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A Comparison of Teacher and Student Absenteeism in Three School Districts of Different Size

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A COMPARISON OF TEACHER AND STUDENT ABSENTEEISM
IN THREE SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF DIFFERENT SIZE

by

John Clifton Huffman

A Project Report
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Specialist in Education
Department of Educational Leadership

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
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A COMPARISON OF TEACHER AND STUDENT
ABSENTEEISM IN THREE SCHOOL
DISTRICTS OF DIFFERENT SIZE

John Clifton Huffman, Ed.S.

Western Michigan University, 1984

This paper compares absentee rates for teachers and students in three Michigan school districts. The districts under investigation vary greatly in enrollment. This first chapter relates the problem of teacher and student absenteeism to maintaining an assumed level of teacher/student contact time.

The second chapter reviews literature related to student and teacher absenteeism. This includes those studies which evaluate absenteeism based on personal and organizational factors associated with absence.

The third chapter relates the procedures which were used in the comparison. The fourth chapter lists the results of the data collected from the three school districts. The data are compared by district size, elementary or secondary level of instruction, and students and teachers.

The fifth chapter discusses the results and suggests possible reasons for the difference identified in the previous chapters. Conclusions and recommendations, based on the comparison are also included in the fifth chapter.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the preparation of this project, I am extremely appreciative and grateful for the support and advice provided by Dr. Larry Schlack of the Department of Educational Leadership, Western Michigan University. His suggestions and guidance will always be remembered. Additionally, he had the foresight to recognize that the topic of this project would have an impact on my professional growth and development.

I would also like to thank the personnel and student accounting offices of the districts investigated during the project. Their willingness to share information and considerable help in gathering the data made this project possible.

John Clifton Huffman

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

In the decade of the eighties, public education may face its greatest challenges. New financial constraints from local, state, and federal sources are squeezing programs in many districts. Competition from private schools, especially parochial schools, is vigorous. The oversupply of teachers competing for scarce job openings has greatly limited the mobility of teachers.

Many districts are facing dropping enrollment, leading to a reduction in the number of teaching personnel through lay-offs. Teachers are being reassigned to unfamiliar teaching areas after little or no preparation.

At the same time there is renewed concern for the quality of public education. A number of studies, such as "A Nation At Risk," have raised serious doubts as to the current practices in our nation's schools. A common conclusion is that schools are not offering adequate teacher/student contact time.

Evidence presented to the Commission demonstrates three disturbing facts about the use that American schools and students make of time: (1) Compared to other nations, American students spend less time on schoolwork; (2) Time spent in the classroom and on homework is often used ineffectively; and (3) Schools are not doing enough to help students develop either the study skills to use time well or the willingness to spend more time on schoolwork" (Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).

"School districts and State Legislatures should strongly consider seven-hour school days as well as two-hundred to two-hundred-twenty day school year" (Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). If indeed the amount of teacher/student contact time is an important variable in the quality of public education, the rate of absenteeism of the part of teachers or students could be as important as the number of scheduled school days.

The possible reaction to the financial difficulties, reassigned staffing, and morale problems schools are now facing could be an increased abandonment of schools by a significant number of teachers and students. Permanent abandonment of public schools by students is seen when a student transfers to a private institution or drops out of school entirely. Permanent abandonment by school

staff could be shown by resignations. For both staff and students, permanent abandonment has financial consequences. Whether the consequences are paying tuition to a private school or searching for a job, they are sufficient to limit considerably the number of individuals willing to walk away from public education.

Therefore, a more frequent result of dissatisfaction with public education can be seen in temporary abandonment of the schools or absenteeism. absenteeism can be the result of sickness or injury. But, absenteeism can also be the result of a conscious choice made by the individual to temporarily abandon the institution. Absenteeism on the part of a student obviously precludes any teacher/student contact and definitely imposes additional financial burdens on the school district. In order to assess the possible impact of this problem it would seem important to examine current rates of absenteeism in school districts.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine and compare the absentee rates for students and teachers in three

school districts of dissimilar size. In addition to district size, data will be delineated to allow comparisons between elementary and secondary schools and elective absenteeism and unavoidable absenteeism. Elective absenteeism is defined as non-attendance on the part of an individual when school is in session. Unavoidable absenteeism occurs when all or part of a school district is scheduled to be in session but is not. An example of unavoidable absenteeism is school cancellation due to bad weather.

