

## **Perceived Parental School Involvement and Problems Faced by Students: Comparison of Truant and Punctual Students**

**Muhammad Aqeel**

Foundation University

**Uzma Anjum**

National University of Modern Languages

**Humaira Jami, Ali Hassan, and Ambreen Sadia**

Quaid-i-Azam University

In this study, perceived parental school involvement and problem faced by truant and punctual students were explored. Sample comprised of both truant ( $n = 100$ ) and punctual students ( $n = 100$ ) with age range 12-18 years. Student: Thinking About My Homework (Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, & Sandler, 2005) was translated into Urdu for measuring each parents' school involvement. Urdu translated version of Mooney Problem Checklist (Rana, 1995) was used to study problems faced by students. Findings indicated that school related and self-centered problems were significantly negatively correlated with mothers' school involvement and fathers' school involvement for truant students. Results further revealed that truancy (truant and punctual students) was moderator between parental school involvement and problems faced by students. Truant students had more school related and self-centered problems than punctual students that were significantly related to bad parental school involvement.

*Keywords.* Parental school involvement, adolescents' problems, school truancy, punctuality, school drop-out, runaways

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Muhammad Aqeel, Department of Psychology, Foundation University Rawalpindi Campus, Pakistan.

Uzma Anjum, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Humaira Jami, Ali Hassan, and Ambreen Sadia, National Institute of Psychology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Muhammad Aqeel, Department of Psychology, Rawalpindi Campus, Pakistan. Email: aqeel.1924@gmail.com

There is a consensus across researchers that school truancy is an important schools problem globally in elementary and secondary schools and it effects every socio-economic group of human society deleteriously (Henry & Huizinga, 2007; Maynard, McCrea, Pigott, & Kelly, 2013). Its negative effects are related to behavior of learner including additional disruptive behavior, substance use, poor school performance, juvenile delinquency, school dropout, and conduct disorder (Battin\_Pearson et al., 2000; Carney, Timms, & Stevenson, 2006; Fortin & Picard, 1999; Garry & Newsome, 2008; Henry & Huizinga, 2007; Maynard, Salas-Wright, Vaughn & Peters, 2012). Similar studies suggest that it is negative behavior and lifestyle of a child and an adolescent, which predispose them to fail in academics and indulge in crimes (Forsterling & Binser, 2002; Henry & Huizinga, 2007; Garry & Newsome, 2008).

On the basis of affective characteristics these dropouts are distinguished by low motivational level and lack of interest towards school as compared to punctual students (Dunn, Chambers, & Rabren, 2004; Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997). Moreover, this dropout population is predisposed to social withdrawal, high levels of anxiety and depression (Forsterling & Binser, 2002; Marcotte, Fortin, Royer, Potvin, & Leclerc, 2001). The dropouts neither comply with norms of the school nor bother themselves with academic achievements (Alexander, Entwisle, & Horsey, 1997; Henry & Huizing, 2007). School related and problematic behavior contribute to higher rate of school dropout. Studies have shown that behavior problems are also one of the early predictors of school dropout (Garnier, Stein, & Jacobs 1997; Henry & Huizing, 2007), at the end of primary school their severity becomes the strongest predictor of school dropout (Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carslon, 2000).

There is a variety of causative dynamic of truancy. Negative behavior of children, family, social and community risk factors are crucial in this regard (Lindstadt, 2005). These are specific factors associated with truancy (Kinder, Harland, Wilkin, & Wakefield 1995; Forsterling & Binser, 2002; Carney et al., 2006; Henry & Huizinga, 2007; Garry & Newsome, 2008).

Families and schools are indispensable for academic achievements. Research has established that students need to be supported by their families and schools for optimum academic development (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Schools are responsible for scaffolding the academic experiences of students and the contribution of schools and teachers has been studied largely. Various studies have explained role the school in the dropout phenomenon. In fact,

dropouts often report negative experiences at school as main reason for skipping school (Lessard et al., 2006).

Counselors and school specialists established that students could perform very well with the participation of their parents in their academic and personal growth. Various researchers have dealt the association and extent to which parental involvement can lead to the tremendous success of students at every academic stage (Cole-Henderson, 2000; Epstein, 2008; Holloway, Yamamoto, Suzuki, & Mindnich, 2008; Jeynes, 2005; Jeynes, 2011). Much of the research data have supported the positive association of parental involvement and success in school (McNeal, 1999; Oyserman, Brickman, & Rhodes, 2007; Woolley & Bowen, 2007), parents' concern towards their child engagement in the schoolwork is a very important factor of the career enhancement and investigation. Trusty (1999) accentuated a positive relationship between the involvement of parents and post-secondary aspirations and success and increased opportunities for admission in college (King, 2009; Watt, Powell, & Mendiola, 2004), parental involvement is very crucial in providing post-secondary education access.

