Faculty Involvement in Reducing Student Absenteeism: Insights from NEP 2020

Rahul Kumar Rajput

Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering,

Bhagwant Global University Kotdwar, Uttarakhand Email Id: rahulkrajput95@gmail.com

ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
	Student absenteeism is a growing concern in higher education institutions impacting both academic performance and the overall educational experience. While a variety of factors contribute to absenteeism, one of the most crucial yet often overlooked influences is the role of faculty members. Faculty members are uniquely positioned to shape the classroom environment and establish relationships with students that can encourage regular attendance. This paper examines how faculty can reduce absenteeism by implementing teaching strategies that foster engagement, creating supportive classroom atmospheres, offering flexibility, and emphasizing the importance of attendance. Through effective leadership in the classroom, faculty can significantly influence student attendance, engagement, and overall success in university education.

Introduction

University students often face numerous challenges that affect their ability to attend classes regularly, including personal, academic, and social pressures. These challenges, combined with the increasing demands on students in modern academic environments, can contribute to higher rates of absenteeism. Missing classes not only hampers a student's academic performance but also leads to disengagement from the course material, diminished participation in group discussions, and an overall lack of connection to

the university community. As such, reducing absenteeism is not only a matter of academic performance but also of fostering a sense of belonging and engagement within the university.

While the reasons for absenteeism are multifaceted, research consistently highlights the role of faculty in shaping student engagement and attendance. Faculty members have the ability to create learning environments that encourage students to come to class regularly, interact with course material actively, and feel connected to the academic community. This paper aims to explore the various ways in which faculty can reduce absenteeism in university settings by examining teaching methods, classroom dynamics, and the importance of supportive student-faculty relationships.

Understanding Student Absenteeism in Universities

Before delving into the role of faculty, it is important to understand the nature and causes of student absenteeism in university settings. Several factors contribute to absenteeism, and these can be broadly categorized into personal, academic, and institutional factors.

Academic Factors	• Lack of Motivation • Feeling Dissconneted from Material
Personal Factors	• Health Issues • Family Responsibilities • Financial Concerns
Institutional Factors	• Rigid Attendance Policies • Impersonal Teaching Environments

Academic factors often include a lack of motivation, feeling disconnected from the material, or not seeing the value of attending class. In many cases, students who are not engaged in the content being taught are more likely to skip class. This disengagement can stem from a lack of challenging material, monotonous teaching methods, or an absence of interactive opportunities for participation.

Personal factors include health issues, family responsibilities, and financial concerns. Students who struggle with mental health issues such as anxiety or depression may find it difficult to attend classes

regularly. Additionally, students who work part-time jobs or have significant family obligations may find it challenging to balance their academic commitments with their other responsibilities.

Institutional factors include large class sizes, impersonal teaching environments, and rigid attendance policies. When students feel that they are just a number in a sea of hundreds of others, they may be less motivated to attend class regularly. Large class sizes, in particular, can make students feel disconnected from the instructor and their peers, leading to a sense of alienation.

Given these diverse reasons for absenteeism, faculty members have a unique opportunity to address these issues and help reduce absenteeism through their teaching practices, interactions with students, and policies in the classroom.

The Impact of Student Absenteeism

Before delving into the role of faculty, it is important to understand the broader impact of student absenteeism. According to various studies, absenteeism can lead to lower academic performance, diminished student engagement, and increased likelihood of dropping out. Research has consistently shown that students who attend class regularly are more likely to perform well academically because they can participate in discussions, access learning resources, and receive immediate feedback. On the other hand, students who miss classes regularly may struggle to catch up with coursework, leading to a cycle of disengagement and frustration.

In addition to academic consequences, absenteeism can also hinder the development of soft skills such as communication, collaboration, and critical thinking. These skills are often developed through active participation in class activities, group work, and discussions. By missing classes, students not only forfeit the opportunity to learn the content but also miss out on these vital skills, which are necessary for success in both academic and professional settings.

Faculty play a crucial role in addressing absenteeism by creating an environment that motivates students to attend class consistently. A shift in faculty approaches can have a significant impact on reducing absenteeism rates and improving overall student success.

Role of Faculty as per NEP 2020

The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** advocates a transformational shift in the Indian education system, with a strong emphasis on **student-centric learning**, **flexibility**, and **holistic development**.

According to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, faculty members hold a key responsibility in minimizing student absenteeism by creating a learning atmosphere that is inclusive, interactive, and supportive. A major approach recommended by the policy involves shifting from conventional lecture-style teaching to more engaging, experiential methods. Educators are encouraged to incorporate innovative strategies such as project-based learning, group discussions, and practical applications of knowledge. These dynamic teaching techniques help sustain student interest and encourage regular classroom attendance.