The Scope of the Study

This study will be limited to determining absentee rates for students and teachers in three school districts for one academic year. While the districts vary in size they are located in the same general geographic area. While the study will not attempt to determine the causes of voluntary teacher and students absenteeism, the data may be suggestive of related variables for further investigation. Beyond the comparisons, the data should provide a baseline for plotting future trends in student and teacher absenteeism.

The Significance of the Problem

This study will provide data for evaluating one aspect of the current status of pupil-teacher contact time. The avoidance of such contact by teachers and students is a serious concern for parents and the future of education. More specifically, data will be provided to help determine the magnitude of both elective and unavoidable absenteeism for teachers and students. Comparisons will also be made in relationship to district size and elementary vs. secondary schools. This type of information may have real significance in considering the number of school days in an academic year as it relates to teacher-student contact.

Indeed, the examination of this type of data may suggest avenues of investigation into causative factors. It is hoped that this information may facilitate the planned reduction of absenteeism in our schools. This would probably be a more cost-effective way to increase teacher-student contact time as opposed to increasing the length of the school year.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There have been a number of studies regarding absenteeism in schools. Studies have been conducted to examine absentee rates among teachers as well as possible factors associated with absenteeism. Similar, though far fewer, studies have been done regarding student absenteeism. This chapter will review these investigations and what others hypothesize on the issue.

Great concern over absenteeism was expressed by Minzey in 1981. He notes that in Michigan the school year itself has gotten considerably shorter. In 1964-65, there were 193 days in the average school year. By 1980-81, this total had been reduced to 180 average school days. He concludes that this reduction, combined with a shorter school day, results in purloined school years for students. His statistics show that the school career of twelve years for the typical student in 1981 was actually three and one-third years shorter than it was for a student in 1964 (Minzey, Michigan School Board Journal, 1981).

Employee absenteeism has been the focus of numerous studies in business and industry. However, far less published data are available on staff absenteeism

in education. The data that does exist is from studies conducted in New York City; Newark, New Jersey; suburban Philadelphia; and the states of Pennsylvania and Illinois. These studies suggest that absenteeism in education is a definite problem, perhaps greater than absenteeism in business and industry. The Academy for Educational Development reported in 1977 to the State Board of Education on teacher absenteeism in Illinois. "Teacher absenteeism as a phenomenon has the potential to be a serious problem for the state of Illinois. The State Board of Education is well advised, as are local districts, to acknowledge the strong possibility that teacher absenteeism as a problem will be aggravated rather than alleviated in the years ahead" (Report on Teacher Absenteeism in the Public School in Illinois to the State Board of Education, Illinois Office of Education, 1977, p. 3).

The trend of teacher absenteeism is running counter to the trends for employees in general across the ratio according to a 1982 report by Peggy Gordon Elliott. She indicates that while the general trend in absenteeism across the nation showed a 27.5 percent decrease during the mid-1970s, absenteeism for teachers during approximately the same period increased by 16.1 percent (Elliott, 1982). She recommends that schools

document absenteeism, make counteraction absenteeism a high priority issue, and involve the teacher's immediate supervisor in controlling absenteeism.

A study by the Philadelphia Suburban and South Penn Study Councils in 1970 indicated factors associated with teacher absenteeism were poor morale, problems in the educational program, endemic illness in the community, low salary scales, poor working conditions, heightened emotional stress, and inadequate staffing (Teacher Absenteeism and Related Policies for Supplemental Renumeration, 1970, p. 40). In 1978, Capitan and Morris listed causes of teacher absenteeism that were given as concerns by school personnel administrators including lenient leave policies, school problems, less devotion to duty, younger and less-dedicated teachers, severe weather conditions, lower morale, sick days more acceptable to society, slipping professional outlook, teaching pressures, personal leave days, and lack of professionalism.

Individual factors have also been studied and related to their possible effect on teacher absenteeism. Some studies relate absenteeism with personal factors. The NEA Research Division published information on twenty-one studies of teacher absence in the 1960 (Lee, 1960). The majority of

these studies indicated that the greater the teacher's age, the greater the absenteeism. However, other studies disagree. For example, Collier found absenteeism was not significantly related to age in a survey of teachers in Livonia, Michigan (Collier, 1975).