Parental involvement was recently acknowledged by Hayes (2011). It is verified to have positive consequence on child's academic outcome and school adjustment. This involvement can be viewed in many ways. Shumow and Miller (2001) explained parental home involvement like discussions between parent and children with focus on school experiences, whereas, school involvement was described as parent's accessibility of contacting with the school. Epstein and Sanders (2002) viewed at both of the behaviors that is attending the parent teacher conferences, and of those indirect behaviors as sharing academic expectations with the child. Studies highlighted that home involvement had an incredible impact on the academic achievement and accomplishment (Bogenschneider, 1997; Broh, 2002; Gonzalez-Pienda et al., 2002; VanVoorhis, 2003) which successfully assists to curtail the dropping of the students (Carpenter & Ramirez, 2007). Regular parent-child conversations regarding school and expectations about the grades had remarkable influence on academic outcomes of adolescents, which include truancy and dropping out of the school (McNeal, 1999). The parental involvement reduces the delinquency in the children (Hoffmann & Dufur, 2008).

In this study, we defined parent involvement both at home and in school involving both direct and indirect behaviors. An important evidence of research suggested that school truancy is a very crucial issue faced by schools from elementary to secondary phase and

influences all societies and communities despite of income and socio economic status differences (Maynard et al., 2013). In most of the countries including Pakistan, truancy, absentees, and attendance of school going students have been associated with drastic, instantaneous and extensive consequences for youth, families, school communities, and societies.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) described that socioeconomic differentiation in academic achievement produced from difference in parental enthusiasm, positive involvement of parents, and a positive parenting style. Positive involvement of parents was explained by these writers as good parenting at home, development of child's self-concept, and productive contribution of parents and school staff of children's progress in their academic work.

This has been concluded in major efforts began by researchers, scholars, school, and policy makers as well as educational practitioners to realize and concentrate on this serious issue. Despite these major efforts and enormous economical costs spent to overcome truant behavior, there is very little confirmation that any positive influence has brought on regular session and school attendance (Attwood & Croll, 2006; Davies & Lee, 2006), may be because root cause were not addressed, that is problems faced by students and parental role in this context.

### **School Truancy and Parental Involvement**

Prior studies examining the dilemma of parental involvement in children's academic achievement has progressively shown more inclination towards negative correlation between a good numbers of measures of social drawback and school attendance and achievement (Cox, 2000). Walls (2005) emphasized that parents' unemployment, complete absence of or poor parental guidance, drugs and alcohol abuse of the parents, lack of awareness of attendance rules, and contradictory thought pattern held by parents regarding the significance and worth of education as the most catastrophic factors for school truancy. In case of school-based interventions to support the students for attendance difficulties, studies have concluded that family circumstances (Lagana, 2004; Marcotte et al., 2001), especially, less interest of parents in children's education is suggested to be more important in student's school attendance and academic achievement than school factors (Mortimore & Whitty, 2000; Sheppard, 2009).

Squelch (2006) established that managing student's behavior is one of the basic tasks of principals and teachers, but it isn't their job alone. Instead it has been argued by the similar author that parents, more than teachers, are eventually held accountable for children's behavior in the within and outside the school. In addition, he explained that as primary educators and caregivers, parents have the obligation of care, nurturing and disciplining their children. Reid (2005) through research has recognized four types of parents and caregivers regarding school attendance. These include parents (1) who try to address poor attendance dedicatedly; (2) who seems to pamper their children excessively and try to be over protective or dependent upon their children; (3) who view themselves as helpless to deal with poor attendance and who are unconcerned about managing poor attendance; (4) and those who seem not to engage with school and other support professionals.

Latest studies emphasized the tendency towards a more disciplinary approach focusing on the issues of school absenteeism and truancy by maintaining penalty notices to the parents of absentee students (Donoghue, 2011). It appears that one of the most basic causes of truancy is parental neglect of their children, followed by showing little or no interest in their school activities and work. According to Kim and Page (2013), most of the parents of truant have no significance of education and seem to show a very careless attitude towards their children's education. In many cases, children are kept at home to work inside and around the house or to babysit preschool siblings. Others are generally refrained to attend the school because of social challenges at home, school or in their neighborhood. Further studies showed that parents of the older students have a several variations in their parental attention. They take care for the homework of the students to help the students for the graduation. These factors help to opt only those strategies that aided their views when they have no issues with respect to achievement and for a variety of reasons (see Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). This research aimed to examine and understand learner's insight of parental involvement behaviors in their academics that might affect their school attendance and engagement in school tasks and activities. It is assumed that with increased problems faced by students, less be the parental school involvement that would be more pronounced for truant students than punctual.

