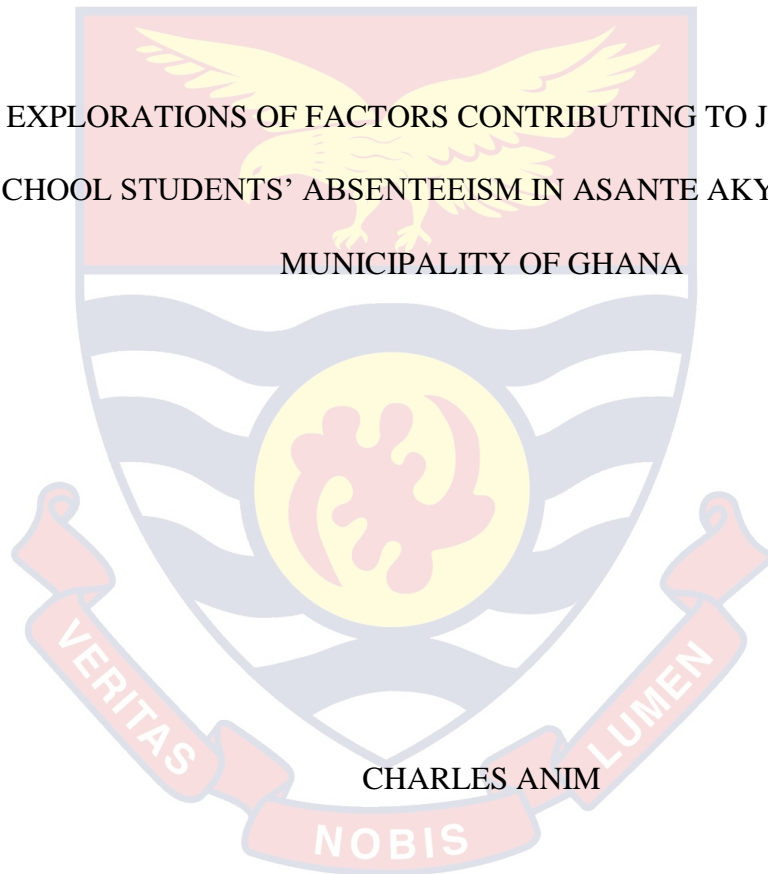


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

EXPLORATIONS OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS' ABSENTEEISM IN ASANTE AKYEM CENTRAL
MUNICIPALITY OF GHANA

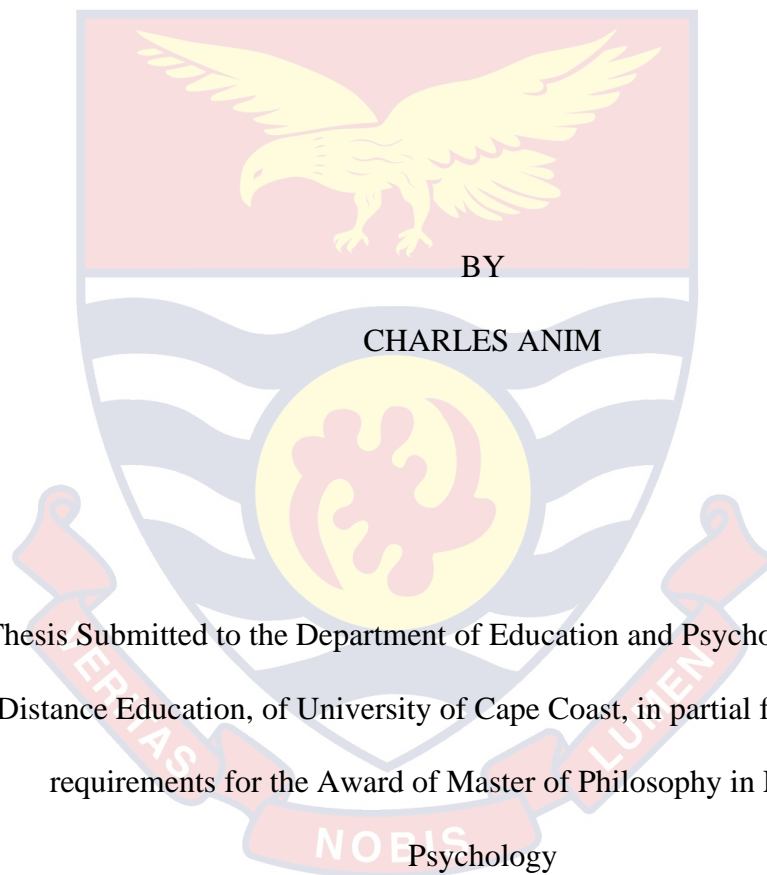


CHARLES ANIM

2020

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

EXPLORATIONS OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS' ABSENTEEISM IN ASANTE AKYEM CENTRAL
MUNICIPALITY OF GHANA



Thesis Submitted to the Department of Education and Psychology, College of
Distance Education, of University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the Award of Master of Philosophy in Educational
Psychology

October 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the results of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

Name:

Supervisors' Declaration

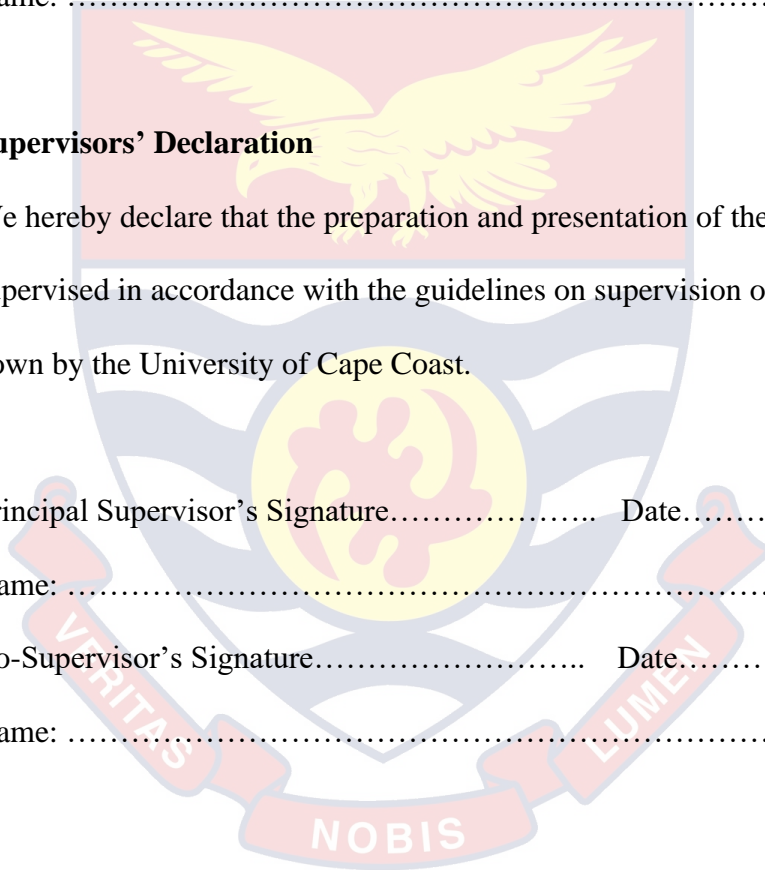
We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name:

Co-Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name:



ABSTRACT

Factors contributing to Junior High School (JHS) students' absenteeism have been extensively explored in developing countries; however, not much is known in Ghana especially in Asante Akyem Central Municipality. This knowledge gap if not addressed could retard the attainment of the United Nations Education-Related Sustainable Development Goals. The objective of the study was thus to explore factors contributing to Junior High School students' absenteeism in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality of Ghana. The study employed a descriptive survey design through the use of simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The population of the study was students, teachers, parents and community opinion leaders. A sample size of 570 was used. Questionnaire, register, terminal report, focus group discussion guides and interview were used to take data from the study participants. Quantitative data were analysed using ANOVA and linear regressions while qualitative data were analysed using narrative analysis. The quantitative analysis revealed that parents/guardians' level of education did not influence absenteeism. The study revealed that unlike fathers' level of income, mothers' level of income was associated with absenteeism among students. The study further found out a relationship between persons' students were staying with and their absenteeism. It was again established that there was association between the number of times parents/guardians attend PTA meeting and absenteeism among students. The results showed that test scores or marks obtained in all subjects (English, Mathematics or Science collectively) significantly impact the number of times students attend school. In view of the findings, the Ghana Education Service should provide adequate teaching and learning resources for junior high schools in order to improve students' academic performance with the view of reducing absenteeism. It is recommended that parents should endeavour to participate in PTA meetings periodically so that absenteeism can reduce. It is further recommended that government should place emphasis on improving the economic potentials of mothers since their level of income influences absenteeism.

KEYWORDS

Absenteeism

ANOVA

Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Approach

Junior High School

Linear Regression

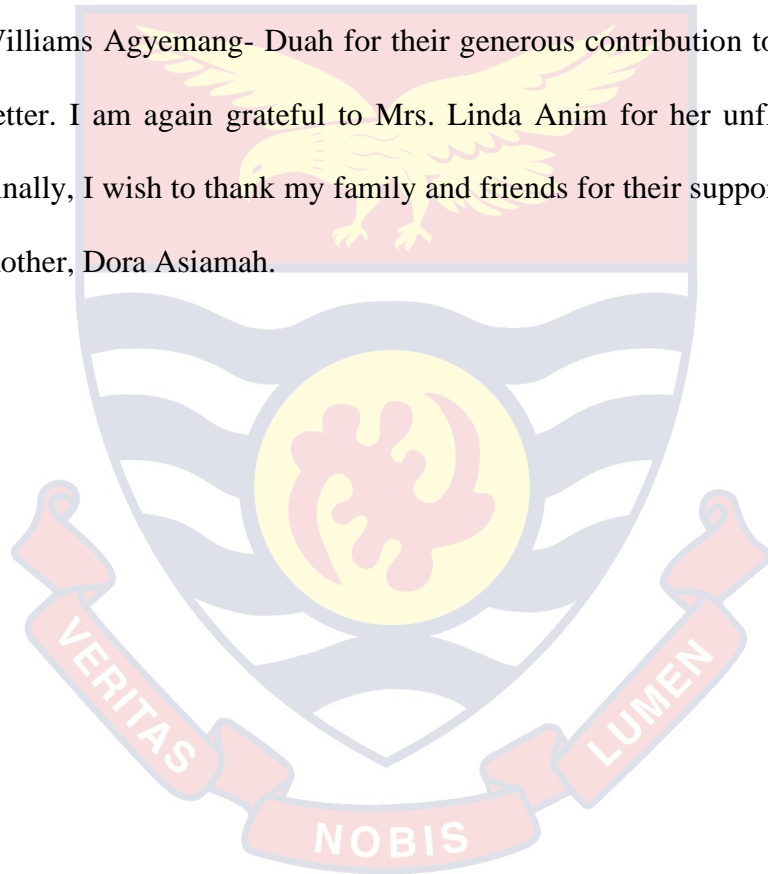
Students



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DEDICATION

To my wife, Mrs. Linda Anim

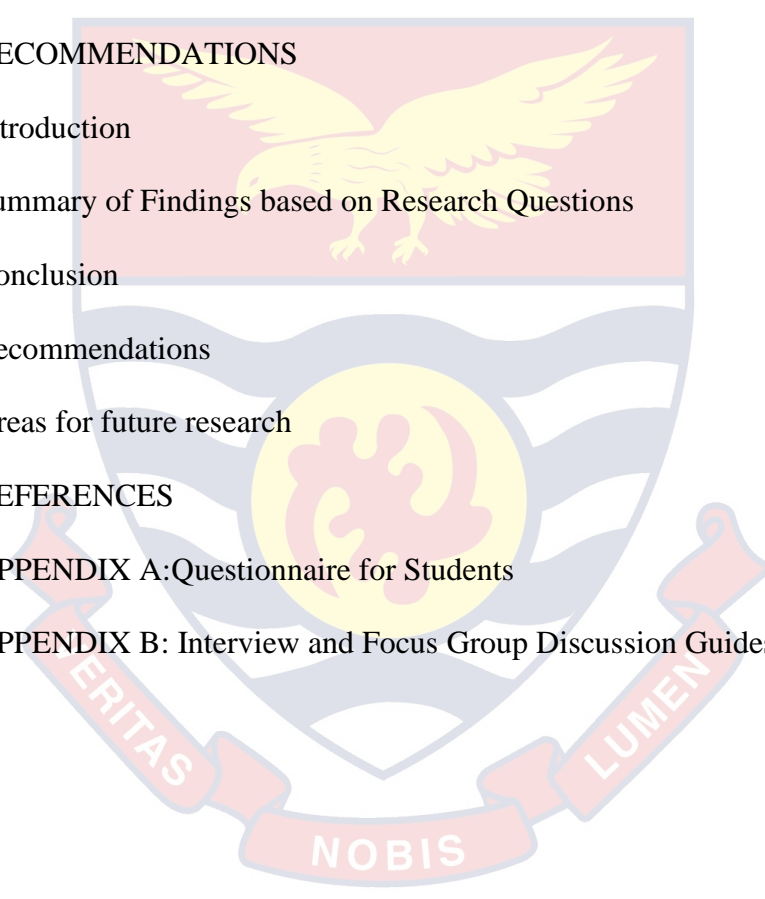


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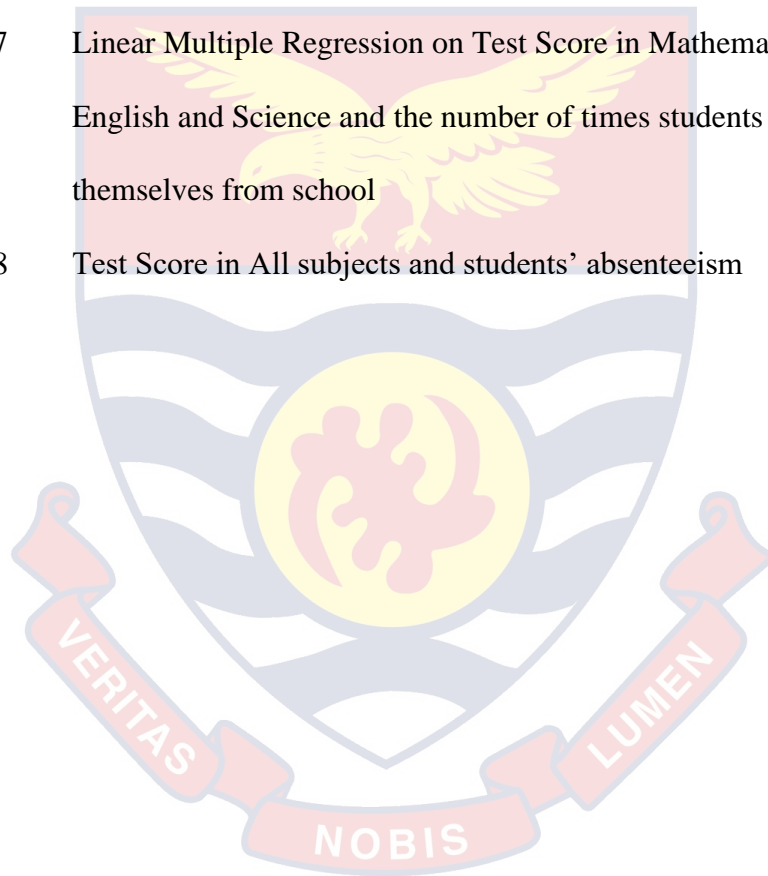
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS –	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANOVA-	Analysis of Variance
BECE-	Basic Education Certificate Examination
FCUBE –	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FGD-Focus	Group Discussion
HIV –	Human immunodeficiency Virus
J. H. S –	Junior High School
MSLC-	Middle School Leaver Certificate
NGOs –	Non Governmental Organizations
PBC-	Perceived Behavioural Control
Ph.D. -	Doctor of Philosophy
PTA-	Parents Teachers Association
S.H.S-	Senior High School
TPB-	Theory of Planned Behaviour