Sex has also been a factor in a number of studies. The studies by Lee and the NEA, published in 1960, indicate that female teachers are absent more than male teachers (Lee/NEA). A more recent study by Sylwester on a sample of 355 Oregon elementary and secondary school teachers and administrators also indicates that female staff members are absent more than male staff members (Sylwester, 1979).

Factors such as race, marital status, family size, educational level, tenure, and years of employment did not indicate a consistent relationship with absenteeism in the research. Studies either indicated that these factors had no effect on absenteeism or gave conflicting results, showing a positive relationship in one study and a negative relationship in the next.

Organizational factors have also been related to employee absenteeism. Generally, the studies show that elementary teachers are absent more than secondary teachers. Lee and the NEA Research Division indicated

this trend in studies from Kansas, Texas, and Southern California (Lee/NEA, 1960). The same was found by Capitan and Morris in 1978. Sylwester in 1979 also found elementary teachers absent more than secondary teachers.

Organization size has also been shown to have an effect on absenteeism--the larger the organization, the greater the absenteeism. The Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council found that systems with more than two hundred teachers had a higher degree of total absence in use of sick and personal leave than systems with less than two hundred teachers (Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council, 1970). The Academy of Educational Development studied Illinois schools from 1971 to 1976 and concluded that teacher absence increased steadily as the size of the school district increased (Report on Teacher Absenteeism in the Public School of Illinois to the State Board of Education, Illinois Office of Education, 1977, p. 9). However, Marchant found that there was no correlation between school building size and absence rates in Richmond, Virginia (Marchant, 1976).

Research on factors such as job satisfaction, group cohesion, satisfaction with supervisor, job responsibility, and job performance do not show a relationship with absenteeism.

A study by White in 1982 indicated that from 60 percent to 80 percent of the teachers studied would like to see a bonus pay program implemented to encourage teachers to reduce absenteeism. Additionally, 83 percent of the teachers studied felt a bonus pay program would have the effect of reducing teacher absenteeism (White, 1982).

Peggy Gordon Elliott speaks to the costs of absenteeism. Included in her compilation are financial costs, management costs, program costs, and the costs of credibility to the school district. These costs go far beyond the usual expenses for substitute teachers and indicate that the impact of absenteeism may be far greater than many assume (Elliott, 1982).

There are far fewer studies on student absenteeism. The data that exist dwell on reasons for pupil absence or its effect on school personnel. Many districts do an extensive job of monitoring pupil attendance, but most of the data tends to remain inside a particular district. Very little is published.

The American Association of School Administrators in its "Critical Issues Report, "Keeping Students in School" shows a number of studies (Boes, 1979). The report indicates that according to a California study,

absenteeism was greater at senior high schools than at junior high schools and at junior high schools than at elementary schools. The study also showed greater absenteeism in poor and urban high schools. The report notes studies which relate student absenteeism to course structure, curriculum, teacher style, classroom climate, alternative programs, and staff attitudes. There is little in the literature to suggest baseline data for typical school districts.

The review of the literature indicates that a major weakness inherent in much of the current research on absenteeism is the wide variety of methods used to measure absence. Miner described the problem saying, "The basic difficulty employers have faced is that what is counted as job absence in one company may differ considerably from what is counted in another company, even though the formula used for computing the rate is exactly the same" (Miner, 1977, p. 26).

Also Muchinsky states, "More than any other consideration, the methodological 'hogepodge' surrounding absenteeism indices plagues the evaluation and interpretation of absenteeism research" (Muchinsky, 1977, p. 317). Muchinsky finds among the variety of measures absence frequency (total number of times absent),

absence severity (total number of days absent), attitudinal absences (frequency of one-day absences), medical absences (frequency of absences of three days or more), worse day absences (absence related to day of the week), time lost (number of days missed during the week for any reasons other than leave), and blue Monday absences (number of employees absent on a Monday less those absent on a Friday for any week).

If absence data is to be effectively evaluated for teachers and students, there needs to be a consistency in reporting. Baseline data needs to be secured from a great number of schools throughout the United States. This consistency would then allow data to be compared among schools, between states, and with business industry. Presently, the literature does not indicate any unified effort to address this concern.

CHAPTER III

SAMPLING

In order to minimize the possible effects of variables not being considered in the study, the school districts for this investigation were located within a twenty-five mile radius of each other. They all operate under the same state guidelines, including specific requirements as to mandatory school attendance. Three school districts were selected to provide a range of size; District A having a 1,071 student population, District B having a 2,720 students, and District C having 12,480 students. The three districts had almost the same number of days in the school year and had similar policies dealing with student and teacher absenteeism.

