

NON-ATTENDANCE AS THE INDICATOR OF STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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SUMMARY

The growth of non-attendance has raised a lot of questions among students that need to be answered. In case when during a school year, in one class consisting of twenty-five students one gets more than five thousands non-attendances, then it is no longer the issue of a single problem nor a few of them but a whole epidemic. Moreover, other classes have a similar problem, too.

By conducting the survey among the students and by analyzing it one has noted a lack of motivation and responsibility towards school related duties. Consequentially there has been a growth of non-attendance among a majority of students. The existing system of sanctioning does not bring neither prevention nor positive results. Therefore, one needs to modernize the educational process in order to motivate both students and teachers and that will function in a way to reduce non-attendance. In order to succeed, one needs to involve every social partner, from parents to potential future employers.

Key words: non-attendance, accomplishment, survey, measures and procedures

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a disturbing and increasing trend of students not attending school or classes. A general discussion with students revealed that the main problem was non-attendance. A survey was then carried out to enable us understand reasons and motives as to why students do not attend school and what should be done to eliminate this problem as well as ways to improve their overall results and studying habits.

The main goal is to understand the reasons for not attending school and to accurately establish ways by which we can prevent this trend in the future. Absent school hours are monitored by the Pedagogical system. Non-attending students usually receive lower behavior grades, but the biggest problem manifested from non-attendance is inability to follow, learn and pass subjects due to lack of continuity of information.

II. AIM OF RESEARCH

The aim of this research is to obtain results with focus on motives for not attending school and to understand them so as to decrease non attendance. School non attendance is in close and direct correlation with other student problems like building up their career, destabilizing class unity, breaking or loosing student teacher relationship etc. It is important to improve the teaching process by bringing in closer to the student with the aim of preventing future non attendance and to achieve success. In addition this research will also provide information that can be used for future studies. This research also explored the relationship between non attendance and overall grades as well as the attitude of these students towards the school and whether or not students understand the results of not attending school.

III. SAMPLE OF EXAMINEE, VARIABLE AND METHODS OF RESEARCH

Sample of examinee has been taken from students of Matija Antun Reljkovic Secondary School, Slavonski Brod. 83 students were examined form the classes with the highest non attending hours, from 1st to 4th grade.

In order to establish and follow up indicators significant for school absenteeism and overall achievements in the school, the survey questioner was applied.

The survey questioner had 15 questions divide into 3 groups as follows;

- Student's opinion towards non attendance and frequency of non attendance.
- Main reasons as why students do not attend school.
- Reaction of society towards students not attending school.

IV. METHODS USED IN ELABORATING RESULTS

To elaborate results we used basic statistic parameters, frequency and percentage. All survey results were summed up and are shown on the graphs.

V. SURVEY RESULTS

Below are the questions with their individual results.

1. I attend classes

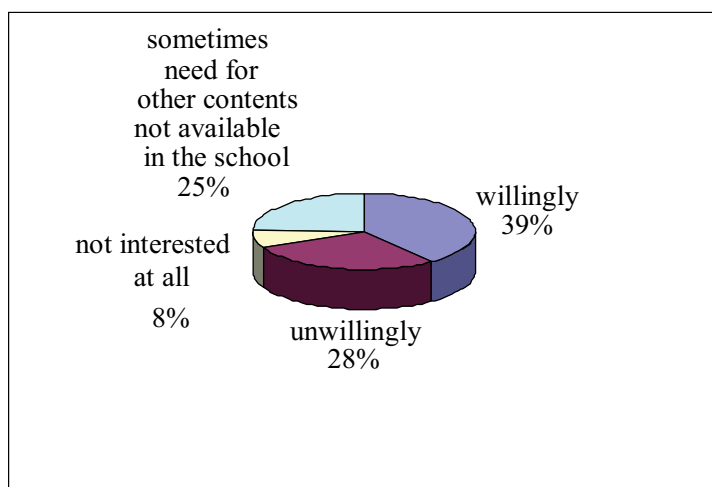
- willingly
- unwillingly
- not interested at all
- sometimes need for other contents not available in the school

On the basis of answers it has been noticed that students willingly attend classes and that a large number of students would like to have other contents not available in their

school.

On the other side 28% of students unwillingly go to school and 8% have no interest for education as shown on the graph.

