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FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ABSENTEEISM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS: A TALE OF TWO INSTITUTIONS IN PESHAWAR

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ABSTRACT

Absenteeism is a growing malpractice that prevails in many of the colleges in Peshawar. Research on absenteeism offers extensive discourse; however, most of the studies have explored the problems from perspectives targeting school students. The dearth of extensive and quantitative research at collegial level create room for the current study. This study strives to explore the reasons for absenteeism in the context of English language classrooms at higher secondary. Since the problem is more alarming in public sector colleges, the study selected two prominent institutions of Peshawar (Islamia College Peshawar, and Islamia College for Girls) for their demographic diversity. A total of 476 students were surveyed using a questionnaire. The questions asked about teaching, interest, other subjects, textbooks, and breaks. The study used the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to explain student actions. As per findings, the dominant factors responsible for truancy include teachers' rudeness, monotonous pedagogy, covering subject in coaching academies, focus on sciences. Likewise, some periphery reasons reported frequently are tiredness, lack of refreshment time in-between the classes, and stress of exams. They show how attitude, peer pressure, and control affect behavior. The study suggests that better teaching, breaks, and support can help. Teachers should be kind and use simple methods. Schools must offer rest time and guidance. Parents should support regular attendance. These steps can reduce absenteeism and improve learning. This study gives useful ideas for improving English class attendance in Pakistani colleges.

Keywords: truancy, absenteeism, English language classroom, higher secondary students, theory of planned behaviour

Introduction

English is a global language used in education, business, and diplomacy. In Pakistan, it holds official status and is essential for upward social and academic mobility (Channa, 2017). Students who are fluent in English often have better access to jobs and higher education. In Pakistani colleges, English is taught as a core subject from the intermediate level. Yet, many students miss English classes regularly. This happens more in public institutions. This absenteeism affects language learning and confidence. It also lowers academic performance (Akhtar et al., 2024). Students struggle with English skills daily. Research shows several causes of absence. Poor teaching methods reduce interest (Nawab, 2012). Lack of interest leads to skipping. Resource shortages add to the problem. These are common in Peshawar schools. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour helps. It explains how actions are shaped. Attitudes, peer norms, and control matter. These influence student decisions (Ajzen, 1991). Applying TPB helps explain absenteeism. It shows what stops class attendance. Context also matters in Peshawar. Cultural and gender norms play roles. Institutional gaps also affect student behavior (Ramzan et al., 2025).

Students in Peshawar face many barriers. English is not spoken at home. Most students speak Pashto or Urdu. This gap affects classroom understanding (Nawab, 2012). Many struggle with basic English grammar. They find the syllabus hard to follow. Teachers often use outdated teaching styles. Lectures lack activities and student involvement. Students stay quiet in English classes. They fear making speaking errors (Akhtar et al., 2024). This lowers participation and confidence. Boredom grows when students feel disconnected. Without support, students lose interest quickly. They begin skipping classes repeatedly. This leads to poor language skills. Absenteeism increases over time. It becomes a routine behaviour (Suleman et al., 2017).

Peer pressure also shapes class attendance. Friends who skip class influence others. Students follow their peers to fit in. This reflects TPB's social norm idea (Ajzen, 1991). If skipping is common, it spreads fast. Family expectations affect English value too. Some parents focus on science only. They see English as less useful. This is common in F.Sc students (Ch et al., 2017). Cultural rules affect girls even more. Safety and modesty limit their presence. Parents may restrict girls from school. Girls face tiredness and emotional strain. Household chores also affect their time. These issues reduce class attendance (Tekke et al., 2014). Poor facilities increase student discomfort. Some rooms lack teaching materials. Ventilation and noise are big problems. Teachers also feel unprepared or unsupported. This lowers lesson quality and engagement (Arshad & Hasan, 2019). When students feel powerless, they give up. Low control reduces motivation to attend. TPB explains this behaviour clearly (Uyanik & Dağhan, 2024). Students feel their efforts won't matter. This mindset leads to absenteeism. Local

context in Peshawar matters deeply. Culture, gender, and system gaps shape behaviour (Ramzan et al., 2025). Understanding these local factors is key. It helps build better solutions. Improved teaching can reduce absence rates.

Absenteeism in English classes is rising. It affects intermediate students in Peshawar. This trend harms language development greatly. It also impacts academic results (Gul et al., 2016). Students miss many critical lessons. This weakens confidence and fluency in English. The problem reflects deeper issues in teaching quality and motivation. Despite this, few studies explore absenteeism through behavioural theories in the Peshawar context (Iqbal et al., 2013). There is little local research that combines personal, social, and academic factors. Understanding why students skip English classes needs theory-based investigation. This study fills that gap. It uses the Theory of Planned Behaviour to explore reasons behind absenteeism in a specific cultural setting. The study intends to explore the key reasons behind absenteeism in English language classrooms among intermediate-level students in Peshawar.