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Education does not just connote the transference of skills; information and knowledge from the teachers to students but the overall makeover of an individual to become educated (Dave, 2014; Duguid & Pawson, 1998; Erickson, 1987). An educated citizen is likely to act efficiently, perceive accurately and think clearly to accomplish goals and aspirations (Lamidi & Williams, 2014). With education playing an integral role in the industrial revolution in the 1750s, education has continued to play significant roles and has socializing effects such as instilling work discipline; preventing working class crimes, strikes, rebellion; and playing roles in the imposition of cultural hegemony by the middle and upper classes of people (Mitch, 2018).

The motive of the Junior high school (J. H. S) education is to prepare the children and young adults for further and lifelong education. Even though formal education has been universally accepted as a human right, countries such as the Japan, Germany, and the USA had made the initial level of education free and at the same time compulsory (Dave, 2014). Ghana reached a similar staggering feat as in Japan and Germany in the early 2000s when the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) was established. However, one of the possible impediments to the full realization of the motive behind the FCUBE is the absenteeism. In Ghana, some of the reasons for students' absenteeism in the JHS range from school-related to home-related issues (Alhassan, 2018; Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009; Ananga, 2011) Absenteeism is a social problem in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality.

From local knowledge and experience as a resident and a teacher at the basic education level in the municipality, many children of school-going age are found loitering around during school hours. Mostly, many of these students are seen taking part in the illegal mining activities in the municipality.

Background to the Study

Children's education is one of the essential components of every nation-state and lays the foundation for future development and innovations. According to Vera-Toscano, Rodrigues, and Costa (2017) educational attainment improves social outcomes by preparing the citizenry for active participation and in both short and long terms facilitates social stability. Therefore, the benefits of education transcend beyond monetary terms. Education contributes to the socialization of people in the modern societies by enhancing the social fabric and thereby imparting values, beliefs, attitudes and norms that govern human interactions (Da Costa, Rodrigues, & Weber, 2014; Helliwell & Putnam, 1999). These benefits help people to fit appropriately into the modern social systems.

There are other benefits derived from education regarding human development. That is, people who go through any form of education build self-confidence and esteem (Bhardwaj, 2016). Also, talents are unearthed when people go through education. This to some extent, facilitates skills improvement through further coaching and mentoring (Bhardwaj, 2016). Many critical decisions taken in life are mostly influenced by education. For instance, education may affect people's life choices most importantly, the involvement in lifestyle which improves or worsen their situations. Research has shown that in South Africa, young women who have had high school

education are less likely to be infected with HIV AIDS as compared to those who could not graduate from high school (Pettifor, Levandowski, MacPhail, Padian, Cohen & Rees, 2008). Also, education is likely to positively influence the choice of consuming healthy food and promotes good health choices (Michels, Bloom, Riccardi, Rosner & Willett, 2008).

On a national scale, nurturing children in an education system is a long-term project in that the benefits are not physically felt instantly but in the future. These could be in the form of national economic growth through increased productivity. Productivity increases with education and training (Hava & Erturgut, 2010). According to Hava and Erturgut (2010), the literature on the nexus between education and economic advancement illustrates that financial growth is being augmented more in states where the educational attainment is higher than in counties with a lower level of educational attainment. The influence of education on economic exceeds physical capital when a trained workforce and potentials of the economy are considered. The economic benefits of education can be cyclical. Whereas education could improve productivity and economic growth, the benefits from economic growth could in the long run also improve education. For this reason, education growth has been recognized as a pillar behind nation building (Neamtu, 2015).

Many factors are likely to impede the benefits of education, and hence the benefits such as improved living standards of citizens are not materialised in many societies due to lower levels of education and illiteracy. These include but not limited to low investment in education, children's apathy towards

education, lack of personnel to educate the children or people, and the problem of absenteeism and school dropout.

The menace of absenteeism to students' education development is an issue of concern in every community. With a high level of absenteeism, education as a precondition for socio-economic development and improvement in the quality of life may not be able to serve its purpose. Absenteeism affects students' education in many ways, and the factors which contribute to this are many, interrelated and complex. No single most important factor accounts for absenteeism according to Ampiah and Adu-Yeboah (2009). Factors such as child neglect, poverty, poor health condition and lack of motivation have been found to contribute to absenteeism (Badu, Opoku & Amponsah, 2017; King, Dewey & Borish, 2015). Many short and long-term effects of students' absenteeism are likely to occur both on the individual and the society at large.

In the Asante Akyem Central Municipality, many factors may have contributed to the current absenteeism among J. H. S. students. As found in other locations in Ghana, the factors could include poverty, peer pressure, child labour, poor parental control, parental deficiency of importance in formal education, and insistent learning difficulties (Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009; Ananga, 2011) Whereas the factors found in Ghana and other parts of the world may apply to the problem of absenteeism in the Asante Akyem Central, they must be broadly tested in for generalisation. The motive of this study was to find out the nexus between selected factors or variables and absenteeism. In the Asante Akyem Central Municipality, the relationship between students' absenteeism and parents' education level, parents' economic status, students'

academic performance, and family ties are not known and well-understood. Specifically, this study would seek to establish the nexus between selected variables (parents' education level, parents' economic status, students' academic performance, and family ties) and students' absenteeism.

Statement of the Problem

The effects of absenteeism have been well researched and established both in the developed and developing world. Factors such as the economic (measured in income monetary terms), social (measured in family ties and cohesion), students' towards apathy, lack of motivation, ignorance about the need for education and absenteeism induced by parents are found to be some of the major factors accounting for absenteeism in children of school-going age (Balkis, Arslan & Duru, 2016; Sahin, Arseven & Kiliç, 2016). Absenteeism could be a bane to the child's educational development in that it is likely to deprive students' continuous attention to following the curriculum and school's syllabi. Continuous attendance on all school days could increase the performance of students in standardized tests and examinations (Aucejo & Romano, 2016). Similarly, Gershenson, Jackowitz and Brannegan (2017) have posited that absenteeism affects students' academic achievements, especially among students from low-income families. Whether is through the fault of students to engage in absenteeism or not, this problem could deprive them of high academic achievements and hence a very high tendency of not achieving the overall goal of higher education.

Even though the effects of these factors are well established through scientific research, most of them are location-specific (Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009; Baker, Sigmon & Nugent., 2001; Bonilla, Kehl, Kwong,

Morphew, Kachru & Jones, 2005; Currie, Hanushek, Kahn, Neidell & Rivkin 2009; Fentiman, Hall & Bundy, 1999; Rumberger & Larson, 1998) ; Kearney, 2008a; Meng, Babey, & Wolstein, 2012 and it would be relevant to establish how the Asante Akyem central case compares with the facts about absenteeism. Most of these researches establishing the causes of absenteeism have taken place in developed countries. Also, studies that took place in Ghana have their theoretical background literature cited from studies that have taken place in the developed world (Ampiah & AduYeboah, 2009; Ananga, 2011; Fentiman et al., 1999; Obeng-Denteh, Yeboah, Sam & Mohkah, 2011; Sarpong, Owusu-Dabo, Kreuels, Fobil, Segbaya, Amoyaw & May, 2015). Despite these previous studies of the causes of absenteeism, Gershenson, Jackowitz and Brannegan, (2017) have argued that even though the phenomenon of absenteeism is significant, it has been understudied and hence there is the need for more studies to be able to build a substantial theoretical justification for why some factors are more linked to absenteeism. Furthermore, Asante Akyem Central in Ghana has different demographic characteristics than locations such as in the developed countries and hence what might be right in these countries could be different in Ghana. The socio-economic features like employment and income levels, the importance attached to education, and family structures might not be the same, and hence the problem of absenteeism has to be studied in different locations to be able to generalise about some of the factors contributing to absenteeism.

From my observation and experience as a teacher in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality, many children of school going age loiter about during school hours, especially Junior High School students. These could have

impacts on the future of these students and the country as a whole. Some of the potential impacts of the students' absenteeism, in the long run, could include dropping-outs of school and potentially engaging in social vices such as gambling, stealing, and smoking. These are social vices witnessed on a daily basis in the municipality. Also, even though there have not yet been empirically established in the municipality, most of the absentees are not likely to progress on the educational ladder to develop their skills.

Furthermore, the absentees may, therefore, become unemployed. Though, recently there have been guidance and counselling coordinators in all schools in the municipality, educating students about the need for education, yet, the problem of absenteeism continues in the Junior High School in the Asante Akyem Municipality.

Purpose of the Study

The resolution of the study is to ascertain how selected variables (known to have affected students' school attendance) relate to students' absenteeism in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality.

The specific aims and objectives of the study are to:

1. Find out the relationship between parents' level of education and their children's absenteeism.
2. Determine the relationship between parents' economic status and their children's absenteeism.
3. Analyse the relationship between family ties and students' absenteeism.

4. Determine the relationship between students' academic performance (measured in average marks) and their absenteeism.

Research Questions

Based on the problem identified above, the following research questions have been stated to guide the study. The research questions have been divided into quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative:

1. How do parents' levels of education relate to their children's absenteeism?
2. How do parents' economic status relate to their children's absenteeism?
3. What is the relationship between family ties and students' absenteeism?
4. What is the relationship between students' academic performance (measured in average marks) and their absenteeism?

Qualitative:

1. How do parents, teachers and community leaders perceive the influence of parents' level of education on students' absenteeism?
2. How do parents, teachers and community leaders perceive the influence of parents' economic status on students' absenteeism?
3. How do parents, teachers and community leaders perceive the influence of family ties on students' absenteeism?

4. How do parents, teachers and community leaders perceive the influence of students' academic performance on students' absenteeism term?

Research Hypotheses

The study is guided by the following research hypotheses:

1. H0: There would be no statistically significant relationship between mothers' level of income and their children's absenteeism.
H1: There would be a statistically significant relationship between mothers' level of income and their children's absenteeism.
2. H0: There would be no statistically significant relationship between fathers' level of income and their children's absenteeism.
H1: There would be a statistically significant relationship between fathers' level of income and their children's absenteeism.
3. H0: There is no statistically significant relationships between persons' students are staying with and their absenteeism.
H1: There would be a statistically significant relationship between persons' students are staying with and their absenteeism.
4. H0: There would be no statistically significant relationship between students' academic performance (Mathematics, English and Science collectively) and their absenteeism.

H1: There would be a statistically significant relationship between students' academic performance (Mathematics, English and Science collectively) and their absenteeism.

Significance of the Study

In Ghana, studies on factors influencing absenteeism among JHS students remain scant. This knowledge gap if not address may slow down the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This is because part of the efforts to achieving this educational goal by 2030 is a study that examines factors contributing to absenteeism among JHS students. Further, this study may come out with recommendations for implementations by education stakeholders that may be relevant to the attainment of sustainable development goal 4. In view of this, inadequate knowledge on factors influencing absenteeism among JHS students in Ghana may delay the implementation of education intervention that aims at reducing absenteeism among JHS students in Ghana. The empirical gap identified and the potential of this study to contribute to the realisation of sustainable development goal 4 constitute the rationale of the study. Apart from this, the study may add to the scant literature on factors explaining absenteeism among JHS students in Ghana which further serves a rationale of the study.

Specifically, the findings of the study will contribute to the literature on the dynamics of students' absenteeism. Results from this work will broaden the knowledge base in the area of students' absenteeism. For instance, with the results from this research and other works, variables such as incomes could be

used to predict the rate at which students would attend school should their families' incomes reduce or increase. The study will guide Asante Akyem Central Municipal Education Office to reduce students' absenteeism especially those at the J. H. S level. Secondly, it is hoped that school administrators, parents, NGOs will use the outcomes of this research to address issues concerning students' absenteeism. Specifically, the socioeconomic variables being explored in this study could provide information for NGOs and governmental institutions to determine the need for social and economic services for needy students. Moreover, the findings would guide teachers to modify their teaching methods to create a congenial atmosphere in the school to motivate students to go to school always to reduce the incidence of absenteeism.

Delimitation

This study took place within the Asante Akyem Central Municipality. The study centred on how the socioeconomic factors, namely: parents' income, family ties, students' academic achievement, parents' education levels relate to the junior high school students' absenteeism. Even though there are many factors accounting for students' absenteeism which could have been tested in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality, I chose to deal with a few selected factors. Also, the search for factors accounting for absenteeism was above the scope of this study and hence any mention of the causes of absenteeism was for the purpose of situating the study in the broader literature on absenteeism.