Collection of Data

Attendance records for students and teachers were obtained from the administrative offices of the three identified school districts for the 1981-82 school year. Data were tabulated by district. Absentee rates (days

absent divided by total number of school days equals absenteeism expressed as a percentage) were determined for both teachers and students at the secondary and elementary levels. For example, in District A there were 41 teachers. Districts A's school year of 180 days multiplied by 41 teachers produces a total of 7380 teacher days. Teachers in District A were absent for a total of 815 days. 815 divided by 7380 indicated an absentee rate of 11.043%.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The data collected from the three school districts are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Rate of Non-Attendance in Percent
1981-82

<u>DISTRICT A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>ELECTIVE LEAVE %</u>	<u>UNAVOIDABLE ABSENTEEISM %</u>	<u>TOTAL LEAVE %</u>
Elementary Teachers	16	4.681	7.222	11.910
Secondary Teacher	25	3.811	7.222	11.022
Total Teachers	41	4.119	7.222	11.043
Elementary Students	532	7.496	7.222	14.177
Secondary Students	539	7.380	7.222	14.069
Total Students	1071	7.438	7.222	14.123
 <u>DISTRICT B</u>				
Elementary Teachers	71	7.469	3.611	10.814
Secondary Teacher	67	4.275	3.611	7.728
Total Teachers	138	5.918	3.611	9.316
Elementary Students	1472	5.189	3.889	8.761
Secondary Students	1248	4.364	3.333	7.552
Total Students	2720	4.809	3.634	8.268

DISTRICT C

Elementary Teachers	322	9.800	4.267	14.060
Secondary Teacher	388	4.700	4.267	8.406
Total Teachers	710	7.002	4.267	10.970
Elementary Students	7353	7.882	4.722	12.232
Secondary Students	5135	14.097	3.889	17.438
Total Students	12,448	10.451	4.380	14.373

Table 1 shows the data collected from the three school districts. Within each district, rates of non-attendance are shown for elementary teachers, secondary teachers, and total teachers. Also under each district are the rate for elementary students, secondary students, and total students. Additionally, rates of non-attendance are indicated for elective leave in each category, unavoidable absenteeism in each category, and total leave in each category. The rates of non-attendance are expressed in percent of the school year.

In Table 2, the same data have been converted to school days. Each column shows the number of school days of non-attendance in the school year in the study. In the same manner as Table 1, these data have been listed by elementary teachers, secondary teachers, and total teachers as well as for elementary students, secondary students, and total

students. The number of days of non-attendance are listed in columns for elective leave, unavoidable absenteeism, and total leave.

Table 2
Days of Non-Attendance
1981-82

<u>DISTRICT A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>DAYS ELECTIVE LEAVE</u>	<u>DAYS UNAVOIDABLE ABSENTEEISM</u>	<u>DAYS TOTAL LEAVE</u>
Elementary Teachers	16	8.4	13.0	21.4
Secondary Teachers	25	6.1	13.0	19.8
Total Teachers	41	7.4	13.0	19.8
Elementary Students	532	13.5	13.0	25.5
Secondary Students	539	13.3	13.0	25.3
Total Students	1071	13.4	13.0	25.4
 <u>DISTRICT B</u>				
Elementary Teachers	71	13.4	6.5	19.5
Secondary Teachers	67	7.7	6.5	13.9
Total Teachers	138	10.7	6.5	16.8
Elementary Students	1472	9.3	7.0	15.8
Secondary Students	1248	7.9	6.0	13.6
Total Students	2720	8.7	6.5	14.9

DISTRICT C

Elementary				
Teachers	322	17.6	7.7	25.3
Secondary				
Teacher	388	8.5	7.7	15.1
Total Teachers	710	12.6	7.7	19.7
Elementary				
Students	7353	14.2	8.5	22.0
Secondary				
Students	5135	25.4	7.0	31.4
Total				
Students	12,448	18.8	7.9	25.9

The data and graph in Figure 1 shows the total elective leave for all teachers and for all students in the three districts. Examination of the graph indicates that teacher elective leave increases as district size increases. The figure also indicates that the student elective leave is lowest in District B, the mid-size district, but rises to its highest point in the largest district, District C.