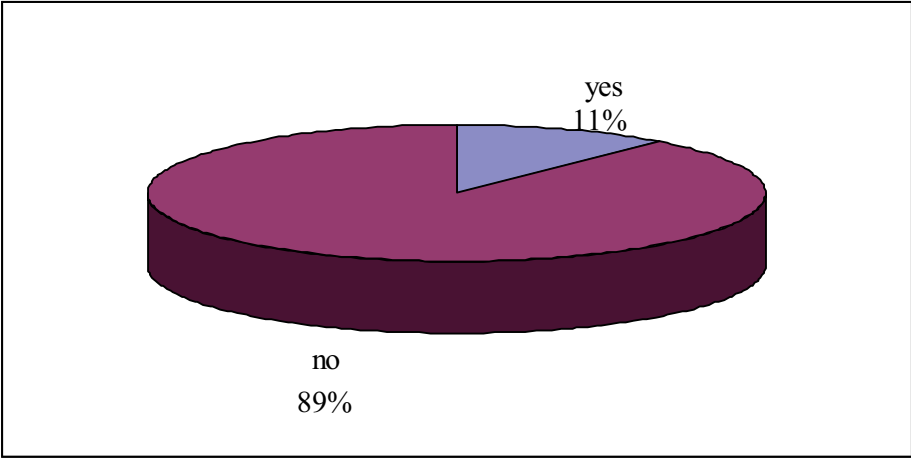
Figure 1. I attend classes....



2. DO I NOTICE UNFAIRNESS DURING JUSTIFICATION OF ABSENT HOURS?

In relation to this question, students from the fourth grade do not feel unfairness during the justification of absent hours, while students from the first grade answered the opposite. This clearly shows strong willingness towards participation and education. Results are shown on the graph.

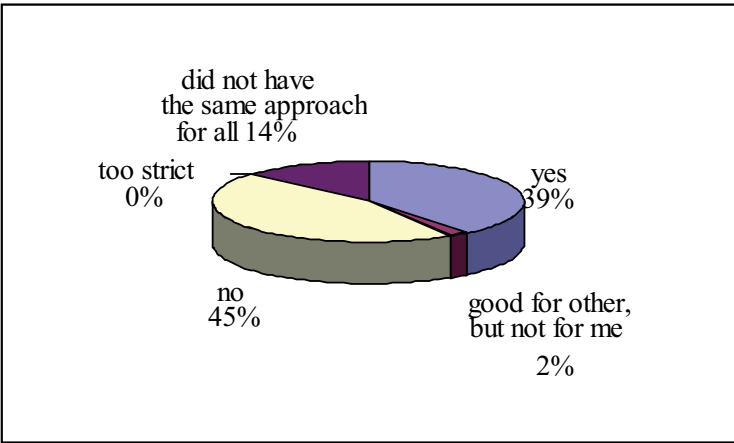
Figure 2. Do I notice unfairness during justifications of absent hours?



3. DO TEACHERS APPROACH PROPERLY WHEN JUSTIFYING ABSENT HOURS?

Answers have shown a small percentage of students believe that teachers have the right approach when justifying absent hours, while a bigger percentage of students think that teachers should use the same approach for all students, whilst in question 2 above a big percentage of first year students thought that teachers did not have the same approach for all, clearly the opposite to fourth grade students, who chose not to answer this question.

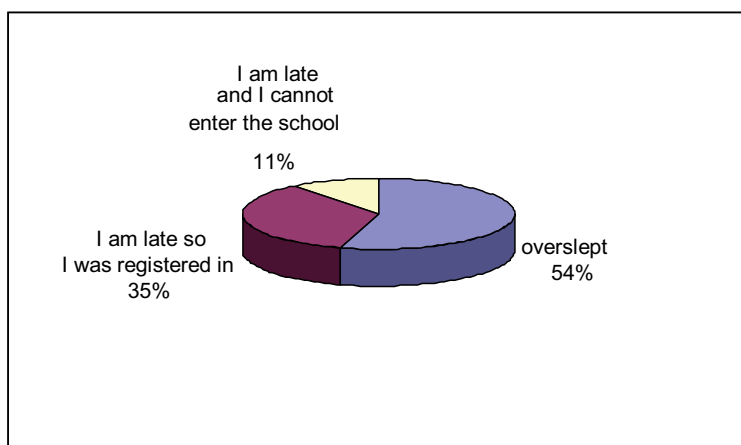
Figure 3. Do teachers approach properly when justifying absent hours?