Literature Review

Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) explains how people choose actions. It has three parts: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived control. These shape intention, which leads to behavior. In English classes, attitude means how students feel about learning English. If they enjoy the subject, they are more likely to attend. If they find it boring or hard, they may skip it. Studies show students' negative attitudes toward subjects lead to absenteeism (Ramsey et al., 2008). Subjective norms involve peer pressure, teacher expectations, and family views. If skipping class is common among friends or ignored by parents, students may follow that pattern. Lastly, perceived behavioral control means how easy or hard students think it is to attend. Lack of transport or low confidence can reduce attendance (Uyanık & Dağhan, 2024). TPB fits well in understanding attendance behavior in Peshawar, where social and cultural factors heavily influence students' actions.

Truancy means missing school or class without a valid reason. It is not a one-time issue. It becomes a pattern. Truancy is different from justified absence due to illness or emergencies. It reflects a deeper issue, often linked to motivation and environment. Like any other malaise, truancy has been classified into three stages:

1. **Casual Truancy** – Students miss classes sometimes. This may happen due to stress, boredom, or laziness.
2. **Habitual Truancy** – Absenteeism becomes frequent. Students begin to disconnect from school.
3. **Chronic Truancy** – Skipping class becomes a norm. Students stay away for long periods. At this stage, serious problems exist.

Truancy begins with negative attitudes, grows through peer pressure, and worsens with low control. It harms grades and mental health (Andres, 2024). Early support can help prevent long-term effects (Spencer, 2009).

Reid (1999) offers one of the most comprehensive overviews of truancy. He frames truancy as a symptom of deeper educational and social dysfunction, identifying types and stages of truancy—casual, developing habitual, and chronic—and linking absenteeism to family deprivation, bullying, school disaffection, and long-term social consequences. His work underscores the need for school-wide intervention strategies and early identification of at-risk students. Building on this, Shironaka (2007) emphasizes the emotional and social dimensions of truancy. Through case studies, he explores how students internalize negative labels and disengage from school, eventually facing marginalization. His findings align with Reid's, stressing early intervention and the importance of listening to students' voices to counter alienation. Several studies from Pakistan add cultural and contextual insights to this understanding. For instance, Suleman et al. (2017) identify technology misuse, poor family environments, and weak teacher-student relationships as key contributors to truancy among male students in Karak. Ch et al. (2017) in Lahore identified transport issues, academic pressure, and psychological fears as major drivers of absenteeism. Gender differences were evident. Boys often skipped for social reasons. Younger students missed school due to commuting challenges and safety concerns. These findings are echoed in Singh's (2016) case study from Hoshiarpur, Punjab. He also found that poverty, parental illiteracy, and family overwork contributed to truancy. Importantly, he highlighted rural-urban gaps in attendance patterns. Singh emphasized that local, community-based action is necessary to tackle absenteeism.

Adding an international perspective, Jennings and Cook (2015) studied absenteeism in Jamaica. Parents reported that financial hardship and undervaluing of education were key causes. Cultural habits, like skipping school on Fridays, were also common. Similarly, Wilson et al. (2008) in the UK noted that truancy disrupts both student learning and classroom morale, affecting teachers and peers. To address such issues, Smink and Reimer (2005) proposed 15 evidence-based strategies. These include early interventions, curriculum reform, and school-community partnerships. Their work offers a structured plan for reducing absenteeism.

Building on the theme of tailored interventions, Tekke et al. (2014) explored truancy among girls in Kuala Lumpur. Family neglect, low confidence, and lack of counseling were major factors. They stressed the need for gender-sensitive strategies and trained support staff. In line with this, Adefunke (2015) found that poor academic performance and peer influence fuel truancy. He recommended holistic efforts across home, school, and community settings.

Finally, Matsuda (2012) emphasized that culturally relevant English teaching can keep students engaged. Her work suggests that improving instruction may reduce absenteeism in language classrooms. By promoting culturally relevant and engaging ELT practices, absenteeism may be reduced in language classrooms. Together, these studies reinforce the link between learner-centered teaching, academic motivation, and regular attendance.

On the psychological side, Hussain et al. (2016) investigate how truancy affects academic self-concept and self-esteem. Their study reveals that punctual students perform better academically, though both punctual and truant groups' exhibit similar self-concept levels. They argue that a strong sense of competence and social belonging can buffer against absenteeism. Aqeel et al. (2016) extend this line of thought by examining parental involvement. Their study shows that truant students report more behavioral problems and less parental engagement—particularly from fathers. In Pakistani society, where mothers often manage academic duties, the absence of fatherly support appears to deepen truancy issues.