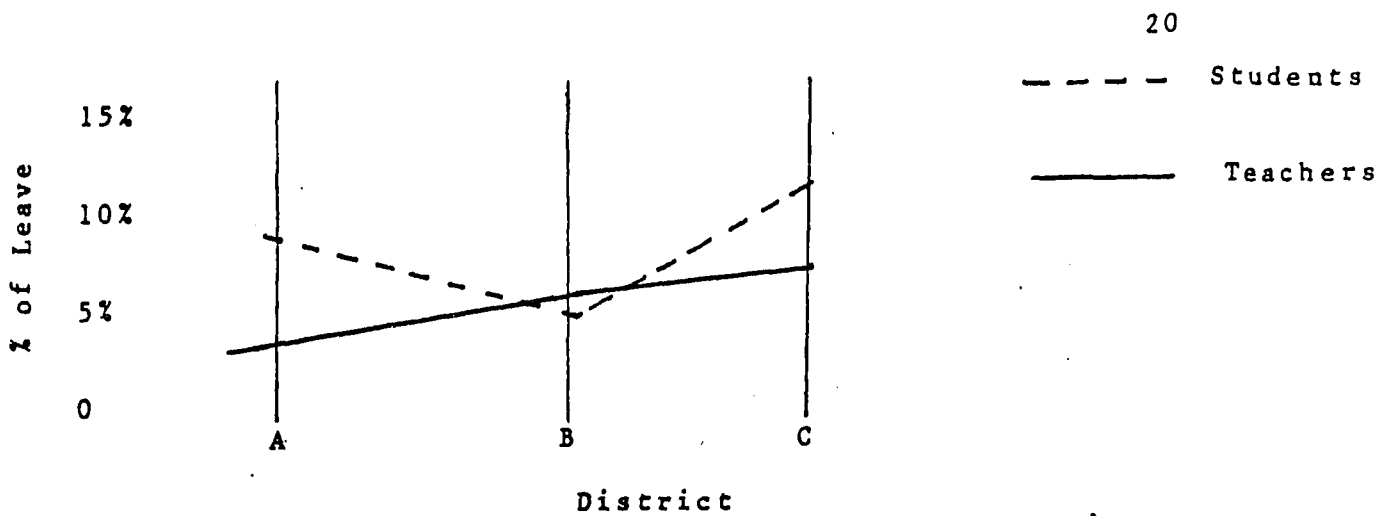


Figure 1

Total Elective Leave for Teachers and Students (%)

Figure 2, with its data and chart, shows teacher leave of elementary teachers compared to teacher elective leave of secondary teachers. The chart shows that the trend of increased absenteeism moving from smaller to larger district shown in Figure 1 holds true for both groups. Figure 2 also shows that elementary teachers are absent more than secondary teachers. It is also noted that the rate of teacher absenteeism among elementary teachers accelerates sharply as district size is raised.