Limitations

Regarding the limitations, the research encountered the following setbacks. Due to resource constraints, the study was not able to cover many schools as possible and this brought about an unfair representation of the schools in the Municipality. This problem was dealt with by using random sampling methods to give every school an equal chance of being selected. Also, students that participated were given an equal chance of being selected. Again, the study was limited to only one Municipality in Ghana limiting possible generalization of the study findings. In view of this, inclusion of more junior high school students in other Municipalities of Ghana could have broadened the scope and improved possibly the generalization and representativeness of the study findings. However, the findings could be generalized among junior high school students who share similar socio-demographic characteristics with the participants who were involved in this study. Further, due to the descriptive survey used, the researcher could not determine causal relationship between and among the study variables. Regardless of these limitations, the objectives of the study were achieved.

Definition of Terms

Absenteeism: In this study, absenteeism was defined as the number of times/days a junior school student was absent from a school within a term taking evidence from the school register/terminal report. That is a situation whereby a junior high school student misses school for at least one day in a term.

Junior High School Students: In this study, J. H. S. students were defined as those who have reached JHS 1, 2 and 3 in their education.

Factors: In this study, factors were defined as any variable such as parents' economic status, level of education of parent's, family ties and pupil's academic performance that are capable of contributing to students' absenteeism.

Academic Performance: The academic performance was defined as the marks scored by students in individual subjects such as Mathematics, English and Science and the average score in all the three subjects with records from their terminal reports.

Family ties: In this study, family ties were defined as the relationship between students' and those they are staying with. It was measured specifically as the number of times parents/guardians visit students in school, number of times parents/guardians attend PTA meeting as well as the relationship with person students are staying with.

Level of Education: In this study, level of education was defined as the academic achievement of students' parents (both mother and father) in terms of schooling.

Economic Status: In this study, the economic status of parents was defined based on the monthly income and the nature of occupation of students' parents.

Organisation of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one focused on the introduction and background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives/questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitation, definition of terms and organization of the study. Chapter two focused on literature review, the research made by other authors

related to the research. Chapter three consisted of the methodology of this research work such as the sample and sampling procedure, research design, study area, and instruments for the data collection. Chapter four consisted of the results and discussions. Chapter five included the summary of findings, recommendations, and conclusion.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two consists of the conceptual understanding and framework. They were written under the sub-topics as follows conceptual review, theoretical framework, empirical review, conceptual framework and summary of literature review. The conceptual review includes conceptualisation of absenteeism, skills and adolescent development factors that encourage attendance, problems associated with students' absenteeism, background causes of pupil absenteeism, importance of attendance, effectiveness of school attendance policies, interventions to combat pupil absenteeism and theoretical framework. The chapter also discusses the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the study. The empirical review section includes parents' economic status and absenteeism, students' academic performance and absenteeism, family ties, parents' education level and absenteeism.

Conceptual Review

Conceptualisation of Absenteeism

Kansas State conceptualizes absenteeism as missing three un-exempted days consecutively, five un-exempted days in a term, or seven un-exempted days in an academic year (Kansas State Legislature, 2012). Each state in the United States has obligatory attendance regulations, making K-12 school turnout compulsory; yet the degree of power of these laws differ from state to state (Nolan, Cole, Wroughton, Clayton-Code, & Riffe, 2013). It is substantial that absenteeism by students can turn into an issue regardless of age. More so, Chang and Romero (2008) indicated the significance of recognizing “chronic

early absence” or “Students missing a protracted spell of school when both exempted and un-exempted nonattendances are considered”. Taylor, & Nelms, (2006) reported that truancy is absenteeism that is sanctioned by guardians since the school decides the legitimacy of excuses for absenteeism, not the guardians. Since the meanings of truancy are diverse and conflicting amongst states, researchers and studies the concept this research adopted was "pupil absenteeism." The term incorporated all students' absence, regardless of whether sanctioned or un-exempted. This term fits the setting of the fact that the issues peculiar to our area are students absenting school with parents' awareness (and regularly support) that may not constitute the average "truant" umbrella.

Skills and adolescent development factors that promote attendance

Non-cognitive skills and teenage growth elements are imperative when debating pupil attendance. Students who are constantly absent might not have had prospects to cultivate non-cognitive skills that will enable attending school stress-free and further gratifying. Students who experience extreme absenteeism may likewise share early youthful advancement factors that make identifying with their companions and taking part in their activities progressively difficult. One youthful improvement factor that may add to students encountering extreme truancy is their alliance with a friend and associates.

Pubescent connection with friends is regularly seen as a critical component of development. Investigations demonstrate that as youngsters develop, they start to differentiate from their families and become increasingly connected with their friend (Brown, Mounts, Lamborn & Steinberg, 1993).

Teenage contemporary groups are instituted on numerous things, however, are frequently contingent on shared characteristics and safeties of students (Brown et al., 1993). Teenagers who are associated with clusters who partake in degenerate conduct, for example, playing hooky, drug abuse, and alcoholism are bound to take practice such deviant behaviours. Actually, sociological variables were identified in one research as perhaps the most underlying indicator of individual students' conduct (Dolcini & Adler, 1994). If students have resilient influence on associates who are most probable to miss school, that pupil will conceivably have a more note worthy issue with truancy. Brown et al. (1993) mention that this connotes not those parents has absolutely no influence over teenager's behaviour. Predominantly, guardians have previously formed the outlook of the adolescent, and that traits and those qualities impact the company the child chooses as a teenager. It additionally makes sense that if students are entangled with friends at school, they are more averse to connect with these groups.

Research defines pupil involvement as an obligation to school, which embrace partaking in school setting (Lovelace, Reschly & Appleton, 2017) It is essential to cogitate the contribution of compassionate adult relations in the existence of students, comprising their resolution to associate with deleterious or progressive peer groups. Although teenagers may individuate from the parental and family norms, there still exist the opportunity to care for adolescents— mostly at the school, to have a progressive influence on kids.

Non-cognitive abilities or elements are conceptualized as intellectually and professionally pertinent aptitudes and qualities that are not precisely scholarly or investigative. They comprise a diversity of disposition and

inspirational behaviours and outlooks that expedite operating effectively in school (Rosen, Glennie, Dalton, Lennon & Bozick, 2010). Pupil truancy in certain students might constitute an indication they lack the non-cognitive qualities such as tenacity, inspiration or self-instruction repeatedly regarded as essential for accomplishment in school and postsecondary schooling and the workplace. Investigation has revealed that pupil attitude and self-conviction impact their behaviour and their educational realization (Krumm, Lipnevich, Schmidt-Atzert, & Bühner, 2012).

Explorations have demonstrated progressive outcomes of school stratagems intended at plummeting absenteeism by enhancing non-cognitive capabilities like self-assurance and enthusiasm (Holmlund & Silva, 2014). Also, Research has revealed nexus between non-cognitive abilities and students' accomplishment; hitherto an extra authoritative association is being established amongst non-cognitive capabilities and postsecondary and occupation outcomes for students (Rosen et al., 2010). One of such studies proposes that non-cognitive behaviours are vital, or especially critical, then intellectual behaviour when it relates to post-secondary accomplishment (Lleras, 2008). Enthusiasm and pupil assiduousness and how these impact attendances are imperative capabilities for fulfilment in the office. One study specified that scholars had expended time guessing that school absenteeism might designate a disposition to job absenteeism. Lounsbury, Steel, Loveland, and Gibson (2004) indicated that conceivably, adolescents proving tendencies for truancy developed into adults through an inclination for absenteeism from work".

Revelations through research demonstrate those non-cognitive abilities are mostly acquired and strengthened during childhood (Holmlund & Silva, 2014). Age is imperative and children's character related factors may influence their accomplishment as early as preschool (Krumm et al., 2012).

Problems associated with students' absenteeism

Pupil absenteeism might influence all facets of an educational system and the pupil who is incessantly missing could lag behind, scoring terrible scores, and an expanded danger of dropping out according to Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention (n.d). The danger of dropping out is connected to adverse self-recognition or low confidence, low yearnings, being exhausted or distanced by the school, and seeking after choices, for example, taking employment or helping families (Shannon & Bylsma, 2003). Different students might be affected by an impeded learning disorder when instructors are attempting to catch up for interminably truant students (Chang & Romero, 2008). Principals, instructors and school office staff might devote an extreme proportion of their day phoning guardians or discovering those students who are repetitively missing (Maynard, Salas-Wright, Vaughn & Peters, 2012). The society is affected legitimately by the probability of growing crime, economically by less qualified workers, and troubled sociologically by the growth in social services (Maynard et al., 2012).

A significant collection of the investigations carried out on pupil absenteeism centred on the uniformity of absentee students. The awareness became positioned on how the students were identical, supposing a few commonalities among the scholars that made all of them absent from school. These studies centre in most cases on the poor socioeconomic traits of pupil

are who absent from school (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Centre for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA, 2006). Students from low-pay family units miss school for some reasons including; more noteworthy medical conditions, transportation issues, or non-participation in early childhood schooling (Chang & Romero, 2008). The report of Shannon and Bylsma (2003) revealed that students who originate from deprived families are multiple times bound to drop out of school than students from progressively well-to-do families. Ready (2010) gives a measurement with respect to the connection between low financial status and pupil absenteeism by expressing that, contrasted with increasingly prosperous students, children living in destitution are twenty-five-parent bound to miss at least three days of school for every month. Also, Maynard et al. (2012) repudiated this popular conviction and rather considered the diversity of truant teenagers and provided proof to conclude that truant teenagers are diverse and fit into various classifications. This research was undertaken utilizing both quantifiable information from the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health; and subjective (qualitative) information utilizing dialogues with an arbitrary example of teenagers who partook in the study. This is basic in our region on the grounds that Asante Akyem Central students who battle with persistent truancy are diverse in several territories. Students in Asante Akyem Central who absent themselves from school are both from prosperous and low financial family units, they differ in age, and in degree of parental commitment. The students with high incidence of truancy all have varied purposes. From the start, this idea could be demoralizing in light of the fact that the students included appear to be from every unique social status, have

different degrees of help at home, and appear to share little in practicality. Locating an operational intercession that is probably going to fit for all students may be increasingly troublesome when a school is managing a wide range of them.

Background causes of students' absenteeism

Pupil's absenteeism is a problematic when it culminates into persistency. It is cognised belief that situations will materialize that will compel students to miss school. In any case, it is when pupil's truancy is viewed as permissible and its prolonged existence is a concern both for students and for schools. Roby (2004) says that, great environment, excursions, and pressure from friends are reasons that influence day by day average participation than diseases and family deaths. This implies it is not the incidental real absenteeism that is influencing students, however the negligent day or hour that is taken from the school period. Numerous guardians do not comprehend how swiftly a couple of unlucky deficiencies in a month could affect a pupil's learning or ability to stay cognizant of what's happening in school (Chang & Romero, 2008). Instruction is a platform where students must acclimatize early ideas to progress onto increasingly in-depth material, and pupil absenteeism could make students pass up significant bits of structure that framework basically on the grounds that they are not in participation at school.

Importance of attendance

Attendance is significant on the grounds that students who have better attendance will in general improve grades, have better results towards the

finish of education, and obtain higher on state administered assessments (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Lamdin, 1996; Nolan et al., 2013; Ready, 2010) At the point when every single other factor is held steady, Lamdin (1996) reports that good attendance impacts student execution. Balfanz and Byrnes (2012) emphasize this argument by depicting the expansion in the accomplishment gap at all degrees of schooling amongst students who battle with truancy and students who go to class. An investigation done in fourth, 6th, and 12th in Ohio indicated modest positive connections between pupil accomplishment and pupil's school attendance (Roby, 2004). Students with low incidence of truancy regularly score preferable on state sanctioned tests over students with high paces of non-attendance (Sheldon, 2007). Understudies who went to class routinely recorded 15 to 20 higher on government sanctioned tests. The authors detailed that, greater accomplishment gap than the one isolating deprived students and English language students from well-performing companion groups (Sparks, 2010). More so, Gottfried (2009) contends that it bodes well for students with better turnout to frequently encounter more noteworthy academic achievement carefully upon the more prominent measure of seat time equalling more noteworthy presentation to scholarly content.

Guardians are knowledgeable of the significance of attendance. Practically all guardians need their children to excel in school (Mapp, 2003; Sheldon & Epstein, 2004). Albeit numerous guardians discover an incentive in school attendance, a similar report found that numerous guardians of students battling with high incidence of pupil truancy were more averse to think their children's' security was in danger on the chance that they absented themselves

from school. Dalziel and Henthorne (2005) likewise revealed that fewer guardians of kids with school participation issues accepted that students who did not go routinely would do seriously in their homework, and also, a slighter extent of these guardians/vocations accepted that youngsters required capabilities. Plainly there is much work to do in speaking with guardians the estimation of school participation.

Another basic bit of the significance of attendance identifies with the poor decisions students can make without much of an effort when they skip school. Students who are encountering exorbitant absenteeism regularly are seen as bound to create substance misuse issues, experience teenage pregnancy, and have family issues (Fantuzzo, Grim, & Hazan, 2005; Sheldon & Epstein, 2004). Thornberry, Henry, Ireland & Smith (2010) give intuition into the association between truancy and substance abuse; the results recommend that truancy is an especially striking indicator of teenage substance usage. Not exclusively is truancy related with expanded chances of commencement of substance misuse, yet once a juvenile starts substance use, truancy is additionally identified with a significant acceleration of utilization.

Students who experience intemperate truancy are frequently more probable than students who normally attend school to dropout from school (Sheldon & Epstein, 2004). Furthermore, Sheldon and Epstein (2004) likewise portray the exploration that demonstrates that frequently drop-outs start showing long haul examples of practices that start removing them from schooling at early ages. Frequently the examples of heightening pupil truancy throughout the long stretches of school is a pointer that students are on track to quitting school when contrasted with turnout incidence of students who

proceed to graduate (Sparks, 2010). Absenteeism is portrayed as an issue that influences various degrees of society according to Fantuzzo et al. (2005). Pupil non-appearance could be portrayed a similar way. At the point when students do not attend class, it might prompt bigger, unintended results incorporating inconvenience in the network, for example, vandalism and expanded crime, substance misuse, quitting school, and poor employment results sometime down the road (Fantuzzo et al., 2005).