4. WHAT STUDENTS THINK ABOUT MISSING THE FIRST CLASSES?

On the basis of the results we can see that there is a necessity to create a frequent talking forum during the form / mistress class in order to create better and more quality approach towards school work. It is disturbing to see that a big percentage of students think that it is justified to miss the first hour of school because they over slept!¹

Figure 4. Unjustified absence from the first classes because...

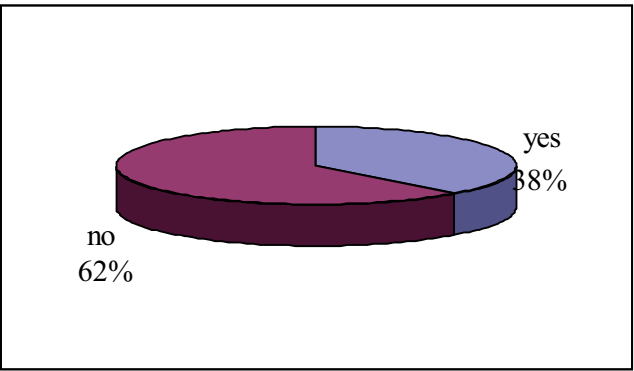


¹ Figure shows in percentage positive answers on each graph

5. DO PARENTS ALWAYS JUSTIFY THEIR CHILDREN SKIPPING SCHOOL?

On this question students answered that they do not get support from their parents on skipping class, except of course only when they think it is justified. This attitude from the parents is encouraging and should be used in creating a closer interactive forum between students, form master / mistress and their parents.

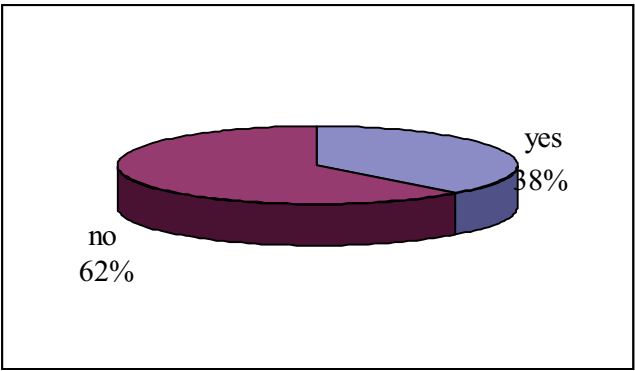
Figure 5. Do parents always justify their children skipping school?



6. DO YOU SOMETIMES SKIP SOME CLASSES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

Answers have shown that students are irresponsible and that there is an urgent necessity to implement adequate preventive measures to increase the need for regular schooling, better knowledge and continuing education.

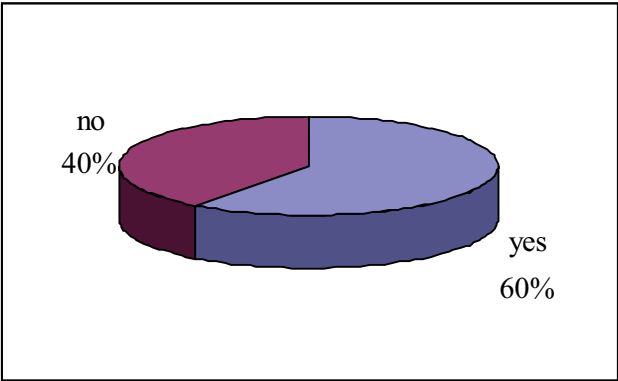
Figure 6. Do you sometimes skip some classes in the middle of the day?



7. STUDENT’S THOUGHTS ABOUT SKIPPING THE LAST CLASS OF THE DAY.

The following table with percentages shows that students are tired and saturated at the end of the day which increases the number of absent (skipped) last class of each day.

Figure 7. Do you skip the last class of the day?