### **A Bio-ecological Theoretical Framework**

The author referred truant behavior in the context of Urie Bronfenbrenner's latest bio-ecological system's theory in terms of the

psychosocial life of a child. It contains a multi-layered set of interrelated and consistent ecological systems. All of these systems influence child's development and adjustment (Hong, Algood, Chiu, & Lee, 2011) including parents being part of Micro-system with problems faced in school setting part of Meso-system in a given society and culture (Macro-system) that changes with time and age of the child is critical in this regard (Chrono-system) (Hong, Algood, Chiu, & Lee, 2011).

Child development and adjustments are both products and producers of environments in context of interdependent systems as explained that is having problems by virtue of runaway from school and parents' lack of interest and concern in their children's problems. Hence, Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory is not only an appropriate theoretical framework for the overall comprehension of the nature and magnitude of learner's truant behavior; it also put forth encouraging and supporting parental role and their interaction with child, hence, promoting development through meaningful parent-school cooperation.

Parent gender and student gender are crucial to parental involvement (Bogensneider 1997; Garg, Kauppi, Lewko, Urajnik, 2002; Muller 1998). Mothers show more involvement in academic issues of their children as compared to fathers (Garg et al., 2002; Muller 1998); however, fathers show more participation involved in academics of their sons as compared to their daughters (Muller, 1998). As far as the indigenous context is concerned, the parental factors in truancy have been highlighted in the earlier research (Tahira, 2011; Zahra, 2012), however, mothers' and fathers' separate role in school related activities and problem faced by truant and punctual students were not addressed as considered in the existing study.

Dropouts are observed to have deficient motivation and interest in school as compare to punctual students (Dunn et al., 2004; Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997). In addition, they have tendencies of social withdrawal, high anxiety, and depression (Marcotte, Fortin, Royer, Potvin, & Leclerc, 2001). These dropouts do not confirm to the school rules and are least bothered about academic success (Alexander, Entwisle, & Horsey, 1997). Previous studies have predicted the contribution of behavior problems (like truancy) lead to drop out from the school (Garnier, Stein, & Jacobs, 1997). Therefore, moderating role of truancy between problem faced by students predicting mothers' and fathers' school involvement was also explored.

## Method

### Sample

In the present research, 200 participants from different government and private schools of Rawalpindi and Islamabad were approached. A purposive sample of (Truant = 100, Punctual = 100) was selected. The researcher included only those students who volunteered to participate. Only male students from grade 6 to 10 with age range 12-18 ( $M = 1.50$ ,  $SD = .50$ ) were included. Both types of students were selected from the same class and school. The rationale for this selection criterion was comparison between truant and punctual student. All those students who remained absent from the school for past 21 days or more in the previous academic year without any medical reason, without permission, and knowledge of the teachers and the parents were defined as truants.

### Research Design

The present research was a correlational and cross-sectional study employing survey method for data collection.

### Instruments

**Student: Thinking About My Homework (STH).** This study employed a scaled for measuring each parents' school involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). It had three subscales, (1) The child's Perceptions of the Child's School and Homework Performance (CPSH), (2) The Parent's Ability to Help with Homework (PAHM), and (3) The Parent's Structuring and Other Activities related to the Child's Homework (PSOAHM). These scales have alpha reliability of .84, .75, and .80, respectively. The items are rated on 4-point likert scale with the scoring of 1 (*never*), 2 (*sometimes*), 3 (*usually*), and 4 (*always*). The total score ranges from 26 to 104. First five items measured the children's perception of their parents' ability to help them with homework, and items 10 to 26 measured the children's perception of how parents help them with their homework. Items 8, 9, and 10 are negative items with reverse score. The scale was translated into Urdu by using back to back translation method in the current study (Brislin & Anderson, 1976). In present research, two separate version of the scale were made: (1) Mother Version (2) Father Version with same items. Test-Retest reliability of Father Version was .84 and

for Mother Version was .80 over a fifteen days period. Cross-language validity of both versions revealed that both original and translated versions is conceptually valid tool for measuring attitudes towards parental school involvement.

**Mooney Problem Checklist (MPC).** This checklist was developed by Mooney and Gordon (1950) and translated by Rana (1995). Four subscales of Urdu version of the junior high school checklist were used in the present study with 44 items. Each subscale carried 11 items measuring different problems of the students including Physical Health Problems (PHP), School-related Problems (SRP), Home and Family Problems (HMP), and Self-centered Concern (SCC) in the study. It is a dichotomous scale that has two response categories (*Yes* = 1, *No* = 0). A test-retest reliability measure of .93 was obtained over a fifteen days period. The scale yields five scores for each child; a total score predicts the total problems faced by each child and one score each for each subscale.