The significance of going to class is manifold, however it fundamentally includes the thoughts that students' non-attendance may influence students' accomplishment and that unnecessary pupil absenteeism may generate issues for families, communities and schools when students are absent (Fantuzzo et al., 2005; Sheldon & Epstein 2004). School attendance is significant in light of the fact that it bears students chances to get familiar with the ideas and abilities that will enable them to look for extra tutoring or preparation toward the completion of school so as to pick work. School likewise serves the significant undertaking of giving a sheltered spot to kids.

The effectiveness of school attendance policies

School attendance strategies are staples of pupil's manuals nationwide. The nature of composed attendance strategies may differ, however it is a typical practice to make and actualize an attendance arrangement. Attendance approaches can be extensive and deep-rooted. Guardians now and then need assistance interpreting the language identified with attendance approaches. Keeping guardians educated on attendance approaches and desires was seen as one of three actions in the investigation that had the most powerful capacity to lower incidence of non-attendance (Sheldon & Epstein, 2004). This was an

amazement to the scientists, seeing as participants at first revealed that arranging guardians to class desires and arrangements about turnout was broadly executed, yet was seen to be amid the slightest compelling actions for enhancing attendance.

Additional prospective issue identified with school turn out approaches is the purpose and focal point of the turnout arrangements. A greater part of attendance arrangements is centred on truancy and the corrective estimates schools take to shield students from being absent. However, the finding from the centre for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA (2006) clarified it as a "deterrence" or discipline. Suspension for absenteeism may merely compound and increase the sentiments students have that they are not accommodated in school and it might intensify withdrawal conduct and persuade understudies they don't have a place in school by any means, driving them quit school (Shannon & Bylsma, 2006).

Numerous strategies in schools' gauge attendance into record with regard to evaluating (no make-up work for un-exempted absence) or the arrangements illuminate lost benefits for students who have unexcused absenteeism. Corrective arrangements are standard nationwide. Reardon (2008) establish that the predominant incessant sort of attendance arrangement in Florida was the reformatory strategy. However, numerous students who battle with pupil absenteeism are youthful and are not really seen as truant or missing without reason. The strategies set out the raising results of truancy without portraying why attendance is necessary. The approaches neglect to examine the possibility that attendance is relevant and are basic to pupil achievement even in pre-school or first grade. It is anything but difficult to

perceive any reason why numerous guardians don't trust a couple of absenteeism a month can signify an accomplishment issue for their youngster, if that isn't clarified by the school or appeared with the attendance approach. Tragically, the writing is evident that school attendance arrangements as composed are frequently ineffectual in light of the fact that they are receptive. The strategies possibly kick in when understudies have been missing unnecessarily. The most inadequate approaches appear to just address understudies who are truant or missing without reason and do not mull over the possibility of exorbitant student non-appearance that is pardoned by guardians (Centre for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA, 2006). School attendance strategies will keep on being less powerful than they might be pending schools start to utilize the approaches as proactive and safeguard instruments to diminish pupil truancy. The investigation is inadequate with regard to what makes an approach viable. Reardon (2008) found no critical connection between the kind of approach actualized and the arrangement's adequacy crosswise over sixty-seven regions in Florida. Furthermore, Shannon and Bylsma (2003) recognise there is an association amongst school attendance and order approaches and students who dropout; yet the examination alerts that quitting is a manifold subject and ought not be credited to just one reason. That review does not explicitly express every attendance arrangement that may be compelling for every school. Certain school regions have taken an alternate edge to attempt to move away from reformatory estimates that reason students to absent school (suspension) if they are as of now absenting themselves from school in the first place.

There are additionally schools that have boosted attendance (Vaishnav, 2005). The motivating forces incorporating gift vouchers for impeccable attendance to money for perfect attendance. In a study conducted by Kube and Ratigan (1992) they examine the significance of designing a framework where students screen themselves and permit that impetuses are a decent method to accomplish that self-checking. There is no all-inclusive rule for the best sort of approach, how to make a decent attendance strategy, or how to impart the arrangement to guardians. Arrangements shift such a great amount of dependent on various school elements and it shows up there is nobody size fits all strategy that will work for each school in the writing. Albeit numerous examinations on what not or approaches to make arrangements progressively viable, there is miniature research tending to ways for schools to make powerful participation strategies (Centre for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA, 2006). The examination that speaks to the adequacy of attendance arrangements is clear.

Attendance approaches must set clear models and elevated standards for students so as to enable students to create self-restraint (Railsback, 2004). The approaches ought to urge students to visit, as opposed to simply be "zero-resilience" reformatory arrangements (Kube & Ratigan, 1992; Railsback, 2004). The approach should be plainly imparted to the two understudies and guardians and reliably authorized (Kube & Ratigan, 1992; Railsback, 2004). A definitive objective of a viable attendance approach is to change the conduct of the incessantly missing student, not to rebuff them.

Interventions to combat students' absenteeism

The studies connected with pupil absenteeism originated from two fundamental sources: the adolescent equity framework and educational diaries. It is basic schools discover positive intercessions to battle pupil absenteeism, as a result of the consequence for students when we do not discover remedies. It starts with schools and training, yet the adolescent equity frameworks must be included when schools are not ready to discover solutions. This subject is one in which a lot is on the line, frequently affecting and influencing students long after they have left school. Pupil truancy is an issue that is hard to change, but there are mediations in the literature that may prompt a reduction in student absenteeism. Interventions frequently work best when focused towards young students before the truancies become constant or before truancy challenge become endemic and are progressively hard to adjust (OJDP, n.d.). According to Cole (2011), one case of such a course is the Check and Connect program. The Check and Connect is a mediation program intended for basic and mid school students; envisioned to have the propensities for remaining in school so as to expand graduation incidences. As stated by Cole (2011), key highlights of the program incorporate affiliation building, repetitive observing of alterable pointers, individualized and timely mediations, long-term duty, inspiration and coherence with regards to instruction, critical thinking, and association with learning and schooling. The Check and Connect mediation give approaches to students to interface with basic grown-ups in the educational system and the network so as to consider them responsible for their participation.

Attendance mediations regularly use impetuses for good attendance. Impetuses can be emotional or material. Emotional enticements are regularly furnished in basic and middle schools with the utilization of acknowledgment at gatherings for perfect attendance rates. Material motivators, for example, pens or pencils, stickers, or little toys are some of the time utilized in tandem with passionate impetuses so as to advance positive attendance propensities (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Cole, 2011). Also, Cole (2011) explicitly found that impetuses work for basic students. In this investigation, students who went to class, and had impeccable attendance were perceived and celebrated. In an alternate motivation program pupil who met attendance objectives, or indicated quantifiable enhancement was compensated for that improvement. The reward/motivator strategy has been most used to battle constant non-attendance at the basic level before students start indicating instances of absenteeism (Cole, 2011). Understudy truancy and the intercessions to address it might revolve as students arrive at secondary school. One mediation technique referenced is to give a guide to students who present hazard factors for non-attendance (OJDP, n.d.; Cole, 2011). Guides help understudies interface with school since they present a minding, positive association with a grown-up in the structure. Coaches additionally can be basic intending to alterable practices right on time, before non-appearance turns into an issue (Cole, 2011).

There exists a crucial association among home and school elements in counteracting truancy and distinguishing those students in danger for absenteeism (Mapp, 2003). The more intently guardians are associated with the school; they set exclusive standards, go to class occasions and parent-

teacher sessions and have correspondence with educators and school authorities the more probable their youngster is to grow great participation designs (Sheldon, 2007).

Community and family contribution in education is additionally connected to enhancements in turnout (Michael, Dittus, & Epstein, 2007). According to Sheldon (2007), schools endeavour to incorporate families and communities regularly not coordinated. Family, community and schools are regularly neglected, or connections are made sporadically. Sheldon (2007) discovered that when a solid programme of the school, community and family projects were executed in Ohio evaluation school students' turnout was enhanced. This was through furnishing interested schools with devices and rules for building up, keeping up, and harmonizing school and family associations. The institutions in this investigation rely not only on individuals from the school to associate guardians to the school. Rather, the schools made activity groups and boards of trustees that concentrated on interfacing families in the school and the school's mission (Sheldon, 2007).

Pragmatic investigations that concentrated on pupil absenteeism notice the imperative connection between schools, community and guardians (Chang & Romero 2013; Cole, 2011; Sheldon, 2007). This connection is basic to any intervention made to battle pupil absenteeism. This connection has been examined as a potential asset to help those students who are incessantly missing and absent. Chang and Romero (2013) noted that ceaseless absenteeism diminishes when schools and networks effectively impart reliably to all students and their folks and connect with families when their kids start to show examples of unnecessary absenteeism.

School absenteeism has been a longstanding problem which continues to concern educators, parents, policy makers and society as a whole. Whereas an occasional absenteeism has not been so problematic, excessive absenteeism is an issue of concern as it is linked with many societal problems such as drug addiction and violence, irresponsible sexual behaviour, suicide and teenage pregnancy (Kearney, 2008a; Romero & Lee, 2007; Romero & Lee, 2008; Sugrue, Zuel & LaLiberte, 2016). Students who engage in protracted school absenteeism are of many labels such as school rejection, school phobia, truancy, and absentee (Pellegrini, 2007). Such labels do not give a clear conceptualization of what absenteeism should be defined. For instance, the label 'school phobia' is a simplistic conceptualization in that absenteeism could be far from just a dislike for attending school. Students could have a great interest in attending school on every school day of the academic year; nonetheless, factors such as poverty, environmental and health factors could be impediments that stifle students' interests.

Absenteeism has been conceptualized as either taking a day off by students of highly intellectual profile among whom school non-attendance possess a structural problem which tangents extracurricular activities or irregular schooling and school aversion (Stamm, 2007). In contrast to this study, absenteeism is conceptualized as a mixture of the two streams of absenteeism identified by Stamm (2007) and does not specifically select a group of students who absent themselves from school. However, the reasons for absenteeism are taken into consideration, especially ones related to economic, family ties, and students' academic performance.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) aids as a hypothetical scheme for the study. The TPB was developed by a social psychologist (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB indicates that behavioural intention is the most significant predictor of behaviour. It helps to understand the linkage between behaviour, beliefs, attitudes, and intentions. Perceived behavioural control (PBC) as a domain under the TPB explains that an individual's expectation that the showcasing of behaviour is within ones' control. Intents are predicted by attitudes (which are a person's complete assessment of behaviour), distinctive norms (represent a person's belief about whether others think they should partake in the behaviour) and the magnitude to which a person recognizes that conduct is under his/her control (Ajzen, 1991; Conner, 2010).

In the first place, attitude is a function of a person's key behavioural beliefs which denote perceived likely consequences of behaviour (e.g. my parents did not give me money so I will not go to school because If I go to school I will be hungry and I will lose concentration in class). Secondly, a subjective norm is a function of normative beliefs which denote perceptions about whether a person should participate in behaviour (e.g., my father said I should take care of my siblings at home, so I will not go to school) (Conner, 2010).

The central factor of the TPB is a person's intention to perform a given behaviour. These intentions are assumed to include the motivational factors that influence behaviour and the kind of effort they are putting in place to enable them to perform behaviour. It is known that some behaviours may, in fact, meet this requirement, the performance of most depends on at least some

degree of non-motivational and availability of needed resources (Ajzen, 1991). For instance, students may have the desire to go to school, but if their parents do not have money, they may be absent from school. One of the specific objectives of the study is to look at parents' economic status and students' absenteeism; therefore, with the application of the TPB in this study, I am able to compare my findings with the TPB.

The TPB is one of the well-known theories and is also familiar to many students, researchers, practitioners and policy makers (Sniehotta, Presseau, & Araujo-Soares, 2014). Also, it has widely been used in local and international studies. For instance, Nawaz et al. (2018) have used the TPB to determine factors including absenteeism among nursing students in Nigeria. Skoglund, Fernandez, Sherer, J. Coyle, Garey, Fleming and Sofjan (2020) also employed the TPB to evaluate factors that influence PharmD students' intention to attend lectures. The strength of the TPB is that it is able to explain factors influencing absenteeism among students using individual related factors. Since this study explores factors contributing to Junior High School Students' absenteeism in Asante Akyem Central Municipality. The TPB therefore, explains the need to adopt the TPB as a theoretical foundation for this study. However, weaknesses of TPB are as follows: first, it supposes that individual has acquired the opportunities and resources to be successful in performing the desired behaviour, regardless of the intention and; second, it does not take into consideration economic/resources factors may influence a person's intention to engage in a behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). In order to address the weaknesses associated with the TPB, the researcher considers how economic factors contribute to absenteeism among JHS students.

Conceptual Framework

Kearney (2008a) has proposed models for conceptualizing and dealing with absenteeism. It is recommended that models defining school absenteeism should be fluid and flexible and must change through time. A complex combination of intertwined factors may be responsible for school absenteeism, and hence conceptual models should account for changes in behaviour and attendance pattern. For instance, many children may exhibit different forms of absenteeism at a time or within a short period, which may include tardiness, skipping classes or complete absence from school. External factors such as parents-induced school absenteeism and the presence or absence of a bully in school must also be considered (Kearney, 2008b; Kearney & Graczyk, 2014). A clear distinction must be made between problematic and non-problematic school absenteeism (Kearney, 2008b), a conceptualization which is similar to that of Stamm (2007). With non-problematic absenteeism behaviour, students can self-correct and it includes when students miss a small amount of school time or when students are occasionally late for school. Problematic absenteeism, on the other hand is based on the number of school days missed within the academic year. Whereas the problematic absenteeism may seem reasonable in defining what should constitute absenteeism, it is problematic, conceptually, because every location has a different number of days that students should miss to fall into the problematic absenteeism category.

Figure 1 shows the possible or probable relationship between students' absenteeism and some of the factors (e.g., parents' level of education, economic status and students' academic performance and family ties).