8. STUDENTS WHO DO NOT LIKE CLASSES AND THEY SKIP SCHOOL BECAUSE OF

Table 1. Reasons for skipping school

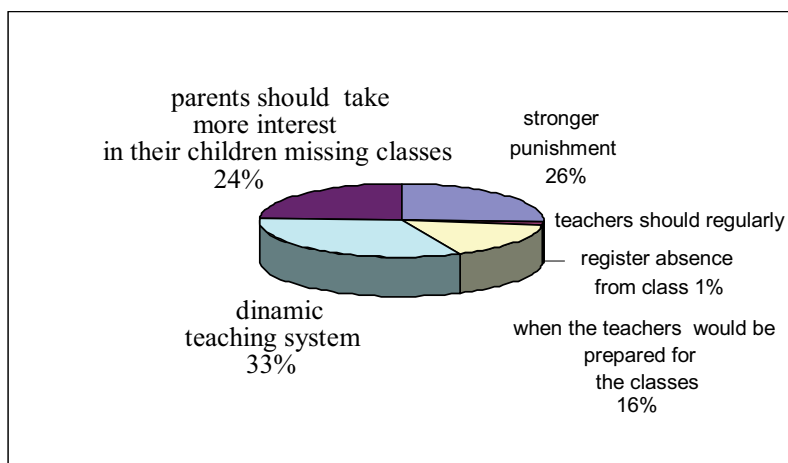
Unwillingly going to class because	%
I am bored	12%
I am tired	6%
I have forgotten my books and or equipment	4%
I have to go and have a cigarette	6%
I have to have coffee in the coffee bar	5%
Of commitments which no one understands	12%
I have not studied and will get bad grades	28%
I don't like the teacher	3%
I think I will not to get registered in the absent book	8%
I have to accompany other friends skipping class	8%
There is no punishment for skipping class	1%
There is nothing being done during the class	3%
The teacher does not like me	4%
Other reasons (gambling)	1%
Total	100%

A large number of students gave not studied, bored and other Commitments as the main reasons for skipping school these reasons gave them confidence and a belief that it is right to skip school and to continue skipping school. Some students skip school to have a cigarette at the nearest coffee bar hoping not to get marked absent.

A small number of student groups think that they will not be punished for the absent hours and that they will not miss anything important while they are absent and find various reasons for skipping class such as gambling, misunderstanding with their teachers from different subjects etc.

9. THERE WOULD BE LESS SKIPPING OF CLASS WHEN

Students think that there will be less skipped hours if stronger measures / punishments or a more advanced teaching system are implemented. Students from the 1st year agreed to implement stronger measures / punishment, while 4th year students were more inclined towards the use of modern and dynamic teaching system. They also thought that parents should take more interest in their children missing classes and that teachers should regularly register students absent from class.

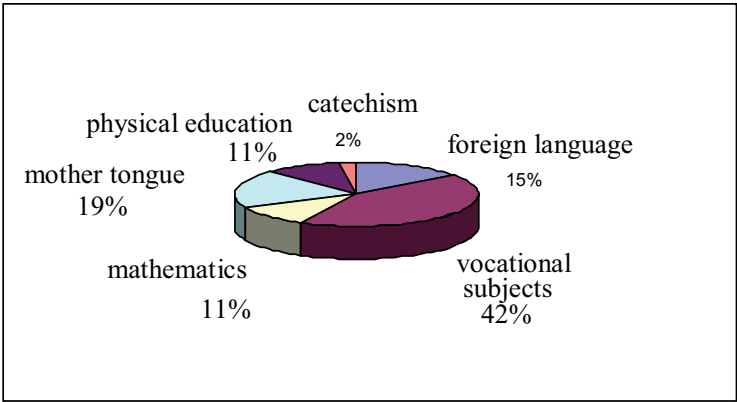
Figure 8. There would be less skipping of classes when...

10. I MOSTLY SKIP CLASS BECAUSE OF THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS...

Answers analysed on this question revealed that students mostly skip major subject classes like Croatian Language, foreign language (English, German etc) physical education and mathematics.

These results have shown that students mostly skip while changing classrooms as they break up into groups and then finally from subjects they consider not important. It is upsetting to see that a large number of absent hours are more from the more important subjects crucial to their future career. All this above is in close correlation with unsatisfied teachers who should consider implementing better methods of quality teaching approach.

Figure 9. I mostly skip class because of the following subjects...



11. DOES YOUR ENVIRONMENT BLAME YOU FOR SKIPPING SCHOOL?

Punishments students receive are from their parents only so parents should play a bigger and more important role in changing the attitude of their children and teach them the importance of education. It is also important to influence the whole class, where classmates can put some pressure on the students skipping class that skipping is a negative trend, to motivate classes to take care of non attendance in their own group or to implement some incentives like a reward for the best attending class (picnic ...).

Figure 10. Does your environment blame you for skipping school?