## Procedure

The data were collected from the different private and government schools, and Colleges, of the Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Schools were approached by the researcher and permission of the school administration and principles was sought. The researcher explained the objectives and the nature of the study and assured the school administration that the results would be kept confidential and would only be used for the research purpose. After taking the consent of the schools administration attendance registers of the last year for 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 10<sup>th</sup> grade students were examined and students who were found absent for more than 21 days in the previous academic year without any medical reasons or without the knowledge of parents and teachers were considered to be truant. Class teachers also helped to identify truant students that is the students who remained absent without the permission of parents and teachers. Further, the researchers also requested the proctor of the class to identify truant students. The students who met the criterion were included. All the students who were approached volunteered to participate after signing informed consent. Then the questionnaires were handed over to the participants. There was no time limit for completing the questionnaires. The researcher provided the appropriate replies to the participants' inquiries such as, "Why are you conducting this research?" or "How would this research benefit us?".



## Results

In the first step, 2% missing values of Father Version for measuring school involvement were handled through an imputation method on SPSS-20 (Field, 2009). To study the relationship between mother and father school involvement and problems faced by the students Pearson Product Moment Correlation Method was used for both truant and punctual students. Next moderated regression analysis was applied to assess the role of truancy (truant and punctual) for problems faced by students in predicting school involvement and self-evaluation.

Overall, alphas values in Table 1 are satisfactory except for Mother's and Father's Abilities to Help in the Homework which is quite low because the current study was performed in try to translate and adaption of the students; thinking about the homework scale into Urdu language and established reliability on father school involvement and mother school involvement structure in Urdu language. In this regard well established translation techniques of Brislin (1976) were used for this purpose. This scale was administered on bilingual subjects. The result of this study revealed good reliability on over all items of both father school involvement version and mother school involvement versions, but poor reliability on one subscale of the mother ability to help with homework and the father ability to help with homework. The result in same study indicated good construct validity for both English and Urdu versions. Poor reliability is resolved through EFA because we did not found any evidence of EFA in Hoover-Dempsey et al (2005) study. The result of EFA explored new structured father school involvement and mother school involvement. Result of EFA indicated mother school involvement structure was different from father school involvement structure.

These finding explored the picture father school involvement and mother school involvement based on same items. Further these finding suggest that both version of students; thinking about the homework is appropriate for assessment of father school involvement and mother school involvement in Pakistan. More ever, during this translation process some statement was unsuitable for the Pakistan culture and society. Thus, these statements were modified according to Pakistani cultural context. The results in Table 1 reveal that problems faced by truant students on Mooney Problem Checklist (including school related problems and self-centeredness excluding physical health and family and home related problems) significantly negatively correlate with mothers' school involvement in structuring including other activities related to homework and students' personal perception of his school and homework performance. Significant negative correlation is

also observed with father's school involvement in structuring including other activities related to homework for truant students. This shows that as school and self related problems increase involvement of both parents decrease. Also with increase in these problems, personal academic performance also deteriorates.

For punctual students, only significant negative relationship is appearing for self-centered problem with overall mother's involvement and child's self-perception about performance in school and homework. As punctual students become more self-centered their mothers become less involved in their school related activities and their personal performance also deteriorates. However, father's role is not evident for punctual students.

Table 1

*Alpha Coefficients and Correlation Matrix among Mother School Involvement, Father School Involvement, and Mooney Problem Checklist and Their Subscales among Truant and Punctual Students (N = 200)*

Variables	<i>a</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. STHM	.78	-	.47**	.66**	.97**	.50**	.31**	.47**	-.19	-.07	-.20*	-.17	-.11
2. CPSH <sup>#</sup>	.74	.57**	-	.28**	.30**	.17	.24*	.09	-.08	-.03	-.22*	-.04	-.03
3. PAHM	.38	.55**	.20*	-	.52**	.26**	.09	.29**	-.10	-.05	-.09	-.12	-.06
4. SOAHM	.88	.96**	.39**	.40**	-	.51**	.31**	.48**	-.19	-.07	-.17	-.17	-.13
5. STHF	.79	.49**	.46**	.03	.47**	-	.60**	.96**	-.10	-.01	-.05	-.16	-.09
6. PAHF	.50	.23*	.20*	-.05	.24*	.64**	-	.35**	-.06	-.09	-.00	-.09	-.03
7. SOAHF	.77	.50**	.47**	.05	.48**	.97**	.46**	-	-.09	-.00	-.04	-.14	-.09
8. MPC	.80	-.27**	-.25*	-.07	-.26**	-.19	.02	-.22*	-	.76**	.61**	.68**	.78**
9. PHP	.63	-.04	-.09	.01	-.03	-.04	.06	-.07	.74**	-	.30**	.45**	.44**
10. SRP	.59	-.33**	-.28**	-.08	-.31**	-.25*	-.07	.26**	.75**	.33**	-	.21*	.26**
11. HM	.61	-.03	.01	-.02	-.04	-.00	.02	-.01	.58**	.39**	.22*	-	.43**
12. SCC	.71	-.37**	-.31**	-.12	-.34**	-.20*	.06	-.25*	.75**	.41**	.37**	.31**	-