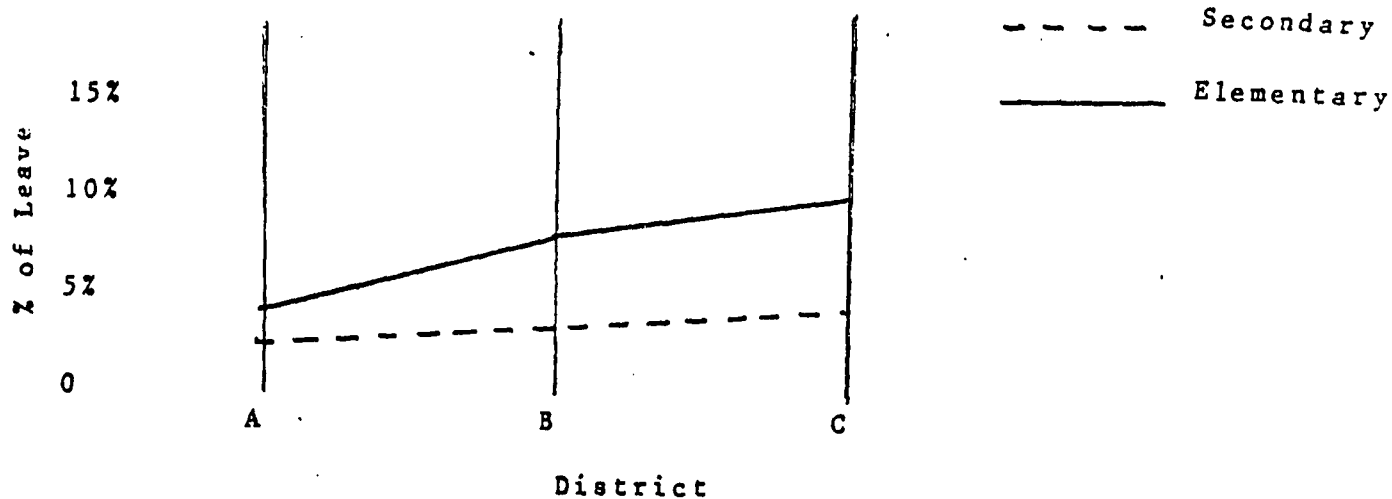


Figure 2

Elective Leave for Elementary and Secondary Teachers

Figure 3 compares elementary student absenteeism with secondary student absenteeism. Of particular interest in this figure is the high rate of absenteeism among secondary students in the largest district, District C. This rate is nearly twice the rate of absenteeism of any students in any other district. In contrast, secondary student absenteeism in Districts A and B is lower than elementary student absenteeism.

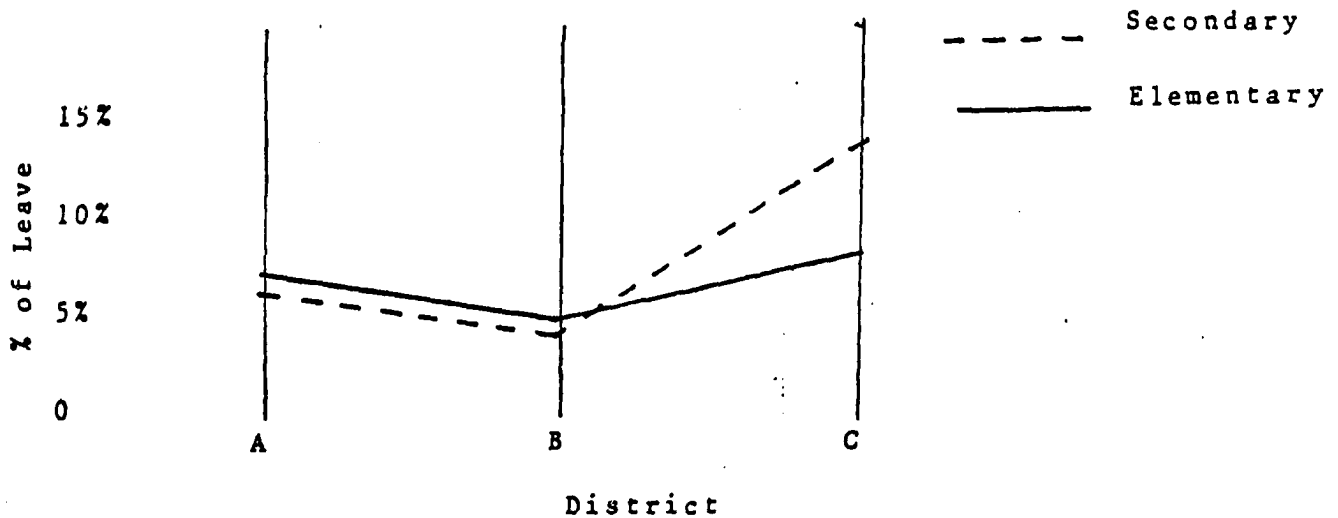


Figure 3

Elective Leave for Elementary and Secondary Students

Table 3 shows the rate of unavoidable absenteeism for students and teachers across the three districts. Unavoidable absenteeism, school cancellation, is quite consistent within each school district since school cancellation precludes student-teacher contact time for both groups.

School Cancellations are generally those days when school is scheduled but cancelled, due to weather conditions. Strikes, closing due to fuel shortages, and closings due to financial difficulties would also be included as unavoidable absenteeism in those cases there the number of student instruction days originally scheduled is reduced.

Table 3
Unavoidable Absenteeism

District A

Elementary Teachers	7.222
Secondary Teachers	7.222
Total Teachers	7.222
Elementary Students	7.222
Secondary Students	7.222
Total Students	7.222

District B

Elementary Teachers	3.611
Secondary Teachers	3.611
Total Teachers	3.611
Elementary Students	3.889
Secondary Students	3.333
Total Students	3.634

District C

Elementary Teachers	4.267
Secondary Teachers	4.267
Total Teachers	4.267
Elementary Students	4.722
Secondary Students	3.889
Total Students	4.380

Figure 5 demonstrates the combined effects of elective and unavoidable absenteeism on the total teaching population and the total student population. Of note is this chart is the actual level of absenteeism demonstrated in each district. This is especially startling when one realizes that an absence rate of 10% is equivalent to eighteen fewer school days of teacher-student contact.