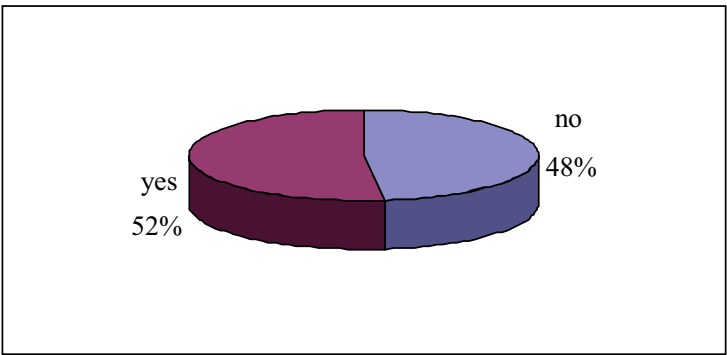
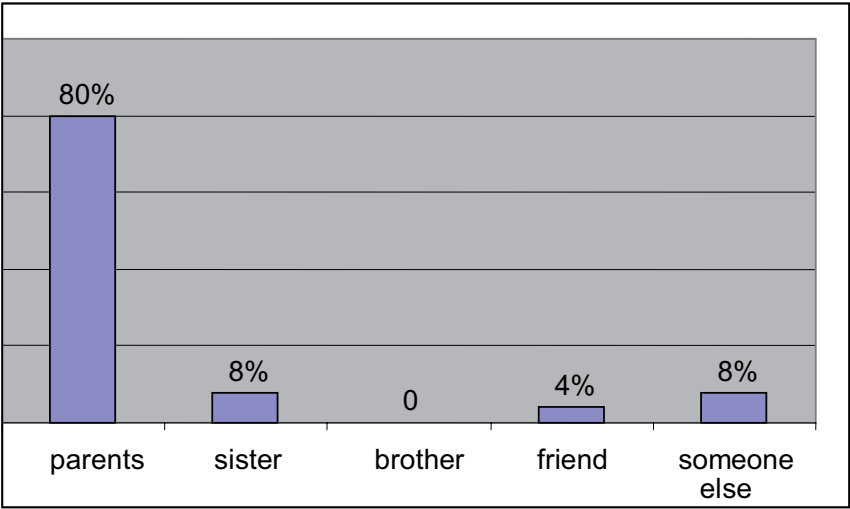


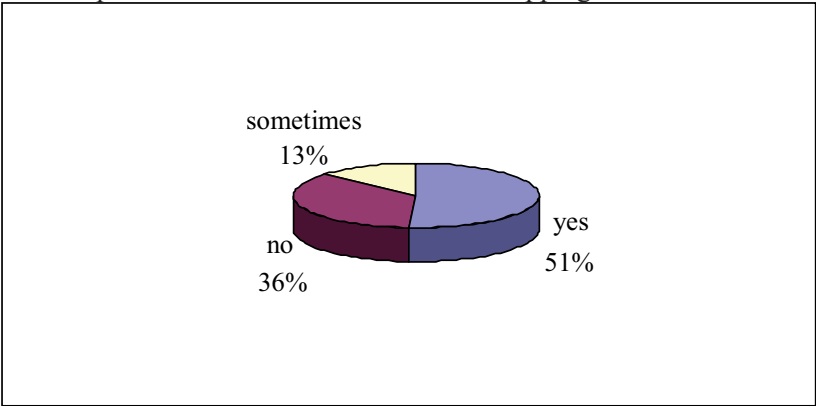
Figure 11. Who blame you?



12. DO PARENTS KNOW ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN SKIPPING CLASSES?

An exceptionally high percentage of students do not communicate to their parents of missing classes. A small percentage of students, those that are honest with their parents communicate this and as such have no problems with absent hours. The results therefore show a very negative trend.

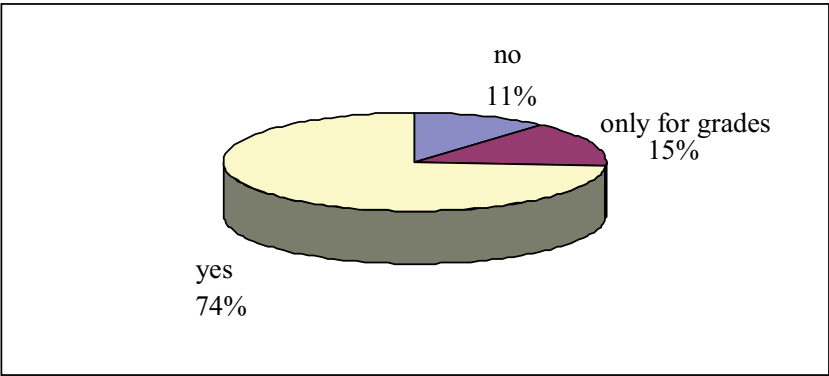
Figure 12. Do parents know about their children skipping classes?