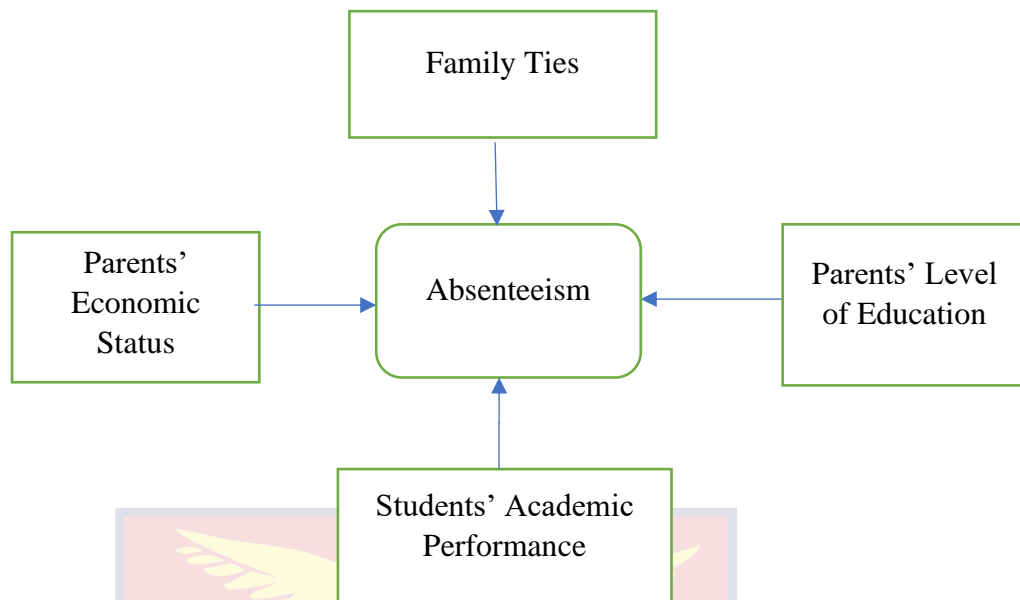


Figure 1: Conceptual framework explaining the factors influencing absenteeism among JHS students

Source: Author's construct, 2019

In the literature on absenteeism, there are many contributing factors connected to absenteeism. Some of these factors are reviewed through in the form of structural, thematic sub-topics even though the focus of this research could not cover all the factors in this framework, the review of literature centres on some of the factors identified by Balkis, Arslan, and Duru (2016). Factors such as child poverty (economic), students' academic performance, family ties, and parents' education level have been reviewed in connection with students' absenteeism. This review has helped to identify some of the flaws of the linkages made in the existing literature. I would be exploring the relationship between students' absenteeism and some of the factors (e.g., parents' level of education, economic status and students' academic performance and family ties) in the framework.

Empirical Review

Parents' economic status and absenteeism

The education literature strongly associates absenteeism with child poverty (D'Agostino, Day, Konty, Larkin, Saha & Wyka, 2018; Ingul, Klockner, Silverman & Nordahl, 2012; Morrissey, Hutchison & Winsler, 2014, Rotham, 2001; Romero & Lee, 2007; Tamiru, Argaw, Gerbaba, Ayana, Nigussie & Belachew, 2016; Zhang, 2003). However, child poverty would not exist without reference to the family within which a child is born. Three questions arise in associating child poverty with absenteeism. What is the economic status of the family of the poor child? Are the children poor because their families are poor? Are families neglecting their children to go into child poverty? In connecting school absenteeism to absenteeism, a clear conceptualization must be made about how child poverty is defined. In this study, child poverty would be theoretically defined in connection with how much families earn. Romero and Lee (2008) have posited that to reduce child poverty, family welfare issues should be addressed at early stages of pupil absenteeism due to poverty. In contrast to the poverty-absenteeism linkage, Reid (2008) has shown that students' dislike for school, difficulties faced at home, and psychological difficulties with schooling are some of the contributing factors to the menace of absenteeism even if there are financial resources supporting students to achieve academic goals. 'Difficulties at home' is vague and hence child poverty could be substituted into it.

According to Ekstrand (2015), some factors go beyond economic measures that contributed to how well students attend school. Powers that attract students to class are an inclination of school achievement attained by

competencies, the probability of bonding with grown-ups, and a school atmosphere that students consider positive (Ekstrand, 2015). Some of these factors are not well known in the literature but emerging as very important factors contributing to students' absenteeism. For instance, in seven selected municipalities in Norway, health reasons emerged as the major factors contributing to students' absenteeism even though about 6.2% of students reported that they absent themselves from school because they are simply truants and could not attribute their absenteeism to any factor. Pilkington and Piersel (1991) have recommended that the attention of researchers should be shifted to the school environment and personnel and their contribution to students' school attendance or refusal behaviour. This gives an alternative view of the contributing factors of absenteeism as issues which are not exogenous to the school environment but could be something related to how unpleasant, unsatisfying, and hostile the school environment is.

Students' academic performance and Absenteeism

Whereas the academic literature on how absenteeism affects students' academic performance has been well researched, much has not been done on the how students performance influences absenteeism. For instance, it has been found that absences from class are associated with lower testing performance (Gottfried, 2015; Gottfried & Kirksey, 2017). This is an indication that to pass some test students must participate in all classes fully. Similar to this is the participation identification model which focuses on students schooling involvement. Theorists assert that the likelihood of a youngster completing her or his 12-year compulsory education depends on her or his participation in school-relevant activities (Finn, 1989). This helps the

students to establish a sense of belongingness and identification with the school. However, Gottfried (2009) has identified two forms of non-participation/non-attendance in class which have distinct impacts on students' performance. These include students with excused absence and students with unexcused absence and their differences in test performance. Students with excused absence or non-participation perform better in the test than students with an unexcused absence.

Whereas the assessment of students' academic achievement about their attendance of school is done to assess the relevance of punctuality in class, fewer research activities have been able to factor in how students perceive of their absenteeism and academic performance. Past and current studies have shown that students with a higher rate of absenteeism have a negative view about their academic ability and the vice versa (Balkis, Arslan & Duru, 2016; Corville-Smith, Ryan, Adams & Dalicandro, 1998; Reid, 1982; Southworth, 1992). Balkis et al. (2016) have shown that, the past academic performance affects students' school attendance negatively; on the other hand, students' school attendance affects academic achievements negatively.

Measuring and connecting the number of time students attend school to the test scores have been the orthodox way of finding the nexus between absenteeism and students' academic performance. However, this measure does not specifically touch on the method of surrogates for test marks and the number of time. The lack of clarity has been about whether or not to measure by the number of time per week, per month or year. Also, regarding measuring the test performance, there is not specificity as to which grades (standardized test grade, final exam grade or just average percentage score of all class

scores) to use. However, to fully assess the impacts of school attendance on the students' academic performance, the previous attendance for an academic year and the average final test scores of the same year could be an excellent way to measuring. It would be likely to do this through a cross-sectional study which assesses both averages of final grades for a year and school attendance for a year.

In their study on the impact of class absenteeism on student's academic performance using regression models, Ahmad, Ul-Saufie, Mohamed, Ahmat and Zahari (2018) revealed that there was a statistical difference between class attendance and academic performance. The same study reported a negative correction between absences from the class with the academic achievement.

Family ties, parents' education level, and absenteeism

The current education literature does not provide much information about how parents' level of education affects the punctuality of their children at school. However, parents' level of education could serve as a motivation factor for students in the school. Few relevant kinds of literature, even though not extensive regarding cases studies have shown that students whose parents have had a college education have a lower rate of school absenteeism (Balkis et al., 2016). Empirical evidence has shown that students who live with parents or at least one parent are more likely to attend school than students who are living with no parents at all (Henry, 2007; Yuksek & Solakoglu, 2016). With the current few numbers of studies in this area of research, it is therefore apparent that this research field is not well developed. The current literature throws more light on parents' education level, family ties, and their relevance in school attendance of their children. However, to be able to firmly

establish a relationship between families and parents' education and absenteeism, a broader empirical base is needed. There is a research gap that needs to be filled in this area of research. The current research would seek to add to the work by Balkis et al. (2016) to be able to establish a theoretical framework for future studies.

Going further, divorce has long been linked to behaviour problems, anxiety and depression in children. This is often because single-parent homes feature parents struggling with their own feelings of depression and anxiety, accomplishing household responsibilities previously held by two people and meeting more financial demands. Single parents often must take on more hours at work to meet financial responsibilities, which can lead to children feeling neglected and acting out, and cause them to experience the effects of economic instability mentioned above. However, according to Priscilla Comino, a researcher at the University of the Basque Country, it is not the divorce itself that affects children's behaviour so much as it is the way that parents handle the divorce. In cases where both parents mutually decided on the divorce and choose to co-parent, both making decisions and providing for the child, the negative effects of divorce are lessened (Henry, 2007; Yuksek & Solakoglu, 2016).

Also, most single-parent households are run by mothers, and the absence of a father coupled with lower household income can increase the risk of children performing poorly in school. The lack of financial support from a father often results in single mothers working more, which can in turn affect children because they receive less attention and guidance with their homework. Researcher Virginia Knox concluded from data from the National

Longitudinal Survey of Youth, that for every \$100 of child support mothers receive, their children's standardized test scores increase by 1/8 to 7/10 of a point. In addition, Knox found that children with single mothers who have contact and emotional support from their fathers tend to do better in school than children who have no contact with their fathers (Henry, 2007).

Summary of literature review

School absenteeism is a serious problem which needs to be given meticulous attention due to its widespread effects on societies as a whole. Students who go through excessive absenteeism stand the risk of being dropped out of school and hence could lead to economic hardship, other social, occupational and marital problems during adulthood (Crissey, 2009; Kearney, 2008b; Ryan & Siebens, 2012; Stoops, 2004). As cited in Sugrue, Zuel and LaLiberte (2016) school absenteeism is contributed by multiple of factors which some of them are very complex. These include but not limited to lack of motivation, unpleasant school environment, the presence of bullies, broken homes and single parenting, lack of parental understanding school policies and priorities, health problems, economic problems, and general apathy towards school.

The literature reviewed discussed the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the study. The main theory underpinning this study is the TPB which was developed by a social psychologist (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB seeks to establish the linkage between behaviour, beliefs, attitudes, and intentions. Further, a conceptual framework was developed to explain factors contributing to J. H. S students' absenteeism in the study area. Based on the research questions and objectives, the conceptual framework integrates four

key variables such as parents' level of education, economic status and students' academic performance and family ties as contributing to students' absenteeism. The literature review indicated that there are many contributing factors connected to absenteeism. These include child poverty (economic), students' academic performance, family ties, and parents' education. This review has helped to identify some of the flaws of the linkages made in the existing literature.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Chapter three provides a methodological framework of the study. It consists of research design, study area, population, sample and sampling procedure, ethical considerations, data collection procedure and data processing and analysis.

Research Design

Descriptive survey was used to examine the relationship between the predetermined factors and Junior High School students' absenteeism in some selected communities and schools in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality. This descriptive survey which uses a mix of qualitative and quantitative data is an exploratory type because it finds answers to "what" and 'when' (type of research questions). Hence, the relationship between the predetermined factors and absenteeism has been examined. Descriptive survey enables a researcher to directly access the data collected from the field within a specific context (Koh & Owen, 2000). Since the study was a detailed investigation into how some selected socio-economic factors affect students' school attendance, it was accurate to use descriptive survey. Descriptive research generates data, both qualitative and quantitative that define the state of nature at a point in time (Koh & Owen, 2000).

Descriptive survey is therefore appropriate to the research questions raised above as both quantitative and qualitative analysis could be done to answer the questions above.

In this study, the qualitative and quantitative data collection analyses were done concurrently (Atif, Richards & Bilgin, 2013). Collecting a mix of qualitative and quantitative data could help to answer a broader and more complete range of research questions. Integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches is an integral part of overcoming the weaknesses in using only one of the approaches while taking advantage of the strengths of each of the approaches. According to Atif et al. (2013) “applying the mixed-methods approach can improve insights into an understanding of the data, which might be missed when using a single approach; integrating qualitative and quantitative data can provide strong evidence for conclusions”. The researcher adopted convergent parallel mixed methods. Here, the author merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the issue under investigation. The essence of employing the convergent parallel mixed methods was that the qualitative and quantitative data were collected at the same time and this information was integrated for the overall results (Creswell, 2016, 2014a, 2014b; Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Study Area

Ashanti is an administrative province in Ghana midway situated in the middle belt of Ghana. It lies between longitudes 0.15W and 2.25W, and scopes 5.50N and 7.46N. The locale region's limits to four of the ten political regions, Brong-Ahafo in the north, Eastern area in the east, Central locale in the south and Western area in the Southwest.

The majority of the region's occupants are Ashanti people, one of Ghana's main ethnic clusters. The greater part of Ghana's cocoa is grown in Ashanti, and it is likewise a critical site of Ghana's gold-mining industry. The

Asante Akyem Central Municipal (once Asante Akyem North Municipal) Assembly is one of the 43 Districts in the Ashanti Region. It was cut out of the recent Asante Akyem District Council in 1988 as a feature of Ghana's Decentralization Process. It has Konongo as its Capital Town. The Municipality is situated in the eastern piece of Ashanti Region and lies between scope 60 30' North and 70 30' North and longitude 00 15' West and 10 20' West. It covers a land territory of 1,160 sq. Km with an expected populace of 169,976 out of 2010 (projection from 2000 Population Census). The Municipality is bounded to Sekyere East on the north, Kwahu South on the east, Asante Akyem South Municipal on the south and Juaben Municipal on the west. The number of inhabitants in the Municipal as per the 2010 Population and Housing Census remains at 71,508 with 33,942 guys and 37,566 females.

Population

The term “population” implies a total arrangement of people (Subjects), items or occasions having regular noticeable attributes in which the scientist is intrigued. However, the population does not really allude to individuals (Agyedu, Donkor & Obeng, 1999). The study population is a widespread arrangement of all things considered or individuals that contain the attributes of premium. Along these lines age, sex, instruction and business status among others.