The policy also highlights the critical role of mentorship and the development of strong, trusting relationships between faculty and students. Teachers are expected to act as mentors, providing both academic and emotional support. They should actively identify students who are frequently absent, understand the reasons behind their lack of attendance—whether it's due to academic pressure, personal issues, or disengagement—and offer appropriate support and interventions. NEP 2020 also advocates for the use of formative and skill-based assessments rather than relying solely on traditional exams. This approach helps keep students consistently engaged and contributes to better academic participation.

Additionally, faculty are responsible for facilitating a flexible, multidisciplinary curriculum that caters to diverse student interests and goals. This adaptability encourages learners to take ownership of their educational journey, which can effectively reduce absenteeism. Creating a safe, inclusive classroom environment where all students feel welcomed and respected is also a key faculty responsibility. Promoting socio-emotional development and overall student well-being is an essential part of this process.

Moreover, NEP 2020 emphasizes the integration of technology into education. Faculty are encouraged to utilize blended learning models that combine traditional teaching with digital tools, making learning accessible beyond the classroom. This is especially helpful for students who may have challenges attending in person. In summary, by embracing innovative, inclusive, and student-focused teaching practices, faculty members can play a significant role in addressing absenteeism and ensuring active, consistent student engagement.

S. No.	Strategy Area	Key Initiatives
1.	**Creating Engaging and Inclusive Classrooms**	**Interactive Teaching**: Use discussion-based, participatory, and experiential learning methods.
		Technology Integration: Leverage smart classrooms, multimedia, and digital platforms.
		Contextual Learning: Relate academic content to real-world scenarios.
2	**Student Mentorship and Support**	**Guidance and Counseling**: Offer academic and emotional support through mentoring.
		Early Intervention: Track attendance and performance to assist at-risk students.
		Community Building: Foster an inclusive campus culture.
3	**Flexible and Holistic Curriculum**	**Multidisciplinary Options**: Allow cross-disciplinary subject choices.
		Formative Assessment: Focus on continuous evaluation.
		Academic Bank of Credits (ABC): Promote self-paced and modular learning.
4	**Encouraging Co-curricular Involvement**	**Integration of Co-curriculars**: Blend academics with arts, sports, and cultural activities.
		Faculty Participation: Support and engage in student-led initiatives.
5	**Professional Development and Role Modeling**	**Faculty Development Programs (FDPs)**: Promote continuous professional learning.
		Lead by Example: Model punctuality, discipline, and lifelong learning.
		Ethical Conduct: Encourage inclusive and respectful teaching practices.
6	**Feedback and Curriculum Reform**	**Feedback Mechanisms**: Implement regular student feedback systems.
		Adaptive Curriculum: Update content based on evolving

		student needs and interests.

Conclusion

Student absenteeism is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach to address. While factors such as personal challenges and external obligations contribute to absenteeism, by adopting the principles of NEP 2020, faculty can play a transformative role in reducing absenteeism. Through engaging pedagogy, supportive mentorship, and flexible academic structures, they can create an environment where students feel motivated to attend, learn, and thrive.Through active learning strategies, clear communication of the benefits of attendance, and empathetic policies, faculty can reduce absenteeism and foster an academic environment where students feel motivated, supported, and engaged. By recognizing the role they play in shaping students' academic experiences, faculty can help create a culture of attendance that supports both academic success and personal development.

Ultimately, reducing absenteeism requires a collective effort from both faculty and students. While faculty can provide the tools and support necessary for student success, students must also take responsibility for their learning by attending class regularly and actively participating in the academic process. By working together, faculty and students can create a vibrant, inclusive, and successful learning environment that benefits everyone involved.

References:

1. Tinto, V. (1993). Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition. University of Chicago Press.
2. Astin, A. W. (1993). What matters in college: Four critical years revisited. Jossey-Bass.
3. Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., Whitt, E. J., & Associates. (2005). Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter. Jossey-Bass.
4. Bean, J. P., & Metzner, B. S. (1985). A conceptual model of nontraditional undergraduate student attrition. Review of Educational Research, 55(4), 485-540.
5. Friedlander, J., & Langenkamp, A. (2002). The role of faculty in promoting student engagement. Journal of Higher Education, 73(4), 456-476
6. Deci, E. L., Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). Motivation and education: The self-determination perspective. Educational psychologist, 26(3-4), 325-346.

7. Jones, E. E., & Abraham, J. R. (2018). Faculty as facilitators: Improving student attendance and engagement. Journal of College Student Development, 59(5), 647-663.

8. Carini, R. M., Kuh, G. D., & Klein, S. P. (2006). Student engagement and student learning: Testing the linkages. Research in Higher Education, 47(1), 1-32.

9. Schuetz, P. (2008). Academic and non-academic factors in retention of community college students. The Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 9(3), 331-357

10. Rojewski, J. W., & Lee, D. (2011). Factors influencing student persistence and success in postsecondary education. Journal of Career Development, 38(2), 163-188