Note. Upper diagonal is for punctual students ( $n = 100$ ) and lower diagonal is for truant students ( $n = 100$ ). STHM = Student: Thinking about My Homework Mother Version; CPSH = The Child's Perceptions of School and Homework Performance; PAHM = The Mother Ability To Help With Homework; SOAHM = Mother Structuring and Other Activities Related to the Child's Homework of Mother Version; STHF = Student: Thinking about My Homework Father Version; PAHF = The Fathers Ability to Help With Homework; SOAHF = The Fathers Structuring and Other Activities Related to the Child's Homework; MPC = Mooney Problem Checklist; PHP = Physical Health Problems; SRP = School Related Problems; HM = Home and Family Problems; SCC = Self-centered Concern.

# Computed only once as it is common factor for both father and mother version for self-evaluation by child.

\* $p \leq .05$ . \*\* $p \leq .01$ .

Table 1 shows that students' (including truant and punctual) self-perception of own school and homework performance is significantly correlated with mother's and father's involvement in homework and structuring the tasks and activities related to school. These relationships are stronger for truant students than punctual students. In case of punctual students, mothers have more significant role than fathers.

Regression analysis was carried out to study moderating role of truancy for problems faced by students in predicting personal perceived performance (Table 2) and parental involvement (Table 3 and 4). Truancy is coded as 1 for truant student and 2 as punctual student. Only significant moderations are reported.

Table 2

*Moderating Role of Truancy for Problems Faced by Students in Predicting Child's Self-Perception of School and Homework Performance (N = 200)*

Variables	Child's Perceptions of the Child's School and Homework Performance				
	B	S.E.	B	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$
School-related problem	-.047	.032	-.04	.81	15.72***
Truancy	2.24	.145	.38***		
School-related*Truancy	.634	.016	.96***		
Constant	16.98	.254			
Self-centered	-.920	.268	-.81**	.041	8.82**
Truancy	.873	.410	.15*		
Self-centered*Truancy	.475	.160	.70**		
Constant	19.53	1.28			

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .000$ .

Table 2 display that truancy is a significant moderator for school related problems and self-centeredness faced by students in predicting the child's self-perceptions of school and homework performance. First part of the Table 2 shows that truancy has significant main effect, so is the self-centered problem in predicting personal performance of the student. However, interaction of truancy for both types of problems is found significant in predicting personal perceived performance (see Figure 1 and 2).

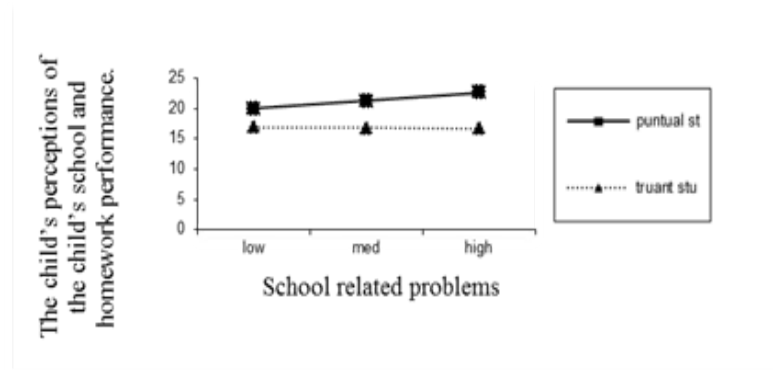


Figure 1. Moderating role of truancy between school-related problems and the child's perceptions of the child's school and homework performance

Slope in Figure 1 shows that punctual students have better perception about the homework and school related performance of students as compared to truant students and with increase in school related problems, performance is not effected in punctual students but decreases for truant students.