The population of the study was therefore defined to include junior high school students, teachers, parents and community (opinion) leaders in the students the Asante Akyem Central Municipality of Ghana. I undertook a reconnaissance survey to identify which schools have a high level of

absenteeism. Also, similar surveys were undertaken in April 2018 to learn about the presence of students of schools going age in the streets of the study communities. This aided in the selection of appropriate study participants for the study.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sampling approaches for quantitative techniques used in mixed methods designs in carrying out research are largely well-established and centred on probability theory. Also, purposeful sampling is a method extensively used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002 as cited in Palinkas et al., 2015). However, with probabilistic or random sampling, researchers aim at the need to generalise findings and minimize biases.

The sampling methods used in this study were the probability and non-probability sampling. To get a fair representation of students within the randomly selected schools, simple random sampling was used.

Simple random sampling (fishbowl) was used to select students within each of the randomly selected schools to respond to questionnaires. This helped to reduce biases in the selection of samples from schools. The Asante Akyem Central Municipal Education unit is made up of six circuits. Two schools were randomly selected from each of the six circuits. The total number of students in the randomly selected schools was 1086. Based on this, a representative sample size of 408 students was randomly selected. The procedure and calculation of the sample size was done using a formula by Miller and Brewer (2003). The formula is:

$n = \frac{N}{1+N(\alpha)^2}$, n (sample size), N (sample frame) and α is the margin of error

(0.05). Mathematically as follows:

$$\frac{1086}{1 + 1086(0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{1086}{3.715} = 292.3$$

$$= 292$$

However, in order to make the sample size to be more representative and to aid in better generalisation of the study results, the calculated sample size was further increased by 40%. The calculation is:

$$\frac{140}{100} \times 292 = 408$$

Hence, the estimated sample size for the study was 408. Based on the differences in population of the selected schools and the need for representativeness, the sample size for each school was determined using proportional stratified random sampling as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Sampled respondents from study locations and schools

School	Sample frame	Sample size
Obenemasi	146	55
Nyaboo M/A	115	43
Praaso M/A	69	26
Dwease Methodist	44	17
Agyareago M/A	34	13
Odumasi Presby	93	35
Odumasi Methodist	85	32
Odumasi M/A 2	122	46
Konongo Urban Council	116	43
Bomiraso M/A	29	11
Konongo R/C	129	48
Konongo Mines	104	39
TOTAL	1086	408

Source: Field Data (2018)

The total sample was 408 students. Out of this, 215 were females whereas 193 were males. The dominant age group among the students was age 14. Up to 108 students were 14 years old. In terms of the level of education or the classes the students were in as at the time of the study, 141 representing a slight majority of them were in JSS3.

Purposive sampling method was used to select people for Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and interviews. The group was entailed mainly of Assembly members, unit committee members, religious leaders, traditional leaders, parents and teachers in each of the selected study community. There was one FGD in each of the selected communities. The reason for the use of purposive sampling technique in these selections (that is from the people) was that data needed for the success of this study could only be provided by them. Also, the FGD helps to acquire diversified opinions and views (from people with different knowledge base and background) about subject matter under consideration (Deliens, Clarys, De Bourdeaudhuij, & Deforche, 2014; Cresswell & Plano Clark 2011). As recommended by many qualitative researchers such as Morgan and Scannell (1998), each focus group discussion included between six and ten participants. In all 42 FGD participants were used. Thirty of them were males and the rest females. Apart from the FGD, 60 parents and 60 teachers were further interviewed. Five teachers consisting of three males and two females were purposively selected from each of the twelve schools. Forty of the teachers were first degree holders whereas twenty were diploma holders. It was also realised that those teachers who were purposively selected had each taught in the schools for more than 5 years in the circuit and for that matter knew what pertained in the Municipality

regarding absenteeism among students. Five parents consisting of three males and two females were also purposively selected from each of the 12 communities in the schools contacted. Thirty-eight of the parents were farmers, with twenty of the mothers having monthly income below 500 Ghana cedis. Also, fifteen of the fathers had monthly income below 500 Ghana cedis.

Data collection Instruments

Sources of data for the proposed research included primary and secondary sources. The study made use of both qualitative and quantitative data to find answers to research questions and test hypotheses. Primary data collection tools were interview guide, focus group discussion guide, and questionnaire.

The reason for using the mixed method of qualitative and quantitative data analysis was to use the qualitative data to complement the quantitative data. Qualitative data provides in-depth information about a phenomenon whereas quantitative data provides structured information (Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002).

Quantitative Data: Quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire, student's register and student's terminal report. The structured questionnaire was divided into five sections. The first section focused on personal data for students such as sex, age (years) and class level. The second section was devoted to family ties and absenteeism such as the person who is currently taking care of the respondents, relationship of the students with the person they are staying with, number of times guardians/parents visit school in a term. The third section focused on absenteeism and academic performance. Absenteeism was measured as the number of times/days a student was absent

from a school within a term taking evidence from the school register/terminal report. Academic performance was measured using the marks scored by students in Mathematics, English, and Science taking evidence from the terminal report of the students. The fourth section focused on parents' economic status and absenteeism. It considered variables such as whether father of the students is working, nature of work and whether they are fully employed. It also took into consideration such as whether mother of the students is working, nature of work and whether they are fully employed. The fifth section considered parents' level of education and absenteeism such as level of education of mother and level of education of father. Details of the variables, coding, response format and measurements are shown in Table 2.

Absenteeism was measured using continuous variable (especially interval scale). Interval scale is basically the level of measurement in which the attributes composing variables are measured on specific numerical scores or values and there are equal distances between attributes. Thus, respondents were made to indicate the number of times they have absent themselves from schools. The interval scale was 0, 1, 2, 3,4,5,6,7,8,9 etc. This evidence of interval scales allowed for inferential statistics (specifically ANOVA and linear regression) to be conducted.

Table 2: Operationalization and measurement of variables

Variable(s)	Category	Coding	Measurement
Sex	Male	1	Nominal
	Female	2	
Age	11	1	Interval
	12	2	
	13	3	
	14	4	
	15	5	
	16	6	
	17	7	
Class	18	8	Ordinal
	JHS 1	1	
	JHS 2	2	
Currently taking care of education	JHS 3	3	Nominal
	Parents	1	
	Grandparents	2	
	Family friends	3	
Rate of Relationship with the person students are staying with	Sibling-brothers and sisters	4	Ordinal
	Very good	1	
	Good	2	
	Very poor	3	
	Poor	4	
Number of times parents/guardian visit students in school			Interval
Guardians/parents visit to students in school			Interval
Guardian/parents attend the parent-teachers' association meetings	Yes	1	Dichotomous
	No	0	

Table 2 Cont;D

Number of times/days a student was absent from a school within a term	-	-	Interval
Marks Scored in Mathematics, English and Science	-	-	Interval
Mother's Engagement in Occupation	Yes	1	Dichotomous
	No	0	
Current occupation of mother	Farming	1	Nominal
	Trading	2	
	Driving	3	
	Civil/public servant	4	
	Artisan	5	
	Private sector	6	
Nature of Occupation of mother	Causal	1	Dichotomous
	Fully employed	2	
Time mother's report to work	Before 6 am	1	Ordinal
	Between 6 and 8 am	2	
	After 8am	3	
Time mother's return from work	Before 3 pm	1	Ordinal
	Between 3 and 5 pm	2	
	After 5 pm	3	
Father's engagement in occupation	Yes	1	Dichotomous
	No	0	
Current occupation of father	Farming	1	Nominal
	Trading	2	
	Driving	3	
		4	

Table 2 Cont;D

	Civil/public servant	5	
	Artisan	6	
	Private sector		
Nature of Occupation of father	Causal	1	Dichotomous
	Fully employed	2	
Time father's report to work	Before 6 am	1	Ordinal
	Between 6 and 8 am	2	
	After 8am	3	
Time father's return from work	Before 3 pm	1	Ordinal
	Between 3 and 5 pm	2	
	After 5 pm	3	
Father's engagement in occupation	Yes	1	Dichotomous
	No	0	
Education of father	Yes	1	Dichotomous
	No	0	
Level of Education of Father	BECE/MSLC	1	Ordinal
	GCE/SHS	2	
	Cert A.	3	
	Diploma/degree	4	
	Masters/PhD	5	
Education of mother	Yes	1	Dichotomous
	No	0	
Level of education of mother	BECE/MSLC	1	Ordinal
	GCE/SHS	2	
	Cert A.	3	
	Diploma/degree	4	
	Masters/PhD	5	

Source: Author's Construct, 2020

Qualitative Data: The essential tools that were used in gathering qualitative data during the field work were structured and semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews gave an opportunity to ask further questions that were deemed relevant at the time of the interview. A structured interview is a systematic method of field investigation whereby a person formally meets respondents and through the interaction asks specific and further questions to find answers to research questions (Ghosh, 1979). The interview guide focused mainly on the research questions underpinning the study. It included questions whether parents' level of education relate to absenteeism, economic status of parents' relate to absenteeism, family ties relate to absenteeism and students' academic performance influences absenteeism.

Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure validity of the research instrument, a pre-test of the questionnaires was done at Patriensa Presby Junior High School in Patriensa for the first time. Just like the main data collection procedure, simple random sampling was used to select the respondents who were contacted for the pre-tests. The use of the simple random sample helped to reduce biases in the selection of the respondents from Petriensa Presby J. H. S. I interviewed 25 students during the pre-test without any problem. The questionnaire of the pre-test was divided into five sections. The first section focused on personal data for students such as sex, age (years) and class level. Twelve of the respondents were females whereas 13 were males. Ten of them were aged 14 years, 2 were aged 15 years, 7 were aged 12 years, 2 were aged 11 years and 4 were aged 16

years. With the class of the students, nine were in J. H. S 1, 8 were in J. H. S 2 and 8 were in J. H. S 3.

The second section was devoted to family ties and absenteeism such as the person who is currently taking care of the respondents, relationship of the person, students are staying with, number of times guardians/parents visit school in a term. The third section focused on absenteeism and academic performance. Absenteeism was measured as the number of times/days a student was absent from school within a term taking evidence from the school register/terminal report. Academic performance was measured using the marks scored by students in mathematics, English, science taking evidence from the terminal report of the students. The fourth section focused on parents' economic status and absenteeism. It considered variables such as whether father of the students is working, nature of work, whether they are fully employed. It also took into consideration such as whether mother of the students is working, nature of work, whether they are fully employed. The fifth section considered parents' level of education and absenteeism such as level of education of mother and level of education of father. The pre-test helped the author to make necessary changes on the data collection instruments so as to ensure quality control. The Cronbach alpha was computed for variables such as relationship of the person, students are staying with, number of times guardians/parents visit school in a term, academic performance, parents' economic status and parents' level of education and absenteeism such as level of education of mother and level of education of father.

Students' relationship with their parents/guardians were measured as categorical variable (very good, good, very poor and poor), number of times guardians/parents visit students in school in a term was measured as continuous and whether guardian/parents attended the parent-teachers' association meetings was measured as a dichotomous variable (yes, no). The academic performance of the students in subjects such as Mathematics, English and Science was measured as continuous variables. The level of education of parents was measured as categorical variable (BECE/MSLC, GCE/SHS, Cert A., Diploma/degree and Masters/PhD). The economic status of parents was measured as both continuous and categorical. Income of parents was specifically measured as continuous variables whereas occupation of parents was also measured as categorical (Farming, Trading, Driving, and Civil/public servant).

The qualitative instrument was given to an expert in the field of educational research for comments. Based on the comments from the expert review, the qualitative instrument was modified to meet the purpose of the study. Also with constructive comments of my two thesis supervisors who are experts in educational research, I was able to design my research instruments to measure what I intended to measure. The qualitative data collection included questions such as, whether parents level of education influence absenteeism, economic status of parents' influence absenteeism, family ties determines absenteeism and students' academic performance influences absenteeism. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to measure the internal reliability of the findings. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was .5. Ideally, a Cronbach alpha value of .5 for this study suggested that the

instrument could be considered reliable with the sample size used. Justified by this is a study by Taber (2018) on the use of Cronbach alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education, it was made known that a Cronbach alpha value between .45 and .98 is acceptable.

Ethical Considerations

Several ethical considerations were considered in this study. To beginning with, approval was sought from the Asante Akyem Central Municipal Education Director before field survey began in the selected junior high schools. Further approval was sought from the headmasters of the selected junior high schools before having contact with teachers and students. Teachers, parents and students were also briefed about the purpose of the study for the informed written consent before data collection began. The participants were assured of the strict confidentiality and privacy of the information they provided. They were made to understand that the information was going to be used solely for academic purposes. The data collection instruments did not capture any personal details such as the names of the respondents. These issues helped the researcher to strictly adhere to ethical standards as far as the study was concerned.

Data Collection Procedures

Quantitative: The structured questionnaire consisted of closed ended questions. The questionnaire was prepared in English. The questionnaire was given to the students to fill their part. The questionnaires were collected a day after distribution. Participants were allowed to send questionnaires home for parents to fill important information that could best be provided by them for

later collection. This approach was to enable the students to send the questionnaire home for their parents to fill their part especially those relating to occupation and economic status. After the students returned the questionnaire to the school, I took the attendance register and their terminal reports to indicate the number of days they had absented themselves from school and also their academic performance in subjects such as English, Mathematics and Science. These processes were continuously done for three weeks excluding weekends. The data collection occurred between 22 May and 13 June 2019.

Qualitative: The interview with teachers was conducted at the various staff common rooms during the break time. The interview was conducted in English since all the teachers contacted were literate. Interview with parents was conducted in their various homes after their normal day to day activity. The interview was conducted in Twi because of their high illiteracy rate. The responses were recorded through handwritten notes. The interview with the teachers and parents lasted approximately 20 minutes on the average.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were done for stakeholders such as Assemblymen, Unit Committee Members, Religious Leaders and Traditional Leaders. The FGDs helped the respondents to talk more openly and freely on factors influencing absenteeism among students in the study area. The FGDs were done in various classrooms that were free from any party interference. Each FGD consisted of 7 participants and lasted approximately between 50 and 60 minutes and ended at a point where I felt all issues had been covered. The FGDs were done in Twi and were recorded through handwritten notes

Data processing and Analysis

Quantitative Data: The data gathered during the field survey were analyzed in two steps which included data preparation and interpretations from descriptive statistics. The data preparation involved cleaning, coding and entering answers to closed-ended questions. Data to all the research questions were analyzed using this procedure. The descriptive statistics provided simple frequencies and percentages. Cross-tabulations were also used to present analysis of the research questions and drew conclusions from them. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and MS Excel were used in analysis of the collected data. Analytical frameworks such as linear regression and Analysis of Variance(ANOVA) embedded in SPSS were used to analyse the quantitative data. ANOVA was used to establish difference between father's occupation and absenteeism, mother's occupation and absenteeism, persons students are staying with and absenteeism, father's education and absenteeism and mother's education and absenteeism. This is because the dependent variable (absenteeism) was continuous and the independent variables were (father's occupation, mother's occupation, mother's education, father's education and persons students are staying with) categorical. Each independent variable was fitted into a model one after the other against the dependent variable (absenteeism). Linear multiple regression was also employed to measure the relationship between student academic performance and absenteeism, mother's income, father's income, number of times guardian/parents visit students in school, and number of times guardians/parents attend PTA meeting against absenteeism. This is because, both the dependent variable and the independent variables were continuous.

