



An Inquiry Into The Causes Of Absenteeism And Its Consequences On Their Overall Academic Experiences Among The Undergraduate Economics Students At 'R' Government College of Bangladesh

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Abstract

During the periods of my teaching career, I have been observing with great regret that most of the students (approximately over 50% of the total students) of the economics department of 'R' Government College, on a regular basis, keep themselves away from their scheduled class sessions. Again, about 25% of them are habituated to attend classes sporadically and the rest 25% tries to attend classes regularly, however, they are deprived of their scheduled class sessions for the reason of the irregular and inconsistent arrangements of the class sessions. This frustrating situation of students' absenteeism is damaging the learning environment of the educational institutes, thus creating barriers to the development of the nation as a whole with long-term implications. To get rid of this curse, therefore, I have realized a crying need at present to have an inquiry into the causes of students' absenteeism behavior and its consequences on their overall academic experiences and over and above to provide the most vital recommendations that can effectively uproot this bad practice from the arena of the educational institutes or at least lessen the extent of this phenomenon. Having devised a qualitative research design, this research study has been carried out to elicit the perceptions of the students and teachers of the economics department and administrators of the 'R' Government College with the utilization of the individual interviews with the research respondents. In this study, I have revealed four broad-categorized causes of students' absenteeism labelled under four comprehensive themes which are students' individual and their family related matters, educational institutes related factors, environment-originated factors, attendance regulation and policy matters, social phenomenon, and others. On the other hand, this study has been found out the consequences of students' absenteeism as very harmful. This study identified that the first

and foremost compromise on behalf of the absentee students is on their exam score. Another dreadful consequence is found that the practice of absenteeism is creating a huge learning gap for the students. Next, the socio-emotional skills like confidence, peer relationship and interaction with teachers are also diminished. **Finally**, this study has attempted to make some effective recommendations to resolve this problem that includes providing financial supports to the students, convenient classroom arrangements, making the best use of the educational technologies to turn classes as attractive to the students, arranging provision for the teachers regarding pedagogical advancements, regular class supervision, arranging teacher evaluation system by the students, expanding residential facilities, and so forth. The most effective change, according to the outcomes of this study, that can consider the college authority is the execution and proper supervision of existing attendance rule in order to get the students returned to their scheduled classroom sessions. Along with this change, another vital recommendation is to abolish the current pattern of question and evaluation practices and to make them standard and creative for the target of achieving the best possible learning goals. Furthermore, arrangement of a structured discourse with the absentee students' parents or legal guardians can also produce a good result as per my recommendation.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the study

In most of the contemporary studies, the researchers, educationists, and policymakers have discovered the positive correlation between the learning outcome and students' class attendance (Arulampalam, Naylor, & Smith, 2012; Dey, 2018; Gottfried, 2014; Irwin, Burnett, & McCarron, 2018; Khan, 2020; Schmulian & Coetzee, 2011; Tiexeira, 2016). When students maintain their class attendance in a consistent manner, they are very likely to achieve their academic goals and consequently to succeed in their future professional development in the long run (Gottfried, 2014; Sahin, Arseven, & Kilic, 2016). In case of the lessons of Economics, it is even more significant for the students to maintain their class attendance in a satisfactory level as they have to learn very complex theories, concepts, mathematics, statistics, econometrics, and so on that it is a must to maintain consistency in the preceding lessons (Chong, Cheung, & Hui, 2009; Tiexeira, 2016).

1.1 Problem Statement

The government colleges of Bangladesh are run by the supervision and regulation of the National University of Bangladesh (NUB) and the harsh reality is that the students of NUB usually get admitted to its affiliated

colleges with holding poor academic backgrounds, and as a definite consequence, they are found not to uphold ambitious career goals. Therefore, most of the students are concerned to get only the passing grade and fail to realize the inherent benefits of attending classes regularly. Besides, financial insecurity, job engagement, female students' early marriage and some other factors are interplaying behind the root causes of absenteeism (Alam, 2009; Chowdhury, 2004). These colleges are also observed not to carry through the strict attendance rule (at least 75% class attendance) approved by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh (Monem & Muhammad, 2010). Thus, the goal of establishing a smooth and dynamic teaching-learning environment is hampered to a great extent.

The aforementioned situation is also found prevalent in case of the intervened college ('R' Government College of Bangladesh) of this study. During the periods of my teaching career, I have been observing with great regret that most of the students (approximately over 50% of the total students) of the economics department of 'R' Government College, on a regular basis, keep themselves away from their scheduled class sessions. Again, about 25% of them are habituated to attend classes sporadically and the rest 25% tries to attend classes regularly, however, they are deprived of their scheduled class sessions for the reason of the irregular and inconsistent arrangements of the class sessions.

1.2 Rationale

Absenteeism, however, bears the potential to interfere and disrupts students' overall academic experiences greatly and thereby eventually, aboveall, lowering their exam grade and brings negative effect on their other academic performances (re-exam, non-promotion etc.), other academic experiences (drop-out, extra-expenses, learning gap etc.) and socio-emotional outcomes (socio-emotional skills, bad company, drug addiction etc.) (Barlow & Fleischer, 2011; Wadesang & Machigambi, 2011). Moreover, it impedes the teachers to direct the learning with an effective lesson plan and brings adverse effects on the motivation of the other students of the class (Burns & Ludlow, 2005; Nyatanga & Mukorera, 2019). Thus, in my consideration, the rationale of conducting this research is the realization of carrying through an in-depth investigation in eliciting the root causes of the phenomenon of students' absenteeism and its consequences on students' overall academic experiences so as to find out the possible remedies of eradicating or at least reducing the extent of this curse from the arena of educational institutions.

1.3 Research Objective

This frustrating situation of students' absenteeism is damaging the learning environment of the educational institutes, thus creating barriers to the development of the nation as a whole with long-term implications. To get rid of this curse, therefore, I have realized a crying need at present to have an inquiry into the causes of students' absenteeism behavior and its consequences on their overall academic experiences and over and above to provide the most vital recommendations that can effectively uproot this bad practice from the arena of the educational institutes or at least lessen the extent of this phenomenon.

1.4 Research Questions

In this study, I have addressed the following Research Questions (RQ):

RQ 1: What are the causes of absenteeism among the undergraduate economics students at 'R' Government College of Bangladesh?

RQ 2: To what extent absenteeism affects their overall academic experiences (academic achievements, other academic experiences, and socio-emotional outcomes)?

1.5 Significance of the study

I argue, nevertheless, that the bad practice of students' absenteeism in the higher education system of Bangladesh should not be kept aside and needs even more attention and critical reflective analysis from the policy perspectives. In this regard, Weller's (2000) comment appears as very relevant, "Besides the potential learning losses, students' absenteeism is a waste of educational resources, time and human potential". So, the significance of this study rests on the implementation of SDG-4 (Sustainable Development Goals-4) of the Government of Bangladesh guided by the UN (United Nations) concerning the development of the overall education sector of Bangladesh whose one of the key goals is the best use of the available educational resources, namely students' vital potentials, teachers' valuable times, physical infrastructure of the educational institutes, and so on, with the help of maintaining a smooth learning eco-system by eradicating students' absenteeism or at least reducing it to a satisfactory level (Alam, 2009; Chowdhury, 2004; Monem & Muhammad, 2010).