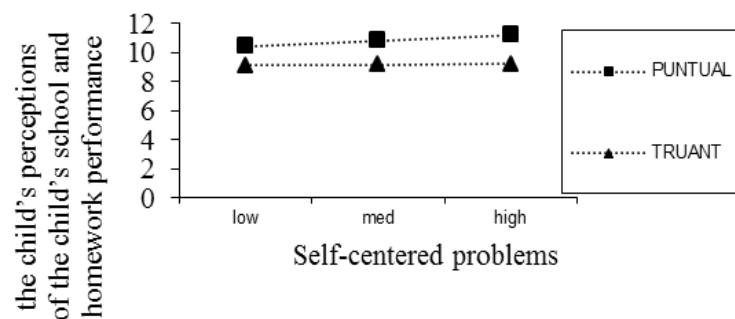


Figure 2. Moderating role of truancy for self-centered concern problems and the child's perceptions of the child's school and homework performance

A significant slope (Figure 2) shows that truancy is a moderator between self-centered concern problems and the child's perceptions of school and homework performance. The direction of results is same as of school related problems, truant students are more predisposed to performance issues with increase in self-centered problems as compared to punctual students.

Table 3

*Moderating Role of Truancy for School-related Problems in Predicting Mother School Involvement and Its Subscales (N = 200)*

DV	IV	B	S.E.	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	F
PAHM	School-related problems	-.036	.088	-.03	.05	11.71**
	Truancy	.124	.398	.02		
	School-related*Truancy	.154	.045	.25**		
	Constant	11.52	.694			
PSOAHM	School-related problems	-.945	.370	-.18*	.08	18.20***
	Truancy	2.051	1.67	.08		
	School-related*Truancy	.805	.189	.30**		
	Constant	48.51	2.91			

Note. PAHM= Mother Ability to Help with Homework; PSOAHM = Mother Structuring and Other Activities Related to the Child's Homework.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .000$ .

Table 3 indicates that truancy is a significant moderator between school related problems and mother's ability to help with homework and mothers structuring and other activities related to the child's homework. Main effect of truancy is nonsignificant, however, main effect of school related problems is only significant for mothers structuring and other activities related to the child's homework. Nevertheless, interaction of school related problems with truancy is significant in predicting mother's school involvement (see Figure 3).

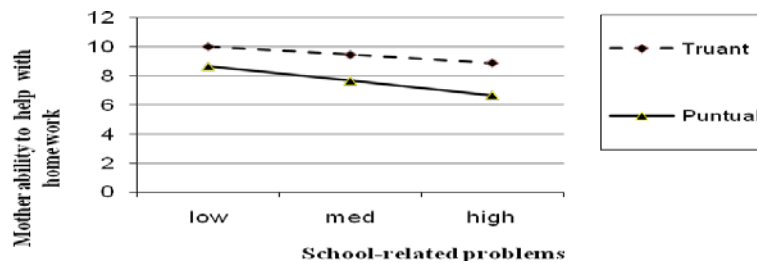


Figure 3. Moderating role of truancy between school-related problems and mother's ability to help with homework

A significant slope in Figure 3 shows that truant students are more predisposed to have lowered mother's ability to help with homework with increase in students' school related problems which is much sharp for truant students than punctual students. Truant students already have less involvement of mother at a given point as compare to punctual students and this involvement in helping in homework activities reduces with increase in school-related problems of the child/student.

Table 4

*Moderating Role of Truancy for School-related Problems in Predicting Father School Involvement and Its Subscales (N = 200)*

DV	IV	B	S.E.	B	$\Delta R^2$	F
PAHF	School-related problems	.028	.092	.02	.04	10.07**
	Truancy	1.126	.417	.19**		
	School-related*Truancy	.149	.047	.23**		
	Constant	9.074	.731			
PSOAHF	School-related problems	-.515	.303	-.12*	.05	9.458**
	Truancy	.594	1.37	.03		
	School-related problems	.477	.155	.23**		
	Constant	49.69	2.39			

Note. PAHF= Father Ability to Help with Homework, PSOAH = Father Structuring and Other Activities Related to the Child's Homework, SRP = School Related Problems.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .000$ .

Table 4 indicates that truancy is a significant moderator between school related problems and father's ability to help with homework and fathers structuring and other activities related to the child's homework. Main effect of truancy is only significant for father's help in doing homework but not for structuring the tasks and activities, however, main effect of school related problems is significant for both domains of father's involvement. Interaction of school related problems with truancy is significant in predicting father's school involvement (see Figure 4 and 5).

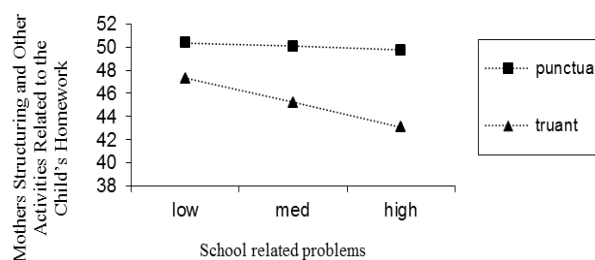


Figure 4. Moderating role of truancy between school-related problems and mothers' structuring and other activities related to the child's homework.