Specifically, mother's and father's mother were fitted into a multiple linear regression model against absenteeism. Also, number of times guardian/parents visit students in school and the number of times guardians/parents attend PTA meeting were fitted into a multiple linear regression model against absenteeism. Further, students academic performance (mathematics, science and english) measured in test score were fitted into a multiple linear regression model.

Qualitative Data: The qualitative data from the interviews and focus group discussions were analysed using the narrative analysis method. These narratives complemented the quantitative data provided by the students and parents in responding to the questionnaires. Narrative analysis was relevant in the sense that it provided a means of investigating human behaviour about how they experienced and learnt about the phenomenon depicted through stories (Webster & Mertova, 2007). According to Viney and Bousfield (1991), narrative analysis is premised on the assumption that people make meanings about occurrences by giving vivid accounts, and that these stories can be identified in interviews. In this study, some of the accounts given by the teachers on students' economic status and academic performance were quoted to buttress the answers produced by the students and parents in responding to the questionnaires.

There was, undoubtedly, some subjectivity in the grouping of the answers from the open ended questions. However, the different methods and data collection tools that were employed in the research provided a high level of accuracy and objectivity in the analysis. To comprehensively analyse the

data collected both the characteristics within and cross schools were highlighted in the data analysis.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine how selected variables (known to have affected students' school attendance according to the literature on absenteeism) relate to students' absenteeism in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality. Even though the variables such as parents' education level, parents' economic status, students' academic performance, and family ties are found to have impacted on students' school absenteeism in other locations mostly in the developed world, their impacts in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality are yet to be known. This study was conducted to learn about the relationship between these variables and students' absenteeism in a local level.

Convergent parallel mixed method approach with qualitative and quantitative strands of research was adopted. The study was conducted in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed to recruit the study participants. A sample size of 408 students, 60 parents, 60 teachers and 42 community (opinion) leaders were used. Questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion guides were used to take data from the study participants. The questionnaire was pre-tested at Patriensa Presby Junior High School and 25 students were used during the pre-test without any problem. As part of the pre-test some teachers and parents were interviewed. Quantitative data were analysed using frequencies, percentages, linear multiple regression and Analysis of Variance(ANOVA) while qualitative data were analysed

using content analysis supported by direct quotations. The response or participation rate was 100%.

Based on the preceding discussions, this chapter of the study is devoted to data analysis and presentation, and presented based on the objectives of the study. It is divided into four sections. The first section deals with the relationship between parents' level of education and the number times students absent themselves from school. The second section considers parents' economic status and the number times students absent themselves from school. The third part focuses on the relationship between family ties and the number times students absent themselves from school. The last section details with the relationship between students' academic performance and the number times students absent themselves from school.

Characteristics of the Respondents

This section discusses the bio-information of respondents. The importance of background data of partakers in a study is to provide insight or appreciation about the persons and the circumstance under study. In this respect, data on demographic physiognomies including gender, educational status and the persons whom the students are staying with among others were analysed.

Pertaining to Table 3, in all, 408 students were enlisted for the study. The dominant gender group among the sampled students was females. The dominant age group among the students was 14 with a percentage of 26.5. This is followed by those students of the age 15 years old with a percentage of 25. The age with the least proportion of students who participated in this study is those of 12 years with a percentage of 4.2. In terms of the level of education

or the classes the students were in as at the time of the study, a slight majority of them were in JSS3. In all, the variations in the number of students who participated in the study from all the classes (JSSI, JSS2 and JSS3) are not significant.

Table 3: Personal information on the students

Demographic trait		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	193	47.3
	Female	215	52.7
	Total	408	100
Age (in years)	12	17	4.2
	13	43	10.5
	14	108	26.5
	15	102	25
	16	67	16.4
	17	41	10
	18	30	7.4
	Total	408	100
Class	JHS1	138	33.8
	JHS2	129	31.6
	JHS3	141	34.6
	Total	408	100

Source: Field Data (2019)

Frequency of absenteeism

Data from the school register/terminal report provided information that showed the number of days the students absented themselves from school in a term. Absenteeism was measured as a continuous variable. The average

absenteeism was 4.49 days (mean absenteeism was calculated based on the responses of 316 respondents, that is, participants who have been absent from school for at least one in a term). However, for the purpose of descriptive analysis, absenteeism was categorised into four categories as indicated in Table 4.

Table 4: Frequency of absenteeism

Item	Score	Frequency	Percent	Mean
Frequency of absenteeism	1-2	106	26	Absenteeism 4.49
	3-5	93	22.8	
	6-9	65	15.9	
	10 or more	52	12.7	
Total		316	77.5	

Source: Field Data (2019)

From the results, as indicated in Table 4.

Slight majority have absented themselves from school one to two occasions in a term while 22.8% of them also absented themselves on 3-5 occasions. In general, it was observed that most of the students absented themselves from school occasionally, an occurrence which has the potential of hampering their academic progress.

Quantitative research question one: *How do parents' level of education relate to their students' absenteeism?*

Analysis of parents' level of education

The level of education of fathers of the students was analysed and presented in figure 2. Most of the fathers of the students attained basic education (BECE) or MSLC qualification while few of them attained GCE/SHS qualification.

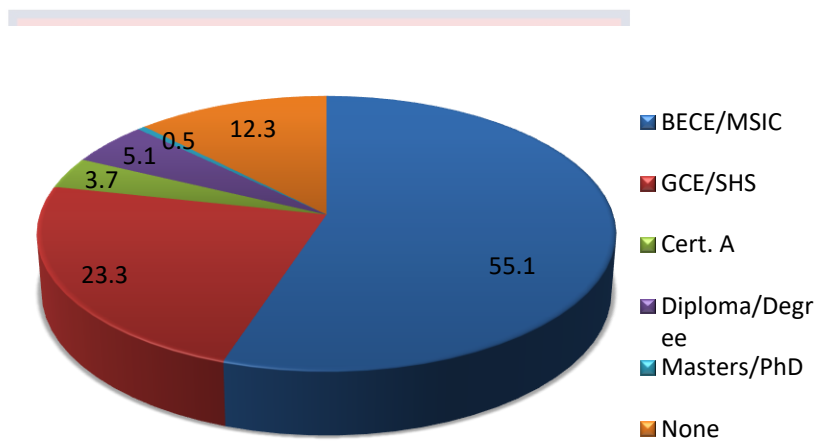


Figure 2: Father's level of education

The level of education of mothers of the students was also analysed and presented in figure 3. Most of the mothers of the students attained basic education (BECE) or MSLC qualification while few of them attained GCE/SHS qualification. The results showed that, the fathers of the students had slightly higher educational attainment relative to the mothers owing to the fact that few of the mothers had no formal education compared to the 12.3% recorded by the fathers of the students.

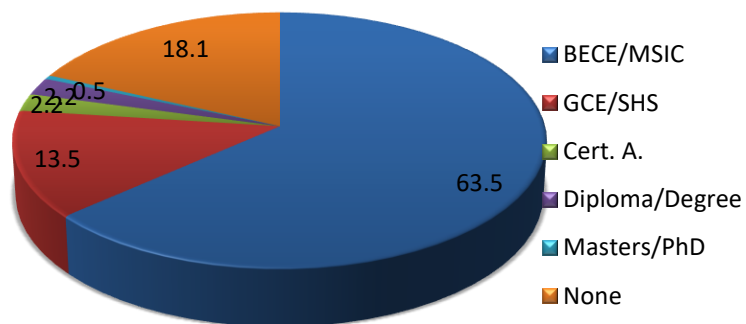


Figure 3 Mother's level of education

Analysis of how Parents' level of education relates to children's absenteeism

The first objective of the study was to analyse the influence of parents' level of education on the number of times students absent themselves from school. Two variables were considered, father's level of education as well as mothers' level of education. ANOVA as an analytical framework was used to establish whether there was a significant difference in the mean absenteeism among the different levels of parents' level of education as indicated in Table 5 and Table 6 respectively. ANOVA was used because the independent variable was categorical whereas that of the dependent was continuous making it appropriate to employ ANOVA.

Table 5: ANOVA Results of Father’s level of education and their children’s absenteeism

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	117.279	5	29.320	.927	.448
Within Groups	11162.743	353	31.623		
Total	11280.022	357			

The study wanted to ascertain whether level of education of fathers had any influence on the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. The results showed that there was no statistically significant influence of father’s level of education on the number of times students have absented themselves from school in a term, $F(4,353) = .927, P = .448$

Table 6: ANOVA Results of Mother’s level of education and their students’ absenteeism

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	136.995	5	34.249	1.245	.292
Within Groups	9022.290	328	27.507		
Total	9159.285	332			

The study wanted to ascertain whether level of mother’s education had any influence on the number of times students have absented themselves from school in a term. The results shows that there was no statistically significant influence of mother’s level of education on the number of times students have absented themselves from school in a term, $F(4,328) = .1.245, P = .292$.

Qualitative research question one: *How do parents, teachers and community leaders perceive the influence of parents' level of education and number of times students absent themselves from school?*

In order to validate the quantitative results on the relationship between parents' level of education and the number of students who have absented themselves from school, a qualitative data was further sought from parents, teachers and community leaders. The qualitative data appeared to contradict with the quantitative data regarding education level of parents and its influence on the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. In the qualitative interviews, it became clear that parents level of education influences absenteeism among students. For instance, when one male teacher from Obenemasi M/A J. H. S was interviewed to find whether parents' level of education influences absenteeism, this was what he had to say:

“Yes, parents' level of education has an influence with the number of times a pupil attend school in a week” (A Male Teacher, Obenemasi M/A J. H. S, Interview).

It was noted that parents who have higher education are able to ensure prompt payment of the fees of their wards. Also, such parents are able to monitor their children and make sure they are always in school. This result is evident to a quotation from a female teacher at Agyareago J. H. S.

“Yes, parents' level of education helps a lot, such parents pay fees quickly. The level that either father or mother has reached in education helps a lot. Such parents also help to

ensure that their children are in school” (A female Teacher, Agyareago J. H. S, Interview).

In a focus group discussion with stakeholders (such as assemblyman, unit committee members’ traditional leaders and religious leaders) from Agyareago, the following evidence became clear.

“The causes of absenteeism of children in the community depend on the level of education of parents. Most parents in the community are illiterates and for that matter do not encourage their wards to go to school”. (A participant from Agyareago, FGDs).

Similarly, a participant in a FGD from Praaso expressed:

“Some parents think since they do not have formal education, it is appropriate if their wards also do not have it. Also, most parents do not know the benefits to education and want their wards to help them in their farms” (A Traditional Leader from Praaso-FGDs).

Thus, it was revealed from the FGDs that knowledge on the benefits of education is also essential to help reduce absenteeism among students. To this end, parents with lower levels of education may lack the necessary knowledge and for that matter does not know why their children should attend school. Such parents as the FGDs revealed may feel reluctant to encourage their wards to go to school on a regular basis.

Another discussant from Odumasi in FGDs commented that:

“This happens because parents with higher levels of education understand the negative impacts of students’ absenteeism on

the academic achievements of their wards and as such they do anything possible to ensure that their wards do not absent themselves from school. Parents with lower level of education behave otherwise and sometimes send their wards to farms for students' to absent themselves from school” (Assemblyman from Odumasi-FGDs).

In an interview with the parents, it was revealed that the relationship between parents' level of education and absenteeism was not one sided. Thus, some parents believed that since they did not go to school, they will do their best possible to ensure that their children have access to good quality education. Others are also of the view that they did not attend school and so they would not enrol their children in school. This observation is because they do not value education. The quotations below are from interviews conducted during the study, and they throw more light on the above assertions.

One parent from Petriensa explained:

“Some parents did not go to school and see no need for their wards to go to school because they do not value school” (A Parent from Praaso, Interview).

One parent from Praaso countered:

“Yes, I, for instance, could not go to school but I try my best to advise my children to go to school, but they do not go sometimes” (A Parent from Praaso, Interview).

Another parent from Odumasi added:

“Yes, parents who have higher levels of education make sure that their children go to school always” (A parent from Odumasi, Interview).

The indication is that while parents with a high level of education are likely to influence their wards from not absenting themselves from school, that of parents with low or no level of education may not care whether their children absent themselves from school or not. This result is as a result of the fact that parents with higher levels of education may be able to determine the benefits their wards are likely to gain from education compared to those without any level of education. This picture suggests that parents’ level of education is likely to influence students’ absenteeism in the study area.

Quantitative research question two: *How do parents’ economic status relate to their children’s absenteeism?*

Analysis of parents’ economic status

The analysis conducted on the occupations of the fathers of the pupil’s revealed that majority of them representing 48.5% are into farming. They farm to support their families. Second on the ranking is trading where 15.9% of them alluded to engaging in such economic activities for sustenance. Other occupations such as driving, artisanal works, private sector employment and civil service employments were the occupations the remaining fathers were into. The reason for the majority of the father’s engaging in farming could be attributed to the nature of the study area. This is because, in the study area, farming remains the major economic activity.