This is the end of Section 1. In this section, I have discussed the introductory issues regarding the subject matter (causes and consequences of students' absenteeism) of this study. Next, in Section 2, I have reviewed relevant literature on students' absenteeism.

SECTION 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of the literature review

A discussion and analysis of relevant literature from various sources that are related to this study directly or indirectly included in this section. At the beginning of this section, the concept of absenteeism is explored from different viewpoints with various definitions of absenteeism. Then, the different causes of absenteeism are reviewed. Finally, a discussion on the consequences of students' absenteeism on their overall academic experiences is presented in the last part of this section.

2.2 Exploring the concept of 'Absenteeism'

According to Barlow & Fleischer (2011), the definition of absenteeism is "a failure to attend timetable sessions such as seminars, lectures, and practical or laboratory classes". Reviewing the literature related to students' absenteeism, it has been found that most researchers made their contribution on the issue of 'Chronic absenteeism' rather than just on 'absenteeism'. In the specification of Gottfried (2014), absenting incessantly 15 to 18 days from the educational institutions can be termed as chronic absenteeism. In the context of 'R' Government College of Bangladesh, I have described the students under the intervention of this study as 'chronic absentees' to those who are habituated to remain absent from their scheduled classes in 50% or more times.

2.3 Causes of Absenteeism

Chong, Cheung, & Hui (2009) identified the financial status of students' family as a very influential variable interplaying behind absenteeism. In their findings, the students who come from wealthy families inclined to miss their classes more because they are in the possession of more learning options as compared to the students who are from poor families. In the context of the educational institutions of Bangladesh, on the contrary, an opposite picture is found prevalent. Here most of the families have been suffering from financial insufficiency, and, as an eventual consequence, the students who come from these families are evidenced to remain absent from their classes for the reason of their poverty.

Gottfried (2014) and Ocak, Ocak, & Baysal (2017), in their studies, brought to light the fact that highly educated parents are more serious of students' learning situations as compared to the parents who have got a lower level of education. In the context of 'R' Government College of Bangladesh, I have gained experience that

family structure is an important determinant of students' absenteeism behavior. Most of our students have come from large families that have a very low income and their parents are not educated enough, even illiterate in a good number of cases. So naturally, parents of such families are appeared to be less anxious of their children's education. Another cause of absenteeism, in view of Longhurst (1999), is higher involvement in familial occasions.

Longhurst (1999) and Chong, Cheung & Hui (2009) revealed that the higher-level education students who spend more time in some kinds of jobs have higher tendency of non-attendance, as is the typical scenario in the context of 'R' Government College of Bangladesh.

A further vital cause, as Marburger (2001) pointed out, a positive interdependence between the quality of instruction and students' attendance behavior. Chong, Cheung, & Hui (2009) and Cleary-Holdforth (2007) agreed to this view and added that a course assigned with a better instructor experienced higher attendance. In my college, in most of the cases, classroom sessions are conducted by the traditional passive lecturing method. Since both the teachers and the students are unfamiliar with modern pedagogical advancement and as learning with traditional approaches is found boring and dull by the students, they prefer to get relief of this situation by skipping from the classes.

Again, some institutional factors, in accordance with the viewpoint of Sahin, Arseven, & Kilic (2016), and that are also found prevalent in the context of my college, emerge as the crucial causes of students' absenteeism that include some notable administrative failures like administrators and teachers' negative attitude towards students, administrators' lackings of necessary connections with students' parents or legal guardians. Furthermore, Sahin, Arseven, & Kilic (2016) and Ocak, Ocak, & Baysal (2017) pointed out that lack of peer relationship, not getting passing grade in the exams, bad companionship, drug addiction etc. also exert pressure on the students to stay away from their class sessions.

Longhurst (1999) unwrapped the fact that the two-thirds of the students who resided long away from the educational institutions, on average, skip classes 1.3 times more. In my context, travel related problems like having long time in getting to college, unavailability and low standard of vehicles, requirement of using more than one or two vehicles etc. and the core weather related problems like rain and excessive hot weather, prevent students to attend their class sessions regularly.

Further, Longhurst (1999) identified the one of the most pointable causes of absenteeism as lack of commitment to the learning procedures from the part of the students. In the context of 'R' Government College of Bangladesh, however, in my observation, most of the students lack the necessary motivation and

commitment to their learning that will drive them to achieve their learning goals by attending classes regularly.

Finally, Barlow & Fleischer (2011) and Cleary-Holdforth (2007), in their studies, revealed a very crucial fact that the educational departments which had introduced a proper attendance regulation and implemented the attendance rule practically in a consistent manner together with maintained a regular follow up of the attendance patterns of the students, experienced the rate of nonattendance in a lesser degree. In my context, there exists a strict attendance rule in such a way that the students have to maintain at least 75% attendance in order to sit for the exam, nonetheless, in practice, the rule is found to be violated by almost all the educational institutes of Bangladesh (Monem & Muhammad, 2010). In case of 'R' Government College, the extent of violation is observed to be even very high.

2.4 Absenteeism and students' overall academic experiences (academic achievements, other academic experiences, and socio- emotional outcomes)

In line with absenteeism and academic achievement, Arulampalam, Naylor, & Smith (2012) found a negative relationship between absenteeism and academic achievement that means absenteeism hinders the achievement of learning goals of the educational institutions, so does in case of my context too.

A good number of researchers examined the effects of students' practice of absenteeism on their exam score and revealed a negative correlation between the two (Gottfried, 2014; Green & Celkan, 2015; Irwin, Burnett, & McCarron, 2018). Romer (1993) noted that "attendance alone accounted for 31% of the variance in performance" (p.171). In my context, during my 12 years of teaching periods, I also experienced the similar consequences of students' absenteeism on their academic performances that absentee students generally achieve significantly lower score both in the internal course work and final exam grade.

The impact of another aspect of students' academic experiences, students' socio- emotional outcomes was investigated by Gottfried (2014). In his investigation, it was found that chronic absentees were necessarily in the possession of poor socio-emotional skills for the reason of being isolated and disengaged to their study matters. Although Gottfried (2014) drew these findings from the context of school students, yet, in my experience, I have also observed resemblance in my context too. Absenteeism, first of all, bounds students to

be isolated and disengaged to their study matters. Eventually such disengaged students fail to make significant contribution to the job market. Also, they fail to achieve sound academic and social code of conduct. Furthermore, study disengagement creates frustration that eventually leads them to engage in bad companies frequently and to provoke them to drug addiction. As an ultimate consequence, they themselves fail to make them understood the fundamental benefits that can build from the regular attendance to their class sessions (Gottfried, 2014; Irwin, Burnett, & McCarron, 2018; Pérez, Cortés, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010).

2.1 Summary of Literature Review and Rationale

Certainly, there prevails the bad practice of higher absenteeism in the higher education colleges of Bangladesh over the years, yet, in the published literature, the phenomenon is still remained unstudied. A fundamental question, therefore, has been raised that education researchers should take steps to conduct in-depth examinations on this issue across multiple colleges and across different departments and courses. In this context, my present study can be represented as a first step to have an inquiry into this issue. I believe that the findings of this study will assist to provide guidelines to ensure good practice and to call for further research initiatives.