From the higher education context, Arshad and Hasan (2019) focus on undergraduate students in Pakistan. They find that boring teaching methods, rigid classroom rules, and peer influence significantly contribute to absenteeism. The study calls for more engaging teaching practices and improved teacher-student relationships. Supporting this, Ezeji (2017) in Nigeria also finds absenteeism rampant among university students, attributing it to financial problems, poor health, and inconvenient lecture times. Both studies recommend enhanced counseling services and institutional support.

Academic performance is another recurring theme. Paredes and Ugarte (2011) use large-scale Chilean data to show a direct correlation between absenteeism and academic decline, quantifying the learning loss from even short-term absences. They challenge rigid attendance policies and advocate for more flexible, outcome-based strategies. Özkanal and Arıkan (2011) similarly find a strong negative correlation between absenteeism and academic success at a Turkish university. Their study reinforces the need for institutions to emphasize attendance and raise awareness about its academic impact. Finally, Ramberg et al. (2019) in Sweden show that school leadership and a strong school ethos can significantly reduce truancy, even after adjusting for socio-demographic differences. Most importantly they show how institutional culture can be a protective buffer.

Taken together, these studies demonstrate that absenteeism is a global, multi-dimensional issue. It is affected by a mixture of psychological, social, academic, economic, and institutional factors. Additionally, they highlight the existence of a research gap: the lack of research on the Theory of Planned Behavior in more localized, student-centered contexts like Peshawar. Most research emphasizes causes and

effects, but few studies integrate student voice, cultural sensitivity, and behavioral theory in cohesive intervention strategies. This gap provides the foundation for our current research. The reviewed literature highlights that absenteeism is a global issue shaped by diverse personal, social, and institutional factors. Studies consistently stress early intervention, supportive teaching, and parental involvement. However, limited research in localized settings like Peshawar shows a gap. This calls for student-centered studies using behavioural frameworks like TPB.

Methods and Procedures

Research Design

This study used a quantitative survey research design. It helps measure and understand absenteeism behavior patterns. The design used structured tools to collect responses. It allowed researchers to analyze data statistically. This design is suitable for large student samples. It ensures objectivity in data interpretation and results. The method allowed comparison between different student groups. It helps find differences in gender and stream. The design is cross-sectional in nature and timing. Data was collected once during the academic year (i.e. 2024). This makes it efficient and less time-consuming. The study focused on finding key causes of absenteeism. A survey design offers clarity, structure, and reliability. It is widely used in educational research studies (Gregar, 2023).

Sampling Strategy

The target population was intermediate college students in Islamia College Peshawar and Islamia College for Girls. They belonged to FA and F.Sc programs. The total reference population was 4,882 students. From this group, 476 students were selected randomly. Random sampling gave every student equal selection chance. This method reduced bias in sample selection. The sample size was large yet manageable. It included students from different academic backgrounds. The sample was diverse in gender and class year. This made the results more balanced and fair. The group was big enough for good accuracy. It also saved time and research costs. A well-chosen sample improves the study's reliability. The data collected reflects the full student population. A proper sample helps generalize findings effectively. The size was suitable for statistical analysis. Sample size should fit goals and resources (Jensen & Dikilitas, 2025).

Table 1. Group*Gender Wise Distribution of Participants (n = 476)

| Stream | 1st Male | Year | 1st Female | Year | 2nd Male | Year | 2nd Female | Year | Total |
|-----------------|-------------|------|---------------|------|-------------|------|---------------|------|-------|
| Pre-Medical | 38 | | 134 | | 86 | | 19 | | 277 |
| Pre-Engineering | 37 | | 4 | | 41 | | 7 | | 89 |
| General Science | 8 | | 0 | | 27 | | 17 | | 52 |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| Arts & Humanities | 24 | 11 | 15 | 8 | 58 |
| Total | 107 | 149 | 169 | 51 | 476 |

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test determines the normality of data distribution ($D(476) = .56, p < .01$), with some negligible deviations from normality. Furthermore, Z scores of the individual items confirm that the data is not normally distributed.

Instrument

The main tool was a structured questionnaire format (see appendix; questionnaire). It had five clear and organized sections. Section A focused on the teaching methodology. Section B asked about interest in English. Section C covered science subject preferences. Section D explored views on teaching materials. Section E included refreshment and comfort-related reasons. Each item used a 5-point Likert scale. The choices were Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Neutral, and Agree and Strongly Agree. This scale helped to measure student opinions easily. Likert scales are simple and user-friendly (McMillan, 1996). The questions were short, clear, and easy to read. They allowed students to answer without confusion. This helped collect honest and accurate answers. The format supported quick and organized data analysis.

