis and interpretation on gathered data to the action research problems. The record and data found in the LIS Coordinator of Bagumbong Elementary School had been gathered and analyzed which served as the basis of the study. Percentage Frequency Distribution were used to analyze the demographic profile of the participants. Weighted mean was used to assess the degree of pupils' compliance in terms of classroom attendance before and after the implementation of PDT.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

These present the data gathered from the questionnaires answered by the pupils with their parents and subject teacher participants comprised of Bagumbong Elementary School, Division of Caloocan City.

### **1. Demographic Profile of Public Elementary Pupil Participants according to Gender, Latest Grades, and Family Income**

Table 1 presents the distribution of pupil participants according to gender. The male participants comprised of seven (7) or 58.33 percent, while six (6) for female participants or 46% percent. This shows

that most of the identified participants who were always absent in the class were male participants. This study contradicts the research conducted by Ambalan (2014) that gender is not a contributing factor to pupils' absenteeism. However, it also favoured the result as the study showed that both female and male are some equally contribute to the absenteeism issues.

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Participants According to Pupils' Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	7	54%
Female	6	46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2 presents the distribution of pupil participants according to latest grades. It shows that most of the identified pupil participants have latest grades of 76-79 percent, while one (1) out of thirteen (13) participants got a bracket grade of 80-84 percent. As seen in the latest grades of identified pupil participants, it revealed that pupils' attendance affects their academic performance. According to Murcia (2015) and Sparks (2012), research has shown that chronic absenteeism in the early grades is associated with lower achievement in academic grades. The finding of the study is consistent with those studies indicating that absentees have low level of academic attainment.

**Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Participants According to Pupils' Latest Grade**

<b>Latest Grade</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
75% and below	3	23.08%
76-79%	9	69.23%
80-84%	1	7.69%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3 presents the distribution of pupil participants according to the family income. This shows that the family earned less has the most numbered of pupil participants who always absent in school. Pupils tend to be absent in school because their family could not support them financially. This concluded that pupils who came from well off family and has a high socio-economic status are the one who is always attending the class and the one who is active in school activities. The outcome of the study is consistent with the research findings of Balkis, Arslan, and Duru (2016), as study showed that pupils, whose parents have low income, are more likely to have high rate of absenteeism, which might affect their academic achievement.

**Table 3.** Demographic Profile of the Participants According to Family Income

<b>Family Income</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
P5,000 and below	6	46.15%
P6,000-P10,000	4	30.77%
P11,000-P15,000	3	23.08%
Total	13	100%

## 2. Absenteeism Rate of Public Elementary Grade 5 Section Kanlaon Pupils Based on their Attendance Form

Table 4 shows the absenteeism rate of public elementary pupils before and after the implementation of PDT based on the pupils' attendance form. It can be seen on the table that there was a marked of improvement on the attendance rate of identified

thirteen (13) pupils of Grade 5 section Kanlaon. It also revealed that among the pupil participants, pupil no. 2 got the highest rate in terms of attendance, while the lowest was pupil nos. 5 and 9. Overall, there still a need to continue the implementation of PDT for the enhancement of pupils' compliance in attending class regularly. The researcher tried to categorize the most problem shared reflected by each parent's response to the interview that researcher purposely asked during home visit and parents' FGD. Most of the families of identified pupils are financially challenge. Furthermore, there were also other factors that affect pupils' absenteeism as stated by the parents, such as: bullying; water shortage; peer-pressure; no money to buy snacks in school; and teachers' aggressive manners. These statements of the parents were also consistent in the findings of Aleken, (2016) on the factors that affect pupils' absenteeism.

**Table 4.** Absenteeism Rate of Public Elementary Grade 5 Section Kanlaon Pupils Based on their Attendance Form for the Months of June up to October of 2018.