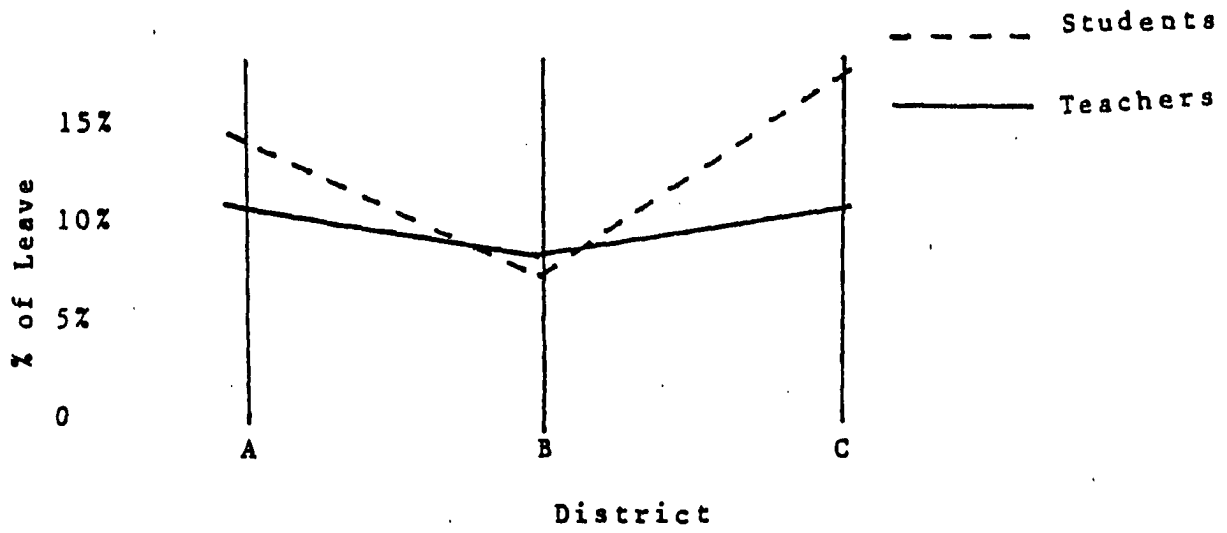


Figure 4
Total Leave

Chapter V

DISCUSSION

Inspection of the data presented in Chapter III suggests a number of interesting trends. Discussion of the possible interaction between the variables investigated in this study will be done in the same sequence as presented in the previous chapter.

Elective Absenteeism for Total Teachers and Students

The data show a very consistent increase in teacher absenteeism as one moves from small to large district. This suggests that district population correlates with increased teacher absenteeism. This may be reflective of several aspects of teaching in a large district. Typically, in a larger district, building level administrators have more teachers under direct supervision and, therefore, may be inclined to take less time dealing with an individual teacher's needs and/or increased absenteeism. It is also possible that the more

urban setting found in a larger district gives a teacher a cloak of anonymity. According to Bamber in 1979:

Increased absenteeism among all school employees . . . was associated with these factors: urban transportation, women who take the jobs for "luxury" money, alcohol and drug abuse, young hedonistic tendencies, marital and family trouble, child care problems, extended holidays, and lack of interest in job.

It may be that these factors outlined by Bamber would be less easily detected in a more urban setting.

Elective absenteeism on the part of students is not as clear-cut as one moves from small to large district. Indeed, absenteeism is again highest in the large district and may be attributable factors associated with a more urban setting. The mid-size district, however, experienced the lowest amount of elective absenteeism on the part of students. Possible the increased amount of absenteeism in District A may be attributable to the de-emphasis of the importance of education in a highly rural culture and the limitations of size which prevent a small district from meeting the needs of its students due to limited offerings.