Procedure

The data was collected using an online method. The questionnaire was shared through digital platforms. Students filled the form using their own devices. They completed it at home or in college. Instructions were written clearly at the beginning. Participation was voluntary and based on consent. Students were given enough time to respond. The online form made collection easy and fast. It also helped reduce paper use and errors. Responses were saved directly in a spreadsheet file. This method allowed quick review and analysis later. Online surveys are now common in educational research (Wright, 2005).

Data Analysis Techniques

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics methods. These included frequencies, percentages, and mean values. These tools helped to summarize the data clearly. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test checked data normality. The result showed data was not normally distributed. Because of this, non-parametric tools were used. Data was grouped by gender and academic year. It was also grouped by academic stream. Group-wise comparison helped find meaningful patterns easily. The software SPSS was used for all calculations. SPSS is useful for organizing and analyzing survey data. Tables were used to present results clearly. These tables showed absentee rates and class phases. Visual formats helped make findings easy to understand. Simple layout made patterns more visible to readers. Tables included values for each student group. This

made it easier to compare results fairly. Statistical methods supported strong and accurate interpretation (Field, 2024).

Ethical Considerations

Students gave informed consent before joining study. They joined the research by their own choice. Every student had the right to withdraw anytime. No names were asked during the questionnaire process. All responses were kept private and anonymous. Personal identity was not linked with responses. Data was stored safely and used for research. Only academic use was allowed for the data. The study followed basic ethical research rules (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). Clear instructions were given at the start. Students were respected and treated fairly throughout.

Findings

This section presents and interprets the data collected from students regarding absenteeism in English classes. It explores trends in frequency, timing, and reasons for absence. The findings are grouped by categories such as teaching, interest, subject preferences, material, and refreshment. Each section highlights key patterns using tables and percentages.

The data shows (Table 2) absentee trends among 1st and 2nd year students. Most absentees fall in the "occasionally" and "frequently" groups. For 2nd year females, 14.71% were frequently absent. Pre-Medical students had the highest total at 26.05% (males) and 32.14% (females). Pre-Engineering male students showed 16.39% absenteeism. General Science males were at 7.35%, while females were 3.57%. Humanities male students had 8.19% absences. Female Humanities students were at 3.99%. "Occasionally" absent students made up 26.26% in 2nd year. In 1st year, it was 20.38%. Frequent absentees were 21.64% in 2nd year. These findings show more frequent absences in the second year.

Table 2. Frequency of Absentees: Percentage

| Absentee frequency | | 1st Year | | | | 2nd Year | | | | |
|------------------------|--------|----------|--------|--------------|------------|----------|--------|--------------|------------|--------|
| | | Never | Rarely | Occasionally | Frequently | Never | Rarely | Occasionally | Frequently | Total |
| Pre-Medical | Male | 2.31 | 2.52 | 8.61 | 4.62 | 1.68 | 0.84 | 5.04 | 0.42 | 26.05 |
| | Female | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.05 | 2.94 | 0.42 | 1.26 | 11.76 | 14.71 | 32.14 |
| Pre-Engineering | Male | 1.26 | 0.00 | 3.36 | 3.99 | 0.84 | 0.84 | 4.83 | 1.26 | 16.39 |
| | Female | 0.00 | 0.21 | 0.21 | 1.05 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.42 | 0.42 | 2.31 |
| General Science | Male | 0.84 | 0.84 | 2.94 | 1.05 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.63 | 1.05 | 7.35 |
| | Female | 0.42 | 0.63 | 1.68 | 0.84 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 3.57 |
| Humanities | Male | 0.21 | 0.00 | 1.68 | 1.26 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 2.52 | 2.52 | 8.19 |
| | Female | 0.21 | 0.00 | 0.84 | 0.63 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.05 | 1.26 | 3.99 |
| Total | | 5.25 | 4.20 | 20.38 | 16.39 | 2.94 | 2.94 | 26.26 | 21.64 | 100.00 |

Table 3 indicates that most students miss English classes at the end. In 2nd year, 33.61% of students were absent in the end phase. In 1st year, 20.38% missed classes at the end. Pre-Medical girls had the highest end-phase absence at 18.28%. Mid-session absences were also common. About 13.66% of 2nd-year students missed during the middle. Pre-Engineering boys missed 3.99% at the end. Only 5.04% (1st year) and 4.20% (2nd year) were absent throughout. Start-of-session absence was the lowest overall. These numbers show most absences happen near exams, when students feel pressure or lose interest