13. ARE PARENTS INTERESTED IN YOUR GRADES AND ABSENT HOURS?

One part of parent's don't show any interest in school activity of their children. Only 74% of parents show interest their children's grades and absent hours. 11% of parents don't show any interest in either grades or absent hours, while 15% of parents are interested in only grades and show no interest in absent hours and think that it is irrelevant and not important.

Figure 13. Are parents interested in your grades and absent hours?

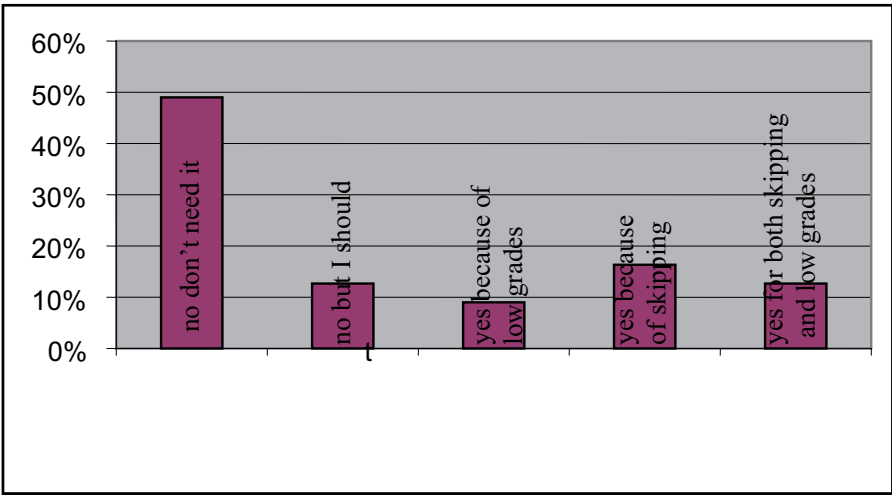


14. HAVE YOU RECEIVED ADEQUATE PUNISHMENT FOR SKIPPING AND LOW GRADES?

Offered answers were; no don't need it, no but I should, yes because of low grades, yes because of skipping and yes for both skipping and low grades.

Only 38% of students thought that they have been adequately punished because of not fulfilling their school obligations.

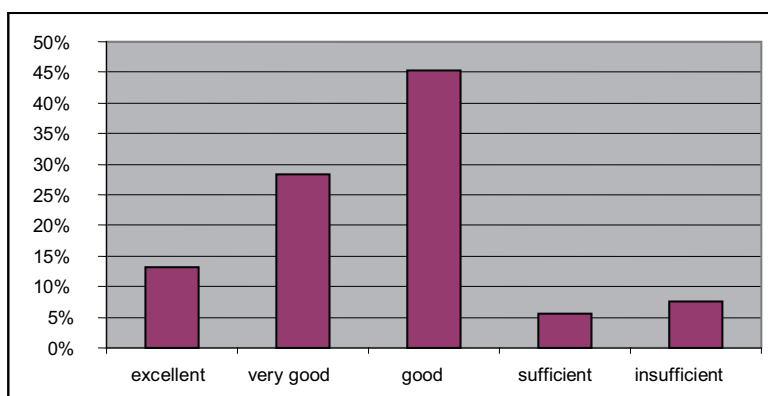
Figure 14. Have you received adequate punishment for skipping and low grades?



15. WHAT GRADES DO YOU EXPECT TO GET AT THE END?

Students expect much higher grades than what they have achieved in the period before. It is surprising that 8% of students don't expect better grades and 6% of students are happy with getting only (sufficient) passing grades.

Figure 15. What grades do you expect to get at the end?



VI. CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to create attention, analyse and to present some opinions about non attendance of students in schools.

Survey results have confirmed the same studies before, showing relationship between students not attending classes and their results, where students with higher absent hours have lower grades and have lower self-esteem.

Students opinion is that non attendance can be reduced with lowering the intensity / load of subjects and introducing a more modern teaching approach.

The current reform of education has the same goal by introducing Croatian National Educational Standard; some reforms have already been introduced in the primary schools where students have been freed from unnecessary contents and heavy school bags. In secondary schools a state high school diploma has been introduced and a more modern teaching approach into the trade schools with a goal to increase student's interest.

Teachers with their role in education, developing better relationships between students and parents and by implementing advanced teaching methods will increase student's interests and ambitions. It will also decrease reasons and motives for not attending school

and through that achieve better professional development of young people.

VII. SOURCES

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