A significant slope in Figure 4 shows that truant students are more predisposed to have lowered mothers' structuring and other activities related to the child's homework with increase in students' school related problems which is much sharp for truant students than punctual students. Truant students already have less involvement of mother at a given point as compare to punctual students and this involvement in structuring the tasks and activities reduces with increase in school-related problems of the child/student.

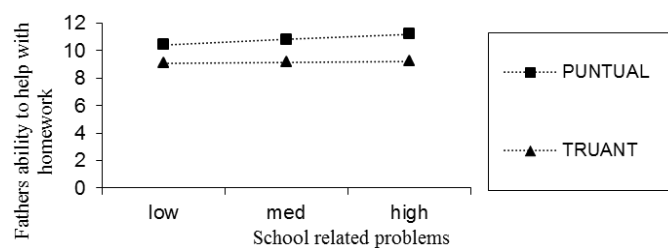


Figure 5. Moderating role of truancy between schools related problems and father's ability to help with homework.

A significant slope in Figure 5 shows that truant students are more predisposed to have lowered father's ability in helping with homework with increase in students' school related problems. As compare to truant students, punctual students receive more help in homework by father when they start facing school related problems, while father's help does not increase when truant students face school related problems.

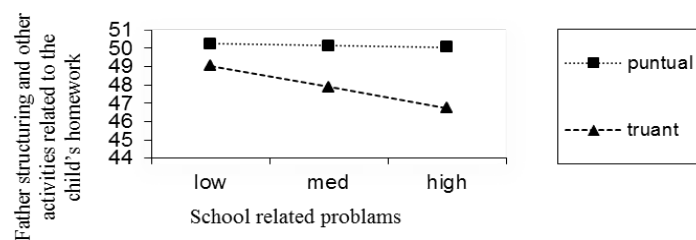


Figure 6. Moderating role of truancy between school-related problems and father structuring and other activities related to the child's homework.

A significant slope in Figure 6 shows that truant students are more predisposed to have lowered father's structuring and other activities related to the child's homework with increase in students'

school related problems which is much sharp for truant students than punctual students. Truant students already have less involvement of father at a given point as compare to punctual students and this involvement in structuring the tasks and activities reduces with increase in school-related problems of the child/student.

### **Discussion**

Firstly, aim of this study was to investigate the relationship among father school involvement, mother school involvement, students' self-perception about school performance, and problem faced by truant and punctual students. Secondly, the aim of this study was to examine moderating role of truancy for problem faced by students in predicting father's school involvement, mother's school involvement, and self-evaluation of student.

Problems faced by students were negatively correlated with mothers' school involvement and father' school involvement for truant students and their personal self-evaluation. This was more pronounced for truant students than punctual students. Moderation also revealed that school-related problems lead to lowered help by both parents in school related activities and in doing homework for truant students than punctual students. Father hold more significant role in truant students than punctual students, while mothers are playing important role for punctual students. This shows that if fathers' positive role will be enhanced, it may reduce truant students problems faced by them and will help them to improve upon their performance. School related and self-centered problems are found to be more related with self-evaluation and parental role. Interestingly, moderation of truancy was only significant for school related problems.

Patterson, Reid, and Dishion (1992) revealed that infrequent parental monitoring was one of the significant factors. The awareness of the parents had played a significant role in the formation of students' behavior for the school engagement, which not only influenced greatly on the forming minds of the students, but also motivated them. The parental constant encouragement strengthened the students' academic self-concept and thus compelled them to complete their home works (Appleton, Christenson, Kim, & Reschly, 2006; Cox, 2000; Donoghue, 2011; Kim & Page, 2013; Mortimore & Whitty, 2000; Maynard et al., 2013; Reid , 2005; Squelch, 2006; Sheppard, 2009; Walls, 2005). This particular socioeconomic situation had distracted the parents from monitoring of their children;



especially, the fathers paid very infrequent attention to adolescents that may contribute to the academic problems. The truant students faced school related problems and self-centered problems that affect their performance, while father's support also reduced which may aggravate the problems and further lower the performance for not getting support by their fathers. Mother school involvement of truant students was evident more significantly as compared to fathers' (Alexander et al., 1997; Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Dunn et al., 2004; Forsterling & Binser, 2002; Fortin & Picard, 1999; Garnier et al., 1997; Garg et al., 2002; Gary & Newsome, 2008; Henry & Huizinga, 2007; Jimerson et al., 2000; Marcotte et al., 2001; Muller, 1998; Tahira, 2011; Vallerand et al., 1997; Zahra, 2012).