Table 3. At what phase of session do students bunk classes

| Absentee Time | | 1st Year | | | | 2nd Year | | | | |
|------------------------|--------|----------|-------|-------|------------|----------|-------|-------|------------|--------|
| | | Start | Mid | End | Throughout | Start | Mid | End | Throughout | Total |
| Pre-Medical | Male | 0.00 | 4.83 | 8.40 | 2.31 | 0.00 | 1.68 | 3.57 | 1.47 | 22.27 |
| | Female | 0.63 | 1.05 | 2.10 | 0.21 | 1.26 | 7.14 | 18.28 | 1.47 | 32.14 |
| Pre-Engineering | Male | 2.31 | 1.47 | 3.99 | 0.84 | 1.47 | 1.68 | 3.78 | 0.84 | 16.39 |
| | Female | 0.21 | 0.84 | 0.21 | 0.21 | 0.42 | 0.42 | 0.63 | 0.42 | 3.36 |
| General Science | Male | 1.68 | 1.68 | 1.47 | 0.84 | 0.63 | 0.63 | 0.42 | 0.00 | 7.35 |
| | Female | 1.05 | 0.84 | 1.05 | 0.63 | 0.63 | 0.84 | 1.26 | 0.00 | 6.30 |
| Humanities | Male | 0.63 | 0.42 | 2.10 | 0.00 | 0.21 | 0.84 | 3.99 | 0.00 | 8.19 |
| | Female | 0.42 | 0.21 | 1.05 | 0.00 | 0.21 | 0.42 | 1.68 | 0.00 | 3.99 |
| Total | | 6.93 | 11.34 | 20.38 | 5.04 | 4.83 | 13.66 | 33.61 | 4.20 | 100.00 |

Relationship Between Teaching Methodology and Absenteeism

Teaching methods strongly affect class attendance. Around 43.1% of boys and 36.8% of girls said teachers were rude. 41.8% of boys and 36.6% of girls said they disliked their teacher. Many students also could not understand the teacher—35.7% of boys and 33.8% of girls agreed. A boring class was another issue. About 13.9% of boys and 7.8% of girls found the class boring. Nearly 25.0% of boys and 18.7% of girls said the whiteboard was not used. Overall, poor teaching and lack of engagement led students to skip English classes regularly.

Table 4. Teaching Methodology – Student Responses

| Teaching Methodology | | Male | | | Female | | |
|----------------------|--|------|------|------|--------|-----|------|
| S.No | Statement | D | N | A | D | N | A |
| T1 | The teacher does not involve me in the discussion. | 30.7 | 13.0 | 14.3 | 28.6 | 7.4 | 6.1 |
| T2 | The class is boring. | 29.6 | 14.5 | 13.9 | 27.1 | 7.1 | 7.8 |
| T3 | The teacher's way of teaching is difficult. | 31.7 | 9.9 | 16.4 | 33.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| T4 | The teacher is not enthusiastic, energetic in the class. | 33.4 | 9.7 | 14.9 | 26.7 | 3.6 | 11.8 |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------|--|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|
| T5 | The teacher in not prepared for the class. | 43.1 | 8.8 | 6.1 | 36.8 | 3.2 | 2.1 |
| T6 | The teacher is rude with me. | 43.1 | 8.8 | 6.1 | 36.8 | 3.2 | 2.1 |
| T7 | The teacher does not use the whiteboard much. | 23.7 | 9.2 | 25.0 | 16.0 | 7.4 | 18.7 |
| T8 | I do not understand the teacher. | 35.7 | 9.0 | 13.2 | 33.8 | 3.4 | 4.8 |
| T9 | I do not like the teacher. | 41.8 | 7.6 | 8.6 | 36.6 | 2.3 | 3.2 |
| T10 | I want to take classes of English with another teacher who teaches better than my teacher. | 29.2 | 5.3 | 23.5 | 32.6 | 1.9 | 7.6 |

Note: D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A= Agree

Interest in English Language and Its Impact on Attendance

Many students lack interest in learning English. About 49.2% of boys and 36.6% of girls disagreed. Only 5.3% of boys and 2.5% of girls agreed. 15.8% of boys and 12.8% of girls felt they could learn English without college. A small group, 22.3% of boys and 15.3% of girls, disliked extra English classes. 44.5% of boys and 37.8% of girls had already studied English at academies. Very few agreed strongly. This shows most students do not openly reject English. However, some feel classes are not needed. Prior academy learning also affects their attendance choice.