In the next Section, in Section 3, the 'Research Methodology' of conducting this study has been discussed.

SECTION 3

RESEARECH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview of Research Methodology

In the research methodology section, the determination of strategies and methods used in this study was carried through with the procedures of the research design as devised by the prominent researchers in the field of education (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). In addition, the justification of the selected strategies and methods were also discussed in this section.

For the purpose of resolving all the research questions of this study, I have adopted the following procedures in a consequent manner.

3.1 Research Design and Research Approach

In the language of Creswell & Creswell (2018), the definition of 'Research design' is expressed as "a plan or procedure that involves several important decisions; procedures of inquiry (strategies), specific methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation that begins with philosophical assumptions". 'Interpretivism' is the research philosophy that guides this study. According to Thanh & Thanh (2015), "Interpretivism is a research paradigm where the researcher uncovers the reality of the research through participants' perceptions, backgrounds and experiences". In literature, the justification of 'Interpretivism' has been derived from the viewpoint of two philosophical perspectives. Of these, 'Ontology' of the paradigm is recognized as the first philosophical dimension of interpretivism. The ontology phenomenon of my present study 'students' absenteeism' is subjectivist in nature where different social factors determine different reality (Wahyun, 2012). Here, in this study, the main goal of the ontology of the paradigm is to identify the concealed aspects behind the causes of absenteeism appropriately in order to change the prevailing situation with appropriate social changes.

The other dimension of the paradigm, in this study, is 'Epistemology', which can be expressed, in other words, as the way of 'knowledge construction' of the research. Maintaining the subjectivist ontology, I have attempted to construct the findings of this study with the perceptions of respondents from varied backgrounds, circumstances, and experiences. This analysis, therefore, in accordance with Mackenzie & Knipe (2006), is epistemologically subjective and descriptive in nature and I have attempted to keep my focus on the insides and details of the views of all the respondents. As I have been working at 'R' Government College, therefore, in terms of 'Axiology', I am also academically connected to this study as an insider.

As my intention is to have an inquiry into the broad areas of interest with respondents' self-perceptions, I have selected to adopt a qualitative research approach, since qualitative research method is identified by the researchers as the ideal method in such type of social scenarios (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Again, I have organized this study with an 'inductive research approach' or a 'phenomenological method' (Sutton & Austin, 2015) that means it has started with the enquiry of the causes and consequences of students' absenteeism first, then with the observation and analysis of diversified patterns of experiences and perceptions of the respondents, and finally generating findings on the basis of these procedures.

3.2 Research context and Sampling

This research is conducted in a pandemic situation of Covid-19. I, therefore, have selected my own college, named 'R' Government College of Bangladesh, as the research context for availing the convenience regarding the constraints of time and cost. 'R' college is a good district level government of Bangladesh. I am serving here as an assistant professor in the department of economics. In our department, presently, 6 teachers, including me, are engaging in carrying through a four-year undergraduate and one-year postgraduate program. In each single year, 150 to 160 students are enrolled. The department conducts the class sessions with the traditional instructional delivery mechanisms in some large classrooms. The assessment criterion followed by the department is a year-end final exam (80% marks) and a less weighted in-course exam (20% marks). The students of this department have very high tendency of remaining absent from their scheduled class sessions. The department is also carrying its operation with infrastructural limitations and with the backwardness in adopting modern technological teaching-learning materials.

A sample size of 3-5 is considered by the researchers to be reasonable in case of the qualitative research approach (Creswell, 2018; Cohen et al., 2011). Accordingly, in case of the present study, 13 respondents were selected using purposive sampling method under non-random (non-probability) sampling criterion because the nature of data of this study is qualitative and randomization is not possible with this type of data in limited time and cost (Tongco, 2007). Out of 13 respondents, 8 of them are the undergraduate students of the department of economics of 'R' college. The remaining 5 are 3 teachers of the department of economics of 'R' college and 2 administrators of 'R' college. In the undergraduate level of the department of economics of 'R' college, students are enrolled for 4 years for the successful completion of their degree. Approximately 600 students (150 in each of the 4 years) have been studying in the undergraduate level of this department. Among those, 8 students (2 from each year) were chosen purposefully from the absentee students using purposive sampling method, because this research has a special purpose to draw findings from the views of the absentee students, since I considered that the absentee students know better the reasons and consequences of their absenteeism. 2 students from each of the 4 years were selected purposefully to make the research meaningful for the whole of undergraduate level of economics department. 3 teachers were chosen purposefully from the total of 6 employed who were considered by me as concerned and thoughtful about the matter of absenteeism. Again, 2 administrators (principal and vice-principal) were also chosen purposefully, as in my consideration, the administrators are well aware of the practice of students' non-attendance.

3.3 Method of Data Collection

In case of conducting research with the use of qualitative research approach, 'interview method' is considered by the researchers as one of the most common and frequently used method of data collection and this method is applied to uncover individual participants' perceptions, beliefs, motivations, and experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). Since the aim of this research is to unfold the causes and consequences of students' absenteeism from the viewpoints of the participants through the lens of an interpretivist, I have adopted only the 'semi-structured interview method' for the purpose of yielding utmost information to seek detailed and in-depth answers of the two research questions, keeping in mind the limited time, cost and accessibility during this pandemic period of Covid-19 (Alshenqeeti, 2014; Thanh & Thanh, 2015). I have arranged the interviews in a semi-structured manner because my plan is to conduct the interview sessions with some specific key questions that can address both the research questions and aims of this study by providing prompt and effective guidelines to explore the subject matters of this study. Then, beyond the structured arrangements, I have allowed some divergence and flexibility in responding of the participants, thereby allowing the study to reveal, in more detail, the perceptions of the respondents (Alshenqeeti, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008; Sutton & Austin, 2015).

3.4 Research Instruments

In this phase, the research instrument used to gather the views of the respondents about the causes and consequences of students' absenteeism is selected only the 'Interview Protocol' with the students, teachers, administrators with some semi-structured open-ended interview questions to include introductory questions, questions related to causes, questions related to consequences, questions related to challenges and questions related to possible solutions for the purpose of answering the research questions.

The justification of selecting 'Interview Protocol' as the research instrument of conducting this study is that, according to researchers, in case of qualitative research where the aim is to elicit useful data from the participants' viewpoints, a well-organized interview protocol is very effective (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Fontana & Frey, 2000; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

Maintaining the four stages of the 'Interview Protocol Refinement (IPR) framework', as provided by Castillo-Montoya (2016), I have designed the interview protocols with the students, teachers, and administrators. Accordingly, in the first stage, I have developed and divided the interview questions for the students, teachers and administrators as properly assigned to both of the research questions separately. Then, in the second

stage of IPR, I have designed the interview protocols differently from the research questions to ensure 'an inquiry-based conversation' which was devised with 'diversified questions' and 'a script with likely follow-up and prompt questions' (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Again, I have explored the third phase of IPR that 'gaining feedback on the interview protocols' and the fourth phase that 'piloting the interview protocol' in the sub-sections of 'Research Validity and Reliability' and 'Pilot Study' respectively (Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

3.5 Research Validity and Reliability

Research Validity

To ensure validity, a researcher needs to establish the appropriateness of the chosen methodology, research context and sampling process, data analysis process, and finally the conclusion of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Golafshani, 2003; Mohamad et al., 2015). I have attempted to establish the validity of this study with the use of two measures, namely 'data blinding' and 'inclusion of different sampling groups in the research design' (Golafshani, 2003; Mohamad et al., 2015). In this study, the sample was divided into three groups - students, teachers, and administrators - to reduce biases. I have used the measure of 'data blinding' by restricting the amount of information shared with the respondents to avoid biasedness of the preconceived ideas of the respondents, thus establishing the validity of the research gained. Furthermore, I have attempted to validate the interview questions set by the reviews of two teachers of my department who were considered by me as concerned and thoughtful about the issue of absenteeism. According to their suggestions, hence, the questions that did not fit well with the subject matter of this study were deducted, and where relevant, the questions were modified (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Golafshani, 2003; Mohamad et al., 2015).