Elective Absenteeism by Teachers
at the Elementary and Secondary Levels

Findings for teachers at the elementary and secondary levels show a very consistent increase in absenteeism at the elementary level. This difference becomes even more dramatic with increasing district size. One possible factor may be declining enrollments, more pronounced in larger districts. Declining enrollments have resulted in reductions of teaching staff. One consequence of this reduction is reassignment and thus only the more senior teachers remain. Unfortunately, these teachers often "bump" into a level or teaching area with which they are unfamiliar and/or uncomfortable.

The situation is somewhat different for many secondary teachers since most positions require specific qualifications, reducing the possibility of layoff and reassignment. This generally results in a younger teaching staff at the secondary level. Certainly an older staff, with increased possibility of health problems and frustration from resulting inappropriate reassignment, may explain at least in part the higher absentee rate at the elementary level.

**Elective Absenteeism by Students
at the Elementary and Secondary Levels**

The trend identified for elective absenteeism for total students across the three districts is maintained at the elementary and secondary levels. Again, the lowest rates are found in the mid-sized district (District B) with the higher rates evident in the more urban District C. A further delineation of the data into elementary and secondary levels reveals a somewhat dramatic increase in elective student absenteeism at the secondary level in the largest district. In fact, for District C, the absentee rate is almost double for secondary students than for the next largest group. It would appear that possible negative factors associated with school attendance in larger, urban districts are most influential on secondary students. Some of these are anonymity, depersonalization and lack of adequate supervision.

Unavoidable Absenteeism

The data on unavoidable absenteeism show that a considerable number of days each school year are unavailable for teachers and students due to school

cancellation. The highest rate is in District A, the most rural of the three districts being studied. The rural nature of the district makes it far more weather sensitive than an urban district. This may account for the high level of unavoidable absenteeism in that district due to school cancellations based on weather. The rate of unavoidable absenteeism in the urban district, District C, appears to be more dependent on such things as school cancellations for teacher training or inservice. These cancellations generally are not for a full day, but do reduce the student-teacher contact on a day which was originally scheduled for instruction.

The most telling factor in unavoidable absenteeism is still weather conditions. Since there is no requirement for making up days of instruction cancelled in this manner, unavoidable absenteeism continues to be a factor which contributes to the overall high rate of total absenteeism.

Total Absenteeism for Teachers and Students

When all of the data are combined to show the total amount of leave for teachers and students the high level is of great concern. It can be seen that

there are a wide variety of influences that appear to affect the rate of absenteeism among teachers and students. But, in the final analysis, the rate of absenteeism is well beyond that which could be expected.

Of the scheduled one hundred eighty instruction days per academic year, students in District B are missing approximately fifteen. On the same schedule, students in Districts A and C are missing approximately twenty-five instructional days per year. Teachers in District B miss nearly seventeen days with teachers in District A and C missing almost twenty. Unless these absences coincide exactly, the actual interruption to teacher/student contact time will be far greater, as many as thirty-nine days in the extreme.

Conclusions

School absenteeism on the part of teachers and students is far too high. Teacher-student contact time is essential to the educational process and is being undermined through an abandonment of the educational process by its participants. While requiring a longer academic year with more instructional days may address

the symptom of reduced student-teacher contact time, it ignores the causes of that problem. A meaningful improvement in instructional time must address absenteeism.

Recommendations

Based on the data, discussions, and conclusions the following recommendations are made:

1. A consistent reporting method needs to be established so that data on teacher and student absenteeism are made comparable.
2. Further study needs to be done in the area of teacher and student absenteeism. The cause and effects of absenteeism need to be determined through investigation. Longitudinal studies need to be carried out to provide comparative data and evaluate long-term trends in absenteeism.
3. Incentives need to be established to reduce absenteeism. many states base funding of education on enrollment determined by average daily attendance. Districts in those states have a financial interest in reducing absenteeism. Such a method to be considered

for funding all schools throughout the nation.

However, one danger of using daily average attendance to control absenteeism was pointed out by Goodman in an article in the Wall Street Journal. He indicated that financial incentives should be awarded for academic performance, not attendance. His rationale is that a financial incentive for attendance results in the school organization making attendance the priority and not school achievement. His suggestion is that a certain portion of educational funds would be based on attendance and that the remaining portion be tied to the academic achievement of each student within the district. He notes that rewards based on attendance do not directly address the goals of the education (Goodman, 1984).

4. A greater sensitivity to the needs of teachers needs to be developed. Schools need to provide a stimulating workplace to overcome the possible causes of temporary abandonment by teachers.

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