Table 5. Interest in English – Student Responses

| Interest in English | | Male | | | Female | | |
|---------------------|---|------|------|------|--------|-----|------|
| S.No | Statement | D | N | A | D | N | A |
| I1 | I do not have any interest in learning English. | 49.2 | 3.6 | 5.3 | 36.6 | 2.9 | 2.5 |
| I2 | I can easily learn English without taking the classes at college. | 30.0 | 12.2 | 15.8 | 23.1 | 6.1 | 12.8 |
| I3 | I do not like to take additional classes of English. | 22.7 | 13.0 | 22.3 | 20.0 | 6.7 | 15.3 |
| I4 | I have already studied the subject in an academy. | 44.5 | 3.2 | 10.3 | 37.8 | 1.5 | 2.7 |

Competition from Science Subjects

Many students prioritise science subjects over English. About 40.8% of boys and 27.7% of girls skip English to prepare for final exams. Around 21.4% of boys and 15.1% of girls want extra science classes. Only 9.9% of boys and 4.6% of girls think English is less important. However, 39.5% of boys and 32.1% of girls disagreed with that view. Preparing assignments is another reason for absence. 19.7% of boys and 11.8% of girls

agreed. This shows science workload pulls students away from English. Final exam pressure is a major cause of skipping classes.

Table 6. Science Subjects – Student Responses

| Science Subject | | Male | | | Female | | |
|-----------------|---|------|------|------|--------|-----|------|
| S.No | Statement | D | N | A | D | N | A |
| S1 | I want to take additional classes of Science subjects like chemistry, maths, biology etc. | 26.9 | 9.7 | 21.4 | 20.8 | 6.1 | 15.1 |
| S2 | English is less important than science subjects. | 39.5 | 8.6 | 9.9 | 32.1 | 5.3 | 4.6 |
| S3 | I want to prepare tests/ assignments of other subjects. | 27.7 | 10.5 | 19.7 | 24.2 | 6.1 | 11.8 |
| S4 | I want to prepare for the final exam. | 13.0 | 4.2 | 40.8 | 10.5 | 3.8 | 27.7 |

Influence of Teaching Materials on Absenteeism

Many students find the English book hard or boring. About 14.5% of boys and 4.0% of girls do not understand some topics. Still, 34.5% of boys and 34.2% of girls disagreed with that. Around 14.1% of boys and 5.3% of girls said the book is difficult. But 33.0% of boys and 31.7% of girls disagreed. On the topic of boredom, 13.0% of boys and 11.2% of girls agreed the book is boring. These findings show the material affects interest. However, most students do not fully blame the book for absenteeism.

Table 7. Teaching Material – Student Responses

| Teaching Material | | Male | | | Female | | |
|-------------------|--|------|------|------|--------|-----|------|
| S.No | Statement | D | N | A | D | N | A |
| M1 | I do not understand some topics in the book. | 34.5 | 9.0 | 14.5 | 34.2 | 3.8 | 4.0 |
| M2 | The book is difficult to understand. | 33.0 | 10.9 | 14.1 | 31.7 | 5.0 | 5.3 |
| M3 | The book is boring. | 28.1 | 5.5 | 13.0 | 37.5 | 4.7 | 11.2 |

E. Impact of Refreshment, Physical Fatigue and Social Factors

Many students skip class for refreshment or rest. About 37.0% of boys and 30.9% of girls said there is no break. Around 33.4% of boys and 27.3% of girls want rest after long classes. Lunch or snacks are also a reason—21.8% of boys and 16.2% of girls agreed. Some students enjoy the weather outside. About 25.8% of boys and 14.1% of girls agreed. Using mobile phones or avoiding tests had lower agreement. Only 7.1% of boys and 3.8% of girls skipped for phones. Overall, tiredness and no breaks lead to skipping English classes

Table 8. Refreshment – Student Responses

| Refreshment | | Male | | | Female | | |
|-------------|--|------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| S.No | Statement | D | N | A | D | N | A |
| R1 | There is no break time for refreshment between the classes. | 17.0 | 4.0 | 37.0 | 9.7 | 1.5 | 30.9 |
| R2 | I want to take their lunch/ snacks. | 24.8 | 11.3 | 21.8 | 13.7 | 12.2 | 16.2 |
| R3 | I get tired of consecutive classes so they want to relax themselves. | 14.1 | 10.5 | 33.4 | 9.5 | 5.3 | 27.3 |
| R4 | I want to enjoy pleasant weather out of the class. | 26.3 | 5.9 | 25.8 | 20.6 | 7.4 | 14.1 |
| R5 | I want to use mobile phone. | 41.8 | 9.0 | 7.1 | 35.5 | 2.7 | 3.8 |
| R6 | I do not want to take test. | 43.9 | 4.4 | 9.7 | 31.3 | 4.8 | 5.9 |
| R7 | I want to chat or spend time with friends. | 33.0 | 7.8 | 17.2 | 27.3 | 3.8 | 10.9 |

The findings reveal that absenteeism is influenced by poor teaching practices, academic pressure, lack of interest, and the need for rest. Second-year students, especially females, showed higher absence rates. The results emphasize the importance of improving teaching methods, student support, and class scheduling to reduce absenteeism in English classrooms.

Discussion

This section explains the results of the study. It links the findings with past research and TPB. Each part explores why students skip English class. It looks at teaching, pressure, interest, and other factors. The goal is to understand how these reasons match or differ from earlier studies.