Research Reliability

To establish and maintain reliability in qualitative research, most importantly, a researcher needs to be consistent in carrying through all the procedures of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Russel, 2014). For the purpose of establishing reliability, I have applied two measures. The first one was recording the data in a table to avail the opportunity of quickly interpreting the results as the process of recording the responses of every individual respondent, thereby realizing the progression of the research easily. Another measure of establishing reliability of this study was the 'method of data triangulation'. Among the different methods of data triangulation, I have applied the 'theoretical triangulation' in the way of reviewing the concurrent literature conducted in the same field to support the results claims of the data collection and analysis process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Russel, 2014)

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

In case of the qualitative semi-structured interview data, Burnard (1991) illustrated fourteen stages of data analysis procedure whose underlying theoretical basis was constructed from 'thematic content analysis' of Glaser & Strauss' 'grounded theory' approach. According to Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick (2008), "Thematic analysis is an independent, reliable and descriptive qualitative approach to analyses". Moreover, it is an inductive approach of analyzing qualitative data (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008; Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). As the aim of my present study is to elicit the perceptions of the students as well as the teachers and administrators being studied, logically I have applied the method of thematic analysis for the purpose of analyzing my collected qualitative data.

In accordance with the Burnard et al's (2008) stage to stage analysis procedure, at the time of interviewing, I have kept notes and 'memos', saved the audio record of the interview, reviewed the transcripts repeatedly and finally created as many headings or categories as necessary after removing the 'dross' or unrelated issues. Then, I have grouped all the categories under the umbrella of some higher order headings after removing repetition of similar categories.

In the next stage, I have taken the co-operation of one of my colleagues in generating categories without observing my list of categories. Then, I have requested some of my respondents to scrutinize the appropriateness of the categories and suggested modifications were done accordingly. In addition, in line with the guidelines of Halcomb & Davidson (2006), I have used the verbatim transcription or 'exact replication of audio recorded words' of some interview data to reach as close as possible to the collected data.

Over the whole process, I have heard the recorded interviews and read the transcripts repeatedly to split the interviews with similar themes and subcategories under each theme, to ensure the inclusion of each and every new theme and to assemble all data until no theme exists. Thus, I have generated a thematic map and assigned the clear definitions and names for each theme (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008; Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Keeping in mind the limited resources and time during the pandemic situation of Covid-19, I have completed the process of theme construction manually without using any software, but I have used MS-Excel application for the purpose of presenting my whole of the organized data set. Finally, I have gone for producing the report with examples, extracts relating my research questions and literature (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

3.7 Ethical Consent

Before starting to collect data from the participants, I have provided them a summary describing the purposes of this present research and under whose (individual, organization and educational institution) supervision this study has been carried through (information sheet). I have also provided them an ethical consent form which will make the commitments and expectations relating to this research project (commitments to anonymity and confidentiality, details about uses of data). In the consent form, I have offered a range of issues for which consent has been sought, and at the same time each participant has been requested to express positively their support for each one. As for instance, the option of digital recording of interview has been sought specific consent of the participants. I have assured all participants that they will not be identifiable in any resulting presentations or publications arising from the research and all documents of their participation will be kept password protected and non- traceable. I have made clear to the participants that their participation to this research is completely voluntary and non-participation will have no negative consequences. No individuals and individual institutions have not been named in the writing up of my research project, and in case of any resulting reports, this practice of anonymity will be maintained. The subject matter of this study has not been involved sensitive issues, and a commonly understandable method of data collection has been selected for the ease of the participants to conveniently participate in this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

3.8 Pilot Study

Even though this study has been conducted during the pandemic situation of Covid-19 with bearing some limitations regarding time, expenses, and accessibility issues, I have arranged a piloting of interview protocol in a small space with 2 students and 1 teacher of the non-sampled group, prior to commencing the interview protocols on the sampled respondents. The objective of this pilot study was to gain a sensible idea about arranging the interview questions in the proper order, to manage the time space of the interview sessions, to choose the appropriate respondents in answering each and every specific questions and finally necessary amendments were done accordingly (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

SECTION 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Section Overview

In this section, I have presented the findings and discussion regarding both the research questions sequentially.

For the purpose of analyzing critically the issues revolving around RQ1 and RQ2, I have devised this study with the use of an inductive research approach under a qualitative research design. Consequently, in keeping pace with the essence of a qualitative research design, I have organized a thematic analysis of the findings of the interview sessions with the respondent students, teachers, and administrators.

4.1 Findings and Discussion Regarding Research Question # 1

RQ 1: What are the causes of absenteeism among the students of 'R' Government College of Bangladesh?

Thematic Analysis regarding Research Question # 1

During the procedures of the data transcribing and data coding, I have arrayed 15 different types (categories) causes revolved around 4 comprehensive themes and patterns of the respondents' responses to the interview questions connected to the causes of students' absenteeism.

Causes of absenteeism:**Personal and Family Matters**

THEME	DESCRIPTION	
Personal and Family matters	Causes of students' absenteeism that relate to Personal and Family matters	
Subcategories	Description	Significant Statement Examples
Financial support	Insufficient familial financial support	Student 1," Along with me, most of the students at this college, do not get adequate financial support from their family to bear all of their educational expenses and this financial insecurity is creating barriers to their study most dominantly, especially compelling them not to attend classes regularly."
Family patterns	Large family Size and structure	Teacher 2," I have observed that most of the students of my department have large family size with more than 3 siblings. The poor parents of such large families are incapable of managing their children's educational expenses."
Financial responsibilities	Sharing financial responsibilities with the parents	"I do not have any brother and I have to share financial responsibilities with my parents as well as to bear the expenses of my two younger sisters." (Student 6, Female participant)
Job engagement	Engaging in part-time and full-time jobs	Student 3,"Financial insecurity has imposed me in job engagement as working in the agricultural fields with my father and two of my brothers who do not study." Teacher 1," I have observed that some of the students of our department are engaged in jobs, other than agricultural works, like engaged as teacher in kindergarten and in coaching centers and providing tuition, and some other parttime and full-time jobs that hinder their regular attendance."
Early marriage	Marriage before the usual time	Student 8 (female participant)," The financial insufficiency of my family has compelled me to get involved in marital relationship and in accordance with the traditions of our country, I have to live with my husband in distant district. For this reason, I can only attend to the exams, but cannot attend to the classes." (Another female student, student 7, has also expressed the similar sort of opinion)

In searching the researchers' viewpoints in literature regarding the finding of 'insufficient familial financial support', it is found that Sahin, Arseven, & Kilic (2016) also supported this finding in their research concerning the causes of students' absenteeism. However, Chong, Cheung, & Hui (2009) observed an opposite picture

that students of comparatively wealthier families showed the tendency of skipping classes more frequently. In my context, I have got experience that the students at National University of Bangladesh (NUB) have been severely suffering from this miserable condition of financial insecurity and this painful reality of the students of NUB has been leading to emerge many other problems cumulatively in the most dominant manner. This finding was supported in literature by Gottfried (2014) and Ocak, Ocak, & Baysal (2017), as they revealed a negative association between the attendance behavior and both the large family structure and parents' educational status. The reason of job engagement for students' absenteeism was also supported in literature by Chong, Cheung, & Hui (2009) and Longhurst (2009), as they noted that job engagement raises students' absenteeism to a great extent.