In our cultural context, fathers are bread winners and mothers' are primary care gives that may be the reason for their much evident role both for truant and punctual students. In case of truant students, father's role becomes important as father is encouraged to be involved by mothers to play his role as complaints are received from school authorities in case of truant children. On the other hand, for punctual students or students who have less problematic behaviours, mothers are more comfortable to tackle with these children and they will not consider father's involvement, while in other condition fathers need to be involved. However, on realizing that child is getting out of hand for their mischievous behavior, parents stop paying a heed or start feeling helpless. This reduces their involvement in school activities of their children.

It is observed that low parental supervision and monitoring resulted in the higher rate of truancy among the students. Similarly, drop out ratio also increased when the students' skip the schools for no reason. The study explored comparison between parental respective ability to help in homework and structuring and other activities related to the child's homework. For truant students' mothers had shown more involvement to check and help these students in completing the home assignments and designing and other activities related to the homework activities as compared to fathers. In addition to this, fathers of punctual students were also observed to be more involved in the above stated activities as compared to mothers.

Pakistani society has been a patriarchal society in its true definition; here fathers dominated a major role in the household and thus had an unquestionable authority over whole family. It has been observed that the households where fathers kept up strict monitoring children remained punctual, on the other hand, the families controlled by mothers, as they had added responsibility for household chores,

could not maintain a strict supervision which, of course, resulted in increased possibilities of truancy. It showed that parental attention affected parental school involvement of the truant. Moreover, parental literacy was also observed to be a very important factor in this regard. Literate mothers' school involvement for punctual students was evidently higher for punctuality than illiterate mothers' role. Parental ability to help in homework and structuring and other activities related to the child's homework was observed significant for truant students. For punctual, there was no effect of parental education on parental school involvement. Pakistan is a collectivistic society. Most of the women have been restricted to the household chores and have no access to education for them to go out to monitor their children in this regard. This has been generally considered to be an all men's affair. Moreover, the illiterate mothers themselves have been reluctant to visit the schools of their children because of social restrictions and due to their low self-esteem for being less educated and outgoing. Parental involvement has been a very crucial factor in the academic career of adolescents (Muller, 1998) and parents were shown to be less involved with their children and their schooling (Herrold & O'Donnell, 2008) that could promote their academic self-confidence of the students (Ambreen, 2012; Dunn et al., 2004; Gary & Newsome, 2008; Gonzalez-Pienda et al., 2002; Henry & Huizinga, 2007; Tahira, 2011; Zahra, 2012).

### **Limitations of the Study**

External validity of the study is because of small sample size and less representative of target population. In future, more heterogeneous and representative sample could be approached. Only boys were selected to study role of variables, as externalizing problems are much prevalent in boys. That may be a sampling bias. Manifestation of truancy could be different in girls (see Zahra, 2012), therefore, for future studies it is recommended to include girls as well.

A very crude measure was used to define truancy (Crespo, 1974) that may be just labeling of the participant as truant. In future, self-reported measure to determine truant tendencies could be used. Future researchers should assess the application of the criterion according to a specific culture. Further, for selection of punctual students, matching on certain variables of interests could be carried out to control their effects.

Confirmatory factor analysis for Urdu version of Student: Thinking about My Homework scale is recommended in larger sample

to ensure its validity for Pakistani adolescents. Validation of father and mother versions is also recommended.

Role of many important variables like socioeconomic status, parental education, ethnicity, etc. was not controlled in moderation analysis. This is recommended for future studies.

Present was a cross-sectional research in which self-reported measures were used. In future, longitudinal studies and qualitative techniques for data collection to study role of parents and problems faced by truant students could be used. Future research can assess validity of responses by using social desirability scales.

For the present study, parental involvement as perceived by child is considered, in future, parents' opinion could be sought to consider their point of view as well. That may help in controlling judgment errors.

### **Implications of Present Study**

It is helpful for counselors and clinician to delineate role of parents and problems faced by students in running away from school which is leading cause of increased number of school drop-out. Government should look into the role of parents to reduce school drop-out and laws should be implemented for making parents to encourage and support their children to attend school. Further, effort should be made to teach students handful of coping strategies to handle their school related problems and also aim at reducing their self-centered approach. This can be done through sublimating their energies in sports which involve team effort. In that context, they will not only learn emotional regulation but also empathy and prosocial behaviour that reduces when one start indulging into delinquent activities. Prevention is better than cure, therefore, regardless of being punctual or truant such education and facility should be part of curriculum for all. The less parental school involvement may also be a point of intervention, which is considered to one of the most potent factors in the etiology of an individual's development of psychopathology and delinquent behavior.

### **Conclusion**

Results revealed that the truant students had school related problems and self-concerned problems. Truancy is moderator for problems faced by students in reducing parental ability or concern to help with homework and structuring tasks and other activities related

to school. Father's role is more effected in case on truant students than punctual, hence their role need to be enhanced to promote better performance and to handle problems effectively.

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