Pupil Participants	Number of School Days						
	18	22	WM	20	20	21	WM 20.33
			20.00				
1	June	July		Aug	Sept	Oct	17.00
2	15	17	16.00	16	15	20	18.00
3	13	15	14.00	18	18	18	16.33
4	15	14	14.50	16	15	18	16.67
5	16	14	15.00	13	16	17	15.33
6	17	15	16.00	16	16	17	16.33
7	16	17	16.50	16	15	18	16.33
8	15	17	16.00	16	16	19	17.00
9	14	14	14.00	13	15	18	15.33
10	14	16	15.00	16	15	18	16.33
11	13	18	15.50	17	16	17	16.67
12	15	15	15.00	16	17	16	16.33
13	13	16	14.50	15	16	17	16.00
GRAND MEAN			15.23				16.44

## 3. Degree of Public Elementary Grade 5 Section Kanlaon Pupils' Compliance in Terms of Classroom Attendance After the Implementation of PDT

As can be gleaned on the table 4 below, it revealed that after employing PDT among public elementary Grade 5 section Kanlaon pupils, there was an evident of pupils' compliance on the areas of attendance as assessed by the subject teachers. Moreover, it revealed that the most complied among the areas of attendance was item nos. 1 and 4. This only shows that PDT has been effective in enhancing pupils' attendance among its areas.

**Table 5.** Degree of Pupils' Compliance in Terms of Classroom Attendance After the Implementation of PDT as Assessed by the Two Groups of Participants

Attendance	Subject Teachers			
	PRE-ASSESSMENT		POST-ASSESSMENT	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. Pupils attend class regularly.	1.43	SD	3.92	SA
2. Pupils attend co-curricular activities regularly.	2.00	D	3.54	SA
3. Pupils attend flag ceremony on time.	1.57	D	3.77	SA
4. Pupils refrain from coming to school late.	3.43	A	3.92	SA
5. Pupils refrain from cutting class.	3.57	SD	3.57	SA
6. Pupils are interested to classroom discussions.	2.14	D	3.86	SA
7. Pupils feel that they are valued by the teachers.	1.57	D	3.58	SA
8. Pupils are engage to classroom activities.	2.29	D	3.86	SA
9. Pupils behave appropriately in the class.	1.43	SD	3.77	SA
10. Pupils tend to be more productive in the class.	1.29	SD	3.77	SA
<b>GRAND MEAN</b>	<b>2.07</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>3.76</b>	<b>SA</b>

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 (Strongly Agree - SA); 2.50 - 3.49 (Agree - A); 1.50 - 2.49 (Disagree - D); 1.00 - 1.49 (Strongly Disagree - SD)

Positive discipline is a technique, wherein a student's feelings are taken into consideration. Students are encouraged to share their feelings as well as to discuss their mistakes, ideas, and problems openly. Teachers together with the parents work with the student on resolving issues while modelling respectful communication. Modelling how to handle mistakes is an important part of PDT. So when the teacher has fault, teacher should apologize to the pupils. This teaches pupils the importance of taking responsibility for their own behaviors and shows the importance of learning from mistakes. PDT focuses on encouragement over praise. Instead of praising pupils for a job well done, PDT focuses on efforts, even the outcome is not successful. Furthermore, encouragement can help pupils recognize their full potential as they need to feel a deep sense of belonging and appreciated. It also teaches them to be more independent as they will begin to see what they are capable of doing on their own. These tons of techniques are congruent to Aleken (2016) positive discipline that teachers can use to reinforce good behavior.

public elementary pupil participants who were always absent in the class were male participants; in terms of latest grades, most of the public elementary pupil participants who were chronically absent in the class have latest grades of 76-79 percent, while one (1) out of thirteen (13) participants got a bracket grade of 80-84 percent; and lastly, in terms of family income; the study showed that the family earned less has the most numbered of pupil participants who always absent in school. After the implementation of PDT, it showed that there was a marked of improvement on the attendance rate of identified thirteen (13) pupils of Grade 5 section Kanlaon from an average attendance rate mean of 15.23 to 16.44. There was also an evident of pupils' compliance on the areas of attending class regularly and punctually as assessed by their subject teachers. This only shows that integrating positive discipline on the teachers' daily lesson plans, teacher-student interactions inside and out of the classroom, and consistent checking and monitoring of attendance can help and encourage pupils to adhere on the school attendance policies.

## IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following implications were drawn: in terms of pupils' demographic profile, particularly pupils' gender, the study showed that the most identified

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