Institutional factors

THEME	DESCRIPTION	
Institutional factors	Causes of students' absenteeism that originated from educational institutions	
Subcategories	Description	Significant Statement Examples
Class arrangements	Irregular and Inconsistent class sessions	Student 2,"In conducting class sessions, we have observed that regularity and consistency are not maintained by our teachers, and sometimes, without any preannouncement, successive classes are suspended. Therefore, we have become discouraged to attend on a regular basis."
Pedagogical issues	Lack of pedagogical advancement (Teachers' traditional teaching style)	Student 4 expressed his frustration saying, "Class sessions are, most of the times, boring; teachers cannot present relevant practical evidence beyond text, and they are not adept to conduct the class sessions in an interactive fashion. Therefore, we do not feel any attraction to attend to the class sessions and remain absent"
Infrastructural issues	Infrastructural limitations	Student 2," We have got some infrastructural limitations like large classes, traditional and uncomfortable sitting arrangement, lack of modern teaching-learning material etc. which are acting as bars to regular attendance."

Residential facility	Crisis in dwelling in college hostel	<p>Student 3," I cannot avail accommodation in the college hostel and this residential problem is influencing my attendance behavior."</p> <p>"The college authority is incapable of availing accommodation for a large number of students (almost 50%) in the four college hostels. I can assume that residential problem is interplaying behind the causes of students' absenteeism to some extent" (Administrator 1 who is the principal of 'R' Government College)</p>
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These findings were also supported in literature by Cleary-Holdforth (2007) and Marburger (2001), as they suggested that pedagogical and infrastructural limitations raise absenteeism.

Environmental and Other factors

THEME	DESCRIPTION	
Environmental and Other factors	Causes of students' absenteeism that relate to Environmental and Other factors	
Subcategories	Description	Significant Statement Examples
Transport	Long distance and transportation problems	<p>Student 3," Along with me, most of the students of our department live in another upazilas outside the district where 'R' college is situated and for getting to college, we need to change at least three vehicles. Again, for financial bear the transportation cost on a regular basis, and as a consequence, we are compelled to choose the easy solution of nothing but skipping our classes."</p>
Private tuition	Private tuition outside classrooms	<p>Student 2," The majority of the students of the Department of Economics, including me, are engaged in taking private tuition from the teachers of our own department because we can get very short suggestions from the teachers in case of private tuition and by memorizing these few answers in the exam papers, we can easily get the passing grade, so we do not feel any extra motivation to attend our classes."</p>

Motivation	Low motivation and commitment to studies	"I cannot mention any specific reason of my non-attendance behavior. I do not feel any sort of motivation in my study matters." (Student 8, Female participant)
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This issue of 'long distance and transportation problems' is found to have a support in Longhurst's (1999) exploration, as the students who need to change more vehicles in getting to classes, are also intended to skip classes more frequently. Reviewing the literature, this view of 'low motivation and commitment to studies' is found to be supported by Longhurst (1999) and Cleary-Holdforth (2007), as they mentioned that low motivation and commitment to the learning matters control the rate of attendance.

Attendance Regulation and Assessment Criteria

		motivation to attend to their scheduled class sessions." (Coded as Teacher 2)
THEME	DESCRIPTION	
Attendance Regulation and Assessment Criteria	Causes of absenteeism that relate to attendance regulation and exam system	
Subcategories	Description	Significant Statement Examples
Attendance regulation	Failure of strict implementation of attendance rule	Teacher 3, "University Grants Commission (UGC) and National University of Bangladesh (NUB), under whose regulation the colleges are governed, has a strict convention of having at least 75% attendance to ensure the students' candidacy to sit for the final exam, but, it is a matter of great regret and unfortunate that the authority of our college is not strict enough to implement this rule for some causes, such as, high dropout, the ill-tendency of sustaining teachers private tuition business, the administrators' and teachers' negligence, and over and above political pressure." (The other teachers and both of the administrators also have expressed the similar type of opinions)
Exam system	Non-standard question and exam system	"The question patterns of the final exam devised by the arrangements of NUB are usually very traditional. Around 80% to 85% similarity in the questions is usually observed from the 2 lagged years' question paper. As a result, the students can easily get a passing grade in exams and do not feel any extra

Evaluation	Tendency of easy evaluation and over-marking	teacher 3, "Most teachers are found to be tended to over-marking, that is, to avoid any sort of future unwelcome consequence, they like to put at least an average mark."
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In literature, this viewpoint of 'failure of strict implementation of attendance rule' is supported by Longhurst (1999), as he argued that execution of attendance rule could raise attendance rate. Again, reviewing the literature, the finding of 'non-standard question and exam system' is also found to be justified by Collett, Gyles, & Hrasky (2007) to their study, as they pointed out that the implementation of 'formative and creative question patterns' and 'transparent and unbiased exam system' in the educational institutes can reduce the extent of absenteeism.

Conclusive remarks of the findings regarding research question # 1

In fine, from the perceptions, beliefs and experiences of the respondent students, teachers and administrators in the interview sessions, students' financial insecurity, pedagogical and infrastructural limitations, long distance and transportation problems, low motivation and commitment to studies, failure of strict implementation of attendance rule, non-standard question and exam system, female students' early marriage have been emerged as the most fundamental causes of students' absenteeism of the undergraduate economics students at 'R' college that needs proper attention to the stakeholders (college authority, policymakers, students, teachers, parents) for the sake of uprooting or at least reducing the extent of this harmful practice.

4.2 Findings and Discussions Regarding Research Question#2

RQ 2: To what extent absenteeism affects students' overall academic experiences (academic achievements, other academic experiences, and socio- emotional outcomes)?

Thematic Analysis regarding Research Question#2

During the procedures of the data transcribing and data coding, I have arrayed 9 different types (categories) consequences revolved around 3 comprehensive themes and patterns of the respondents' responses to the interview questions connected to the consequences of students' absenteeism.

Consequences on students' academic achievements



THEME	DESCRIPTION	
Students' academic achievements	Consequences of students' absenteeism on their academic achievements	
Subcategories	Description	Significant Statement Examples
Grade	Achieving lower grades in exam	Teacher 1," During my 20 years of teaching experience, I have noticed that absentee students achieve significantly lower grade in exams."
Re-exam	Obligation of sitting for re-exam in some courses	Teacher 2," In my observation, over the 10 years of my teaching experience, half of the total students are obliged to sit for re-exam on at least three courses on average and absentee students are, in most of the cases, found to face this situation."
Non-promotion	Failure of getting promotion to the next academic year	Student 5," I had failed to get promoted to the next academic year due to my nonattendance."