Relationship Between Teaching Methodology and Absenteeism

The study shows many students are unhappy with how English is taught. About 43.1% of boys and 36.8% of girls said their teachers were rude. Nearly 42% of boys and 36.6% of girls disliked their teacher. Also, 35.7% of boys and 33.8% of girls said they could not understand the teacher. These feelings lead to low motivation and more absences. This aligns well with past research. Ramsey et al. (2008) found that poor teacher behaviour lowers student interest and attendance. Similarly, Suleman et al. (2017) noted that weak teacher-student relationships increase truancy. When teachers lack energy, students become disengaged. Dincer et al. (2021) also stressed that poor teaching methods push students to skip class.

Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) helps explain this too. According to TPB, a student's attitude plays a key role. If they feel the class is boring or the teacher is rude, they develop a negative attitude. That leads to poor intention to attend. Perceived control also matters. If students feel they cannot understand the lesson, they may feel powerless and stay away (Uyanık & Dağhan, 2024). Overall, these results match the

literature. Negative teacher behaviour directly affects student mindset and choices. When teachers are unprepared or disrespectful, students lose interest. If they struggle to follow lessons, they feel helpless. These findings show that teaching style is a strong reason for absenteeism. Improving teacher behaviour and communication may reduce this problem and boost attendance in English classes.

Interest in English Language and Its Impact on Attendance

Many students believed English was either unimportant or already learned. About 44.5% of boys and 37.8% of girls said they had studied English in academies. This suggests they felt classroom learning was not necessary. Also, only 5.3% of boys and 2.5% of girls admitted to having no interest in English. These responses reflect weak behavioral intention to attend classes, as explained by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Students' low motivation shows a negative attitude towards formal classroom learning.

This finding aligns with previous literature from Pakistan. Nawab (2012) noted that traditional classroom teaching often fails to engage students. Poor teaching strategies can make students rely on outside sources. This lowers their interest in attending college classes. Similarly, Arshad and Hasan (2019) reported that boring classroom methods reduce student motivation. In such cases, students may seek alternatives like academies. These trends confirm that teaching style and relevance shape attendance decisions.

The current results also reflect Suleman et al. (2017), who found that weak teacher-student relationships push students away from formal learning. Students might feel more comfortable learning English in non-traditional settings. This supports the idea that subjective norms and perceived behavioral control—two TPB components— influence attendance. If their peers also skip class due to similar beliefs, it reinforces the behavior.

Additionally, Singh (2016) emphasized rural-urban differences in student learning. In urban centers like Peshawar, students often have greater access to academies. This makes them less dependent on classroom instruction. Thus, the findings support Singh's view that social context and access influence student behavior.

Competition from Science Subjects

The results indicate that many students prioritise science subjects over English. Approximately 40.8% of male and 27.7% of female students reported skipping English classes to prepare for final examinations. Additionally, 21.4% of boys and 15.1% of girls expressed a desire to attend additional classes in science subjects. Only 9.9% of boys and 4.6% of girls agreed that English was less important than science, yet their actions suggest otherwise.

These findings align closely with the study by Ch et al. (2017), who observed that academic pressure and subject preference significantly contributed to absenteeism among students in Lahore. In particular, students often prioritised science subjects when feeling overwhelmed by workloads. The current findings echo these patterns, with students choosing to skip English in order to concentrate on subjects like chemistry, biology, and mathematics.

Within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), these actions reflect students' attitudes toward English in comparison to science subjects. When English is perceived as less useful or relevant to academic success or future careers, students are less likely to attend those classes. This indicates a lower behavioural intention to participate in English learning due to a belief in the greater utility of science subjects.

Matsuda (2012) highlighted the importance of culturally relevant and engaging English teaching methods. When students fail to see English as meaningful or connected to their goals, they disengage. The current study supports this view, showing that perceived subject importance influences attendance. These results are consistent with existing literature and underline the need for greater integration of relevance and motivation in English language instruction.

Influence of Teaching Materials on Absenteeism

The findings show that many students struggle with the English textbook. Around 14.5% of boys and 4.0% of girls agreed that they do not understand some topics. Additionally, 14.1% of boys and 5.3% of girls found the book difficult. A smaller group—13.0% of boys and 11.2% of girls—said the book was boring. These responses suggest that the material may not support effective learning for all students.

Such struggles can affect student engagement. If students cannot understand the material, they may lose interest quickly. Difficult textbooks create frustration. When lessons feel unclear, students are more likely to skip class. This aligns with Matsuda's (2012) study, which highlighted the role of culturally relevant teaching. He argued that when material connects with student experience, interest improves. The current study supports that view. Many students may not find the content relatable.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour also helps explain this result. When students believe they cannot succeed due to complex books, their perceived behavioural control drops. This leads to weak intentions to attend. If they feel they won't benefit, they stay away. Negative attitudes toward the book also reduce motivation.