I asked the students' GPA (Grade Point Average) and matched their rate of attendance with them. I surprisingly observed from this investigation that these absentee students' GPA were on an average 40% lower compared to the students who attended their classes regularly. The finding that 'absenteeism has found to have significant consequences on students' exam grade of the undergraduate economics students at 'R' Government College' was also supported in literature by the findings of Gottfried (2014), Green & Celkan (2015) and Marburger (2001), since they reported that absentee students were found to achieve significantly lower grade in exams as compared to the regular attendant students.

Consequences on students' other academic experiences

THEME	DESCRIPTION	
Students' other academic experiences	Consequences of students' absenteeism on their other academic experiences	
Subcategories	Description	Significant Statement Examples
Drop-out	High drop-out rates	"R' Government College is experiencing a high drop-out rate every year. I think that absentee students fail to keep pace with their study matters and finally decide to drop-out from their studies."



		(Administrator 1 who is the principal of 'R' college)
Extra-expenses	Extra expenses on private tuition	Student 4," Together with me, absentee students have to take extra private tuition from the teachers of our own department to cover the learning gap due to our habit of non-attendance."
Learning gap	Large gap in learning and understanding level	Teacher 2, "These students even do not have the courage to attend in the competitive exam for lacking in fundamental knowledge, they even cannot provide educational support for their children in the long run, and they become burden for family and society."
Career plan	Compromising with future goals after education	Teacher 1, "They often fail to prove self-confidence and often provide poor signal to the job market."

I also reviewed the documents of students' attendance patterns and students' drop-out rates in different academic years and found a significant positive correlation between non-attendance and drop-out (also got support in literature by Sahin, Arseven, & Kiliç, 2016). Reviewing the literature, the findings regarding 'learning gap' and 'career plan', Gottfried (2014) and Irwin, Burnett, & McCarron (2018) have supported these by arguing that absence creates a large gap in the learning and understanding level of the students which eventually pushes them to compromise their future career goals after education.

Consequences on students' socio-emotional outcomes

THEME	DESCRIPTION	
Students' socio-emotional outcomes	Consequences of students' absenteeism on their socio-emotional outcomes	
Subcategories	Description	Significant Statement Examples
Socio-emotional skills	Lacking in socio-emotional skills	Student 3," Along with me, we, the absentee students, feel that we have strong lacking in case of some vital socio-emotional aspects like confidence and social and academic interaction. We realize that the practice of our nonattendance is responsible for these shortages, but due to some unavoidable reasons we cannot give up our bad practice of absenteeism."
Bad company & drug addiction	Involving in anti-social activities and becoming victim of drug addiction	"During my periods as an administrator, I have observed that absentee students are inclined to involve in some sorts of anti-social activities like terrorism, snatching etc. and also in drug addiction" (Administrator 2 who is the vice-principal of 'R' college)

Reviewing the literature, I have got support of these findings in Gottfried's (2014) study, since he noted that the habit of chronic absenteeism bears the potential negative consequence of making the students disengaged and isolated from their academic and socio-emotional matters which eventually turns them less confident in the long run.

Conclusive remarks of the findings regarding research question # 2

To sum up, in the interview sessions with the students, teachers and administrators, most of the respondents have pointed to the viewpoint, regarding the consequences of students' absenteeism, that the first and foremost compromise students are found to do with their exam grade. Furthermore, reexam, non-promotion, drop-out, learning gap, compromise in career plan, lacking in socio-emotional skills, involving in anti-social activities and drug addiction are cited by the respondents as the other fundamental consequences of students' absenteeism.

4.3 Combining (Triangulating) the findings regarding both the research questions together

In the process of eliciting the findings at the time of the procedures of the data analysis of this study, it is evident that there prevail some root causes behind students' absenteeism behavior of the undergraduate economics students at 'R' college which ultimately damaging the teaching-learning environment of the undergraduate level of the department of economics of this college with long term implications on students' overall academic experiences. Therefore, I can suggest from the findings of this study that, first of all, there needs to take proper steps to remove the causes of students' absenteeism identified in this study. Then, the negative consequences of students' absenteeism will be vanished automatically.

4.4 Limitations of this study and directions to future research

In the dreadful situation of the pandemic of Covid-19, this study is conducted on only the undergraduate economics students in a very short timeframe, so the study had to embrace some limitations like the failure of covering a broad area of interest, lacking to provide in-depth and in-detail attention related to the issue of students' absenteeism etc. In future, the scope of the research covering this issue can be expanded to all the students of economics department (both the students of undergraduate and postgraduate education) with a representative large sample and with a long term continuous follow up. Other departments of the college, even

other colleges that have been experiencing the problem of students' absenteeism can be taken under the broad scope of research in this manner. The success of the present study will rely greatly on the arrangements of more research on this issue in future and in that cases this research can be a primary source of knowledge covering the issue of students' absenteeism for future research initiatives.

SECTION 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The utmost intention of this study was to have an in-depth inquiry into the fundamental causes that mostly affect the attendance behavior of the undergraduate students of the department of economics at 'R' Government College of Bangladesh and consequently to have an in-depth investigation on the consequences of students' absenteeism on their overall academic experiences for the purpose of finding out the ways to get rid of the problems. In this study, I have revealed four broad-categorized causes of students' absenteeism labelled under four comprehensive themes which are students' individual and their family related matters, educational institutes related factors, environment-originated factors, attendance regulation and policy matters, social phenomenon, and others. Covering these issues, 15 different categories of causes have been identified. First of all, students' financial scarcity or insecurity has been identified as the first and foremost influential factor and this perception was found to be held by the students, teachers, and administrators altogether. In this study, it has been noticed that this problem of financial constraint alone can explain effectively so many other factors like bearing extra familial responsibilities, large family size and structure, job involvement, female students' premature or early marriage, and so on. These financial barriers compel the students to have engaged in other activities skipping their scheduled class sessions. Secondly, the major institutional limitations identified in this study are lack of pedagogical advancement, traditional and inconvenient classroom setting, irregular and inconsistent class sessions, students' residential problem, unstrict implementation of existing attendance rule, and so on. In this regard, the perceptions of teachers and administrators on the issue of their inability of strict implementation of attendance rule are discovered as very crucial to eradicate absenteeism from the arena of educational institutions. Present practices of question formation and evaluation system are identified in this study as the vital factors that has been distracted students from the classroom and allowed them to pass easily without attending classes. On the other hand, this study has been found out the consequences of students' absenteeism as very harmful. This study identified that the first and foremost compromise on behalf of the absentee students is on their exam score. Another dreadful consequence is found

that the practice of absenteeism is creating a huge learning gap for the students. Eventually, this learning gap is observed to make the malpractice of private tuition so dominant. Next, the socio-emotional skills like confidence, peer relationship and interaction with teachers are also diminished.

This study has attempted to make some effective recommendations to resolve this problem. Firstly, the college authority, regulatory bodies and policy makers should take some necessary steps to provide support for the students to reduce the extent of students' financial insecurity. My suggestions they can consider are the provision of scholarship (financial support), reducing or if possible, making free of students' tuition fees etc. Again, college authority can consider the convenient classroom arrangements, rescheduling of the class sessions like suspending early morning classes, provision of evening and online classes, making the best use of the educational technologies to turn classes as attractive to the students, and so on. Secondly, in my consideration, gaining understandings from the findings of this study, 'R' Government College of Bangladesh has enough scope to provide remedies of the institutional shortcomings, such as arranging provision for the teachers regarding pedagogical advancements, regular class supervision, arranging teacher evaluation system by the students, expanding residential facilities, and so forth. The most effective change, according to the outcomes of this study, that can consider the college authority is the execution and proper supervision of existing attendance rule in order to get the students returned to their scheduled classroom sessions. Along with this change, another vital recommendation is to abolish the current pattern of question and evaluation practices and to make them standard and creative for the target of achieving the best possible learning goals. Furthermore, arrangement of a structured discourse with the absentee students' parents or legal guardians can also produce a good result as per my recommendation.

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Appendix A

Practice Based Inquiry (PBI) Research

Research Title - "An inquiry into the causes of absenteeism and its consequences on their overall academic experiences among the undergraduate economics students at 'R' Government College of Bangladesh"

General Information Sheet

You are invited to take part in a research study. This research study is part of a Module I am taking at the School of Education, University of Nottingham Malaysia. Before you agree to take part, it is important to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.

Please take time to carefully read the following information. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear, or if you would like more information. Please think about it carefully and then decide whether you would like to take part or not.

What are the aims of the research?

This study aims to assess teachers' knowledge and perceptions about the causes and consequences of students' absenteeism and recommendations of reducing students' absenteeism practice. It is hoped that this study will provide insight and future direction into improving teachers' professional practice.

Who else is and can be involved?

Besides you, some other students, teachers, principal, and vice-principal of this college will be asked to participate.

What sorts of methods are being used?

This research is based on data collected via a questionnaire and interview which asks about your perceptions/understanding of the causes and consequences of students' absenteeism as well as some of your demographic information. Your interview will be audio-taped or recorded using phone call recording app.

Why have you been chosen?

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are belonging to this college and the research focus is also concerning of this college.

What are you being asked to do?

You are being asked to complete a questionnaire, be interviewed, audio-taped and give permission for the researchers to use your responses on the questionnaire and interview.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

The data we collect will be treated confidentially, and only members of the research team will have access to the raw data. All information collected while carrying out the study will be stored on a database which is password protected and strictly confidential. The digital and textual data will be kept in a secure and confidential location. Your name will not appear on any database or any information which is then published. Instead, a number will be used as an identifier on all data associated with you. The master copy of the names associated with each number will be kept in a separate, secure, and confidential location.

We will report the results anonymously. When results are reported all individuals and institutions (e.g., individual schools and zones) will be anonymized, so neither you nor your affiliations will be identifiable.

We are committed to carrying out our research according to the ethical guidelines provided by the British Educational Research Association (online at <http://tinurl.com/6r5iuen>).

What will happen to the results of the research study?

We expect to talk about our research at professional conferences and write about it in academic journals.

Do you have to take part?

Your participation is entirely voluntary. It is important you understand that you do not have to participate in the project at all, and even if you decide to take part you are still free to stop at any time and without giving a reason.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

We realize that some people may find completing the questionnaire tiring or difficult and we understand that for some teachers this may cause feelings of discomfort or anxiety. Otherwise, we do not believe there are any risks or disadvantages to you in taking part.

What are the possible benefits to me of taking part?

We hope that your views, and those of others, will us better understand the knowledge and perceptions about the causes and consequences of students' absenteeism amongst students, teachers, and administrators of this college.

If you agree to take part in this study, please-

1. Keep this copy of the Information Sheet for your records.
2. Sign the attached Consent Form Fill-in the attached questionnaire



Appendix B

Practice Based Inquiry (PBI) Research

Research Title - "An inquiry into the causes of absenteeism and Its consequences on their overall academic experiences among the undergraduate economics students at 'R' Government College of Bangladesh"

Consent Form

1. I have read the Information Sheet.
2. I understand the nature and purpose of this research.
3. I have received enough information to make an informed decision about taking part.
4. I understand that I can raise questions, offer criticisms, and make suggestions about the project.
5. I understand that I can decide *not* to participate in this project at any time after agreeing to.
6. I agree to contribute to this research.
7. I agree for the interview to be audio-taped or recorded using phone recording app.
8. I agree for my responses to be analyzed for this research.

I consent to take part in this project after considering the information provided.

NAME (capital letter): _TANIYA ISLAM

Signature: _____

Date: 27/09/2020

Participant Code (for research team use): ___ Student 7

Appendix C

Practice Based Inquiry (PBI) Research

Research Title - "An inquiry into the causes of absenteeism and its consequences on their overall academic experiences among the undergraduate economics students at 'R' Government College of Bangladesh"

Interview Protocol (For Student Participants)

Dear Participants,

Thank you for taking time to participate in this Interview Protocol and agreeing to be part of this research study.

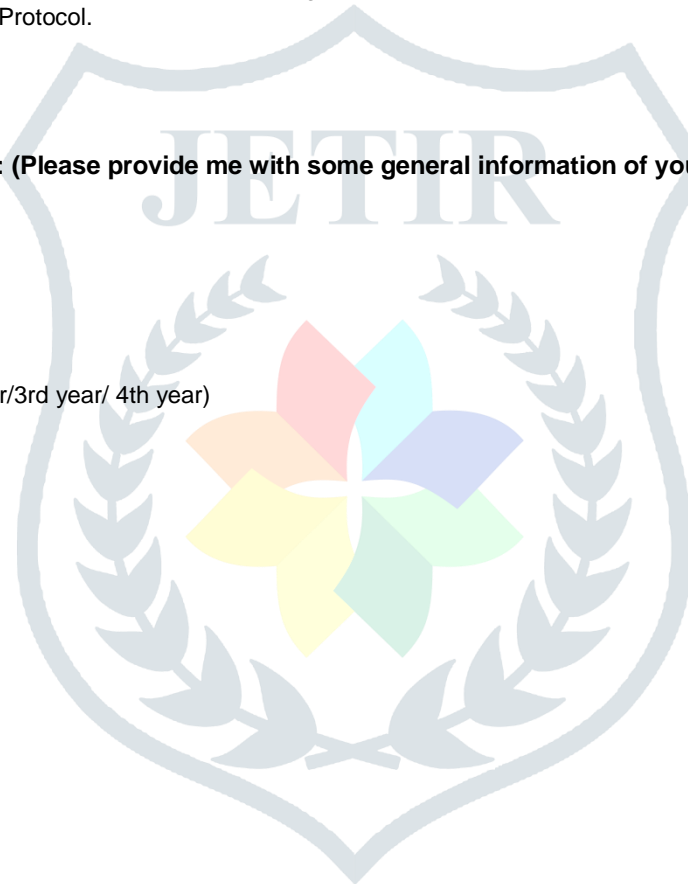
This Interview Protocol consists of two sections. **Section One** asks you information about yourself and **Section Two** asks you to respond to items related to the causes, consequences, challenges, and solutions of students' absenteeism. It should take about 10-15 minutes to complete this Interview Protocol.