These findings are consistent with research by Singh (2016), who noted that rural-urban gaps in resource quality affect student attendance. In urban schools like those in Peshawar, material might still not meet student needs. Likewise, Arshad and Hasan (2019) found that rigid and unengaging classroom content reduces attendance.

Impact of Refreshment, Physical Fatigue and Social Factors

The findings reveal that students skip English classes due to tiredness, no breaks, and social reasons. About 37.0% of boys and 30.9% of girls said there was no break time. Also, 33.4% of boys and 27.3% of girls felt tired after back-to-back classes. These students preferred to relax. Around 21.8% of boys and 16.2% of girls skipped class for snacks. Others left to enjoy the weather or chat with friends.

These behaviours reflect casual absenteeism, as discussed by Spencer (2009). When skipping becomes a habit, it may develop into a larger issue. Andres (2024) also linked such patterns to disconnection from school. The current findings support these views. Students miss class not due to dislike, but to find rest or comfort.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour explains this as perceived behavioural control. If students believe they cannot stay focused due to tiredness or lack of breaks, they are more likely to skip class. Their attitude also plays a role. If English is seen as tiring, they avoid it.

Tekke et al. (2014) noted that girls often miss class due to fatigue and lack of support. The present findings align with that. Both genders show fatigue, but girls show it more subtly. The reasons are often social, emotional, and physical.

Timing of Absences During Academic Session

Most students skipped English classes during the end phase. About 33.61% of second-year students were absent at this time. In first year, 20.38% missed classes near term-end. This pattern suggests exam stress impacts attendance. Paredes and Ugarte (2011) found that exam pressure leads to absenteeism, even during short terms. The present findings support that view. Students may skip class to study or rest. According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, high stress reduces perceived control. When students feel overwhelmed, they avoid class. This shows how emotional and academic stress influences behaviour, especially during exams. The findings align with earlier studies.

Gender-Based Patterns and Implications

Female students showed higher absenteeism in several areas. In the end phase, 18.28% of Pre-Medical girls were absent. Girls also skipped due to tiredness, hunger, and lack of rest. These findings support Tekke et al. (2014), who noted that girls face emotional fatigue and low support. Singh (2016) found that safety, parental control, and overwork affect girls' attendance. These social pressures limit freedom and increase stress. The Theory of Planned Behaviour explains this as reduced control. When girls feel unsafe or overburdened, they skip class. The findings align closely with gender-sensitive research in South Asian settings.

Conclusion

This study explored why students skip English classes. It investigated the viewpoints of collegial students of two institutions, namely, Islamia College Peshawar and Islamia

College for Girls. Key reasons were found across five main areas. These include teaching style, student interest, science subject pressure, textbooks, and physical comfort. Many students reported poor teaching methods. They said teachers were rude and unprepared. Some found the class boring or hard. This lowered motivation and class attendance. Others believed English was not important. They had already studied it in academies. Science subjects were seen as more useful. Students skipped English to focus on exams. Tiredness and lack of break time also mattered. Many students said they needed rest. Some skipped class for snacks or to chat. A few found the textbook boring or unclear. Girls showed more absence in some areas. Especially near the end of the session. These patterns match earlier research studies. Most reasons reflect attitude and control issues. These are core ideas of the TPB.

Limitations

This study has some clear limitations. It was done in only one college. Results cannot be applied to all areas. The sample included only intermediate students. University and school levels were not included. Also, the method used was only quantitative. It did not include teacher interviews or parent feedback. Emotional and psychological factors were not studied deeply (Adefunke, 2015). Some students may not have answered honestly. Online surveys may lead to less serious answers (Wright, 2005). Also, the study did not explore long-term trends. Absenteeism was only checked for the current session. This limits full understanding of the issue.

Recommendations

Teachers should make classes more engaging. They should use active learning and simple materials. They should try to involve students in discussion. This builds interest and trust (Arshad & Hasan, 2019). Teachers also need better training. They should avoid rude or passive behaviour. Institutions must give breaks between classes. Students need time to rest and refresh (Spencer, 2009). English should be linked to real-life goals. It should be showed how it helps in careers. This improves student attitude and motivation (Matsuda, 2012). Colleges should also review the syllabus. Students should get counselling support. Especially before exams or when tired (Tekke et al., 2014). Parents need to support regular attendance, especially for female students under pressure (Suleman et al., 2017). Finally, more research is needed. Studies in other colleges and regions will help. Using interviews and mixed methods can give better results (Jennings & Cook, 2015). This will help develop stronger attendance policies and make English learning more successful.

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