Section One:

Information of the participants: (Please provide me with some general information of yours)

1. Name....
2. Age....
3. Gender,,,
4. Study year,... (1st year/2nd year/3rd year/ 4th year)
5. Academic session...,
6. Residence

address....



Section Two:**Introductory Questions:**

- 1) Have you ever missed a class? Why?
- 2) How frequently you be absent from classes?

Questions related to Research Question # 1: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) Why were you absent from the class? (Please point out the reasons for your absence)
- 2) What are the students' personal matters that compel them to remain absent?
- 3) What might be the students' familial reasons of their non-attendance?
- 4) What are the possible institutional factors that can interplay behind students' absenteeism?
- 5) What are the environmental factors that can create students' absenteeism?
- 6) Does the practice of private tuition play a role behind students' absenteeism? How and to what extent?
- 7) To what extent students' motivation and commitment to studies act as the causes of students' absenteeism?
- 8) What is your idea about the matter that attendance regulation has a significant impact on students' attendance behavior?
- 9) How question patterns, exam system and evaluation practices create students' absenteeism?

10) Questions related to Research Question # 2: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) Do you believe absenteeism affects your overall academic experiences?
- 2) How does and to what extent it affects your academic achievements? (Please give examples to support your points)
- 3) How does and to what extent it affects your other academic experiences? (Please mention the possible areas that might be affected by absenteeism)
- 4) How does and to what extent it affects your socio-emotional outcomes? (Please mention the possible areas that might be affected by absenteeism)

Questions related to challenges: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) What are the challenges on the ways to reduce absenteeism?
- 2) How these challenges can be overcome?
- 3)

Questions related to possible solutions: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs and experiences)

- 1) Are there things you can do or within your control to reduce your absenteeism practice?
- 2) What are the other solutions to reduce the practice of absenteeism?
- 3) What steps can the college take to reduce absenteeism?

Exit (Conclusive) Question:

- 1) Is there anything you would like to add about the causes, consequences, challenges, and possible solutions of students' absenteeism?

Appendix D

Practice Based Inquiry (PBI) Research

Research Title - "An inquiry into the causes of absenteeism and its consequences on their overall academic experiences among the undergraduate economics students at 'R' Government College of Bangladesh"

Interview Protocol (For Teacher Participants)

Dear Participants,

Thank you for taking time to participate in this Interview Protocol and agreeing to be part of this research study.

This Interview Protocol consists of two sections. **Section One** asks you information about yourself and **Section Two** asks you to respond to items related to the causes, consequences, challenges, and solutions of students' absenteeism. It should take about 10-15 minutes to complete this Interview Protocol.

Section One:

Information of the participants: (Please provide me with some general information of yours)

1. Name....

2. Length of teaching period....

Section Two:

◆ Introductory Questions:

- 1) Do students absent from your lessons?
- 2) How often they absent from your scheduled class sessions?
- 3) **◆ Questions related to Research Question # 1: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)**
 - 1) Why do students absent from their scheduled class sessions? (Please point out the reasons for their absence)
 - 2) What are the students' personal matters that compel them to remain absent?
 - 3) What might be the students' familial reasons of their non-attendance?
 - 4) What are the possible institutional factors that can interplay behind students' absenteeism?
 - 5) What are the environmental factors that can create students' absenteeism?
 - 6) Does the practice of private tuition play a role behind students' absenteeism? How and to what extent?
 - 7) To what extent students' motivation and commitment to studies act as the causes of students' absenteeism?
 - 8) What is your idea about the matter that attendance regulation has a significant impact on students' attendance behavior?
 - 9) How question patterns, exam system and evaluation practices create students' absenteeism?

Questions related to Research Question # 2; (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) Do you believe absenteeism affects students' overall academic experiences?
- 2) How does and to what extent it affects their academic achievements? (Please give examples to support your points)
- 3) How does and to what extent it affects their other academic experiences? (Please mention the possible areas that might be affected by absenteeism.)
- 4) How does and to what extent it affects their socio-emotional outcomes? (Please mention the possible areas that might be affected by absenteeism.)

Questions related to challenges; (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) What are the challenges on the ways to reduce absenteeism?
- 2) How these challenges can be overcome?

Questions related to possible solutions: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) Are there things you can do or within your control to reduce students' absenteeism practice?
- 2) What are the other solutions to reduce the practice of students' absenteeism?
- 3) What steps can the college take to reduce students' absenteeism?

Exit (Conclusive) Question:

- 1) Is there anything you would like to add about the causes, consequences, challenges, and possible solutions of students' absenteeism?

Appendix E

Practice Based Inquiry (PBI) Research

Research Title - "An inquiry into the causes of absenteeism and its consequences on their overall academic experiences among the undergraduate economics students at 'R' Government College of Bangladesh"

Interview Protocol (For Administrator Participants)

Dear Participants,

Thank you for taking time to participate in this Interview Protocol and agreeing to be part of this research study.

This Interview Protocol consists of two sections. **Section One** asks you information about yourself and **Section Two** asks you to respond to items related to the causes, consequences, challenges, and solutions of students' absenteeism. It should take about 10-15 minutes to complete this Interview Protocol.

Section One:

Information of the participants: (Please provide me with some general information of yours)

1. Name....
2. Designation....
3. Length of period as an administrator,...

Section Two:

Introductory Questions:

- 1) Do students absent from their scheduled class sessions at your college?
- ❖ How often they absent from their scheduled class sessions? **Questions related to Research Question # 1: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)**
 - 1) Why do students absent from their scheduled class sessions? (Please point out the reasons for their absence)
 - 2) What are the students' personal matters that compel them to remain absent?
 - 3) What might be the students' familial reasons of their non-attendance?
 - 4) What are the possible institutional factors that can interplay behind students' absenteeism?
 - 5) What are the environmental factors that can create students' absenteeism?
 - 6) Does the practice of private tuition play a role behind students' absenteeism? How and to what extent?
 - 7) To what extent students' motivation and commitment to studies act as the causes of students' absenteeism?
 - 8) What is your idea about the matter that attendance regulation has a significant impact on students' attendance behavior?
 - 9) How question patterns, exam system and evaluation practices create students' absenteeism?

❖ Questions related to Research Question # 2: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) Do you believe absenteeism affects students' overall academic experiences?
- 2) How does and to what extent it affects their academic achievements? (Please give examples to support your points)
- 3) How does and to what extent it affects their other academic experiences? (Please mention the possible areas that might be affected by absenteeism)
- 4) How does and to what extent it affects their socio-emotional outcomes? (Please mention the possible areas that might be affected by absenteeism)

❖ Questions related to challenges; (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) What are the challenges on the ways to reduce absenteeism?
- 2) How these challenges can be overcome?

❖ Questions related to possible solutions: (Please answer these questions from your perceptions, beliefs, and experiences)

- 1) Are there things you can do or within your control to reduce students' absenteeism practice?
- 2) What are the other solutions to reduce the practice of students' absenteeism?
- 3) What steps can the college take to reduce students' absenteeism?

❖ Exit (Conclusive) Question:

- 1) Is there anything you would like to add about the causes, consequences, challenges, and possible solutions of students' absenteeism?