Out of the 93.1% of the fathers of the students employed 60.8% of them are fully employed while 32.4% of them are just casual employees. On the time the fathers of the students go to work, the majority work between 6:00 am and 8: 00am while 38.5% of them report to work before 6:00 am. A small proportion of them report to work after 8:00 am. This trend shows that the fathers of the students go to work very early each day. On the time they return from work, 40% constituting majority return after 5:00 pm. A significant proportion of them return between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm while few of them return from work before 3:00 pm. Majority of the fathers of the students earn monthly income between 500 cedis to 1000 cedis followed by 28.9% who earn monthly income between 1001 and 1500 cedis. Few of the fathers of the students earned more than 2000 cedis monthly while 9.1% of them earn between 1501 and 2000 cedis monthly. There were 13.2% of the fathers who earned monthly incomes less than 500 cedis.

The analysis conducted on the occupations of the mothers of the pupil's revealed that majority of them were into trading. They sell items to earn money to support their families. The occupation on the second position is farming where 35.8% of them alluded to engaging in farm related activities for sustenance. Other occupations such driving, artisanal works, private sector employment and civil service employments were the occupations the remaining mothers were into. On the contrary, few of them are not into any economic activity. This might be as a result of unemployment or old age. The majority of the mothers of the students employed, the majority of them were fully employed while few of them are just casual employees.

On the time the mothers of the students go to work, the majority report at work between 6:00 am and 8: 00 am. Few of them report to work after 8:00 am. This trend shows that the mothers of the students go to work very early each day. On the time they return from work, the majority return after before 3:00 pm daily. A significant proportion of them return between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm while few of them return from work after 5:00 pm on daily basis.

Majority of the mothers of the students earned monthly income between 500 cedis to 1000 cedis followed by 25.4% who earned monthly income between 1001 and 1500 cedis. Few of the mothers of the students earned more than 2000 cedis monthly. There were few of the mothers who earned monthly incomes less than 500 cedis.

Table 7: Father’s economic status

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Father’s Occupation	Farming	198	48.5
	Trading	65	15.9
	Driving	44	10.8
	Civil/public servant	37	9.1
	Artisan	21	5.1
	Private sector	15	3.7
	None	28	6.9
	Total	408	100
Employee type	Casual	132	32.4
	fully employed	248	60.8
	None	28	6.9
	Total	408	100
Reporting time	Before 6:00am	157	38.5
	Between 6:00 am and 8:00am	192	47.1
	After 8:00am	30	7.4
	None	29	7.1
	Total	408	100
Departure time	Before 3:00pm	74	18.1

Table 7 Cont'D

	Between 3:00pm and 5:00pm	142	34.8
	After 5:00pm	163	40
	None	29	7.1
	Total	408	100
Father's Income (GHS)	less than 500	54	13.2
	500-1000	129	31.6
	1001-1500	118	28.9
	1501-2000	37	9.1
	Above 2000	70	17.2
	Total	408	100

Source: Field survey (2019)

Table 8. Mothers economic status

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Mother's Occupation	Farming	146	35.8
	Trading	195	47.8
	Driving	5	1.2
	Civil/public servant	11	2.7
	Artisan	10	2.5
	Private sector	12	2.9
	None	29	7.1
	Total	408	100
Employee type	Casual	127	31.1
	Fully employed?	247	60.5
	None	34	8.3
	Total	408	100
Arrival time	Before 6:00am	139	34.1
	Between 6:00am and 8:00am	174	42.6
	After 8:00am	63	15.4
	None	32	7.8
	Total	408	100

Table 8 Cont'D

Departure time	Before 3:00pm	132	32.4
	Between 3:00pm 5:00pm	126	30.9
	After 5:00pm	118	28.9
	None	32	7.8
	Total	408	100
Mother's Income (GHS)	less than 500	74	18.1
	500-1000	142	34.8
	1001-1500	104	25.4
	1501-2000	22	5.4
	Above 2000	66	16.2
Total	408	100	

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2019

Analysis of influence of parents' economic status on their children's absenteeism

One of the research questions was to examine how parents' economic status influences the number of times students absent themselves from school. The variables that were considered to enable the author answer the research questions were father's income, mother's income, mother's occupation and father's occupation. In doing so, a linear regression was used to analyse the data on father's income and mother's income in relation to the number of times students absent themselves from school. The use of regression to establish the relationship between economic status and absenteeism was as a result of the fact that both independent variable and dependent variable were continuous

Regarding the fathers' and mothers' occupation, ANOVA was used in relation to the number of times students absent themselves from school to establish relationship between parents' occupation and absenteeism. The use of ANOVA to establish differences in students' absenteeism, based on parent's

type of occupation was as a result of the fact the independent variable was categorical whereas that of the dependent variable was continuous making it appropriate to use ANOVA.

Table 9: Linear Multiple Regression Results on Fathers’ and Mothers’ income and the number of times students absent themselves from school

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	5.584	.587		9.515	.000
Income of father	.000	.000	-.021	-.412	.681
Income of mother	-.001	.000	-.113	-2.240	.026

F-Stats= 2.938, p-value=.054, R²=.014, R=.120

Table 9 shows linear multiple regressions on fathers’ and mothers’ income and the number of times students absent themselves from school. The results showed that the income of fathers does not significantly impact on the number of times students absent themselves from school (B= -.021; p= .681). The results further showed that the income of mothers significantly impact on the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term (B= -.113; p=.026). This means that mothers’ income is a good predictor of the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term than fathers’ income.

Table 10: ANOVA Result on Father’s occupation and number of times students have absented themselves from school

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	203.002	6	33.834	1.087	.369
Within Groups	12482.976	401	31.130		
Total	12685.978	407			

Regarding the relationship between father’s occupation and absenteeism, this study revealed no influence of occupation of father on absenteeism of students, $F(6,401) = 1.087, P = .369$.

Table 11: ANOVA Result on Mother’s occupation and their students’ absenteeism

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	159.355	6	26.559	.850	.532
Within Groups	12526.623	401	31.238		
Total	12685.978	407			

Regarding the relationship between mother’s occupation and absenteeism, this study revealed no influence of occupation of mother on absenteeism $F(6,401) = .850, P = .532$.

Qualitative research question two: *How do parents, teachers and community leaders perceive the influence of parents' economic status on students' absenteeism?*

In order to check the credibility of the quantitative data on the relationship between parents' economic status and absenteeism among J. H. S students, qualitative data were gathered from parents, teachers and community (opinion) leaders to support the quantitative evidence. The qualitative data showed that parents' economic activity influences absenteeism among J. H. S students. It was explained that parents who are into economic activity might get money to pay for their wards fees and buy other educational needs and so their children would not be absenting themselves from school. Apart from that, some of the participants raised the concern that parents who are engaged in economic activity are able to feed their children and provide them with pocket keeping money. A male teacher from Nyaboo M/A J. H. S said:

“Yes, parents who are into economic activity pay for their wards fees feed their children every day in school and provide other educational needs for them. This makes such children not to be absenting themselves from schools” (A male Teacher from Nyaboo M/A J. H. S, Interview).

Another female teacher from Dwease J. H. S mentioned:

“Yes, it is true that parents with good economic standard pay fees, buy all the necessary books for their children and so they feel the joy to be in school always” (A female teacher from Dwease J. H. S, Interview).

The quotation above indicates that parents with good economic status do not only pay fees but also they provide other books for their wards to improve their learning in school. However, one parent admitted that as a result of the fact that she is not engaged in any economic activity, her children mostly absent themselves from school because she is not able to provide certain critical educational materials such as books. It is a fact that parents who are wealthy would be able to provide the basic needs of their children compare with those who are financially unsound as evident in the above literature. Thus, one parent said that she struggles to pay for the school fees (including extra classes, printing fee, cultural fee, light bill, computer fee and sports fee) of her ward and that the school authorities have been sacking the ward from school. These views are expressed in the quotes below:

“Yes, I find it difficult to provide certain important materials such as books, pay for the fees for my wards and also get money for her to buy foods. As such, the school authorities have been sacking her to go for the fees of which I do not have. In light of this, I have asked her to stay home until I get the money. I think I could have raised enough money to pay the fees if I was working” (A parent from Agyareago, Interview).

This result shows that financial constraints as a component of economic status result in absenteeism among students.

This picture presented in the preceding quotation was utterly different for parents with economic status. For instance, one parent from Konongo said:

“Yeah, because I have work to do, my children always go to school. So good economic status plays an important role in absenteeism among students” (A parent from Konongo, Interview).

In FGDs, a discussant from Konongo said:

“The economic situation of members in a community has a role to play in absenteeism. People in this community are not financially sound. The only job available here is farming, so mostly when students are asked why they are absent, their excuse is, I didn’t get money to come to school, my uniform is torn, my school bag is spoilt and my father said he does not have money so we should go to farm to bring foodstuff” (Assemblyman from Konongo, FGDs)

This statement depicts that parent’s inability to provide the necessary educational needs or logistics for their wards could result in absenteeism among students. Their inability to provide the needed educational needs of their wards may result from their poor economic activity. Students from such family also tend to work to support their families and meet their basic needs of life as evident in the quotation below:

“Most parents are not working so their children are always on the street begging for money to support their families. As a result, they sometimes absent themselves” (A unit committee member from Dwease, FGDs).

The above discussion points to the fact that parents’ economic status plays an essential role in absenteeism among J. H. S students.

Quantitative research question three: *What is the relationship between family ties and students' absenteeism?*

Analysis of family ties of the respondents

Family ties are integral factors that can act with other factors to impact on the extent to which students absent themselves from school. The study examined some specific family ties as part of the background information of the respondents. The findings revealed that 82.4% of the students live with their parents be it either parents or one of them. This represents a large majority. Thus most of the students live with their parents. There were 10% of the students who lived with their grandparents, 3.7% live with their family friends while 3.9% of them reside with their siblings-brothers and sisters. It could be found from the study that while majority of the students lived with their parents, minority of them lived with their family friends. The high level of good relationship the students have with their parents and guardians can subtly be attributed to the fact most the students are staying with their parents and grandparents.

On the healthiness of the relationship between the students and their persons they are staying with, the results showed that 70.9% of the students reported that they have very good relationship with the persons they are staying with while 26.7% of them agreed to have good relationship with their guardians (parents, grandparents, family and friends and siblings). These totals to 97.6% of the students who agreed to have good relationship with their parents/guardians. Only 10 students representing 2.4% of the sampled students reported that they have poor relationship with their guardians.

Table 12: Family ties

Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
Guardian	Parents	336	82.4
	Grandparents	41	10
	Family friends	15	3.7
	Sibling-brothers and sisters	16	3.9
	Total	408	100
Relationship with guardian/parent	Very good	289	70.9
	Good	109	26.7
	Very poor	5	1.2
	Poor	5	1.2
	Total	408	100
Frequency of guardian/parent visit	1-3	114	27.9
	4-6	23	5.6
	7-9	-	-
	10 or above	271	66.5
	Total	408	100
Guardian attends PTA meetings	Yes	314	77
	No	94	23
	Total	408	100

Source: Author's Survey, 2019

On the frequency of the parents/guardians visit to the school of their wards in a term, 66.5% of them reported that they visited their schools 10 times or above every term. Up to 27.9% of the students reported that their parents/guardians visit their schools on one to three occasions in a term. Only

5.6% of the students indicated that their parents or guardians visit their school on four to six occasions in a term.

Conversely, there were no students that reported visit by the persons they stay with on seven to nine occasions. More so, from the results, 77% of the parents/guardians attend parents-teachers' association (PTA) meeting of their wards. That notwithstanding, 23% of the parents/guardians do not attend such parent-teachers' association meetings for their wards.

Analysis of influence of family ties on students' absenteeism

The third research question sought to ascertain how family ties determine the number of times students absent themselves from school. In order to answer the research question, variables such as the number of times parents/guardians visit them in school in a term, number of times their guardian attend PTA meeting and the relationship with their guardian/parents were used to measure the number of times they absent themselves from school in a term. Based on this, both linear multiple regression and ANOVA were used to analyse the data. For the number of times parents/guardians visit students in school and the number of times parents/guardians attend meeting, linear regression was employed to estimate their association with the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. The use of linear regression was as result of the fact that both dependent and independent variables were continuous.

Regarding their relationship with their parents/guardians, ANOVA was used to establish relationship with the number of times they attend school. ANOVA was used because the independent variables were categorical while that of the dependent variable was continuous

Table 13: Linear Multiple Regression Results on parents visit to students and guardians'/parents attendance at PTA meeting and the number of times students absent themselves from school

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.476	.949		2.610	.009
Number of times guardians/parents visit students in school	-.079	.065	-.060	-1.219	.224
Number of times guardians/parents attend PTA meeting	2.156	.653	.163	3.303	.001

F-statistics= 5.83, R square= 0.028, R= .167, p-value= 0.003

Table 13 shows the linear multiple regression on the relationship between the number of times guardians/parents visit students in school and the number of times parents/guardians attend PTA meeting in relation to the number of times students have absented themselves from school in a term. The results showed that the number of times guardians/parents visit students in school significantly does not impact on the number of times students absent themselves from school ($\beta=-1.219$; $p=.224$). The results further showed that the number of times parents/guardians attend PTA meeting significantly impact on the number of times students absent themselves from school ($\beta=3.303$; $p=0.01$). This means that the number of times parents/guardians

attend PTA meeting is a good predictor of the number of times pupils' absent themselves from school in a term compared to the number of times parents/guardians visit students in school.

Table 14: ANOVA Results on the difference with the person students are staying with and the number of times they absent themselves from school

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	114.964	3	57.482	1.852	.038
Within Groups	12571.014	405	31.040		
Total	12685.978	407			

Pertaining to the relationship with the person students are staying with and the number of times they absent themselves from school, the study observed a significant relationship between the two variables tested. This is because the p-value which is .038 is less than .05 making it significant. Therefore, there is a significant difference between students' relationship with the persons they are staying with and absenteeism. The F-Statistics is 1.852 with a corresponding degree of freedom of 3.

Table 15: Post-Hoc Analysis results on difference between the person students are staying with and the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term

(I) Who is currently taking care of your education?	(J) Who is currently taking care of your education?	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Parents	Grandparents	.06511	.92630	.044	-1.8861	1.7559
	Family friends	1.01131	1.47768	.494	-1.8936	3.9162
	Sibling-brothers and sisters	.54464	1.43280	.704	-2.2720	3.3613
Grandparents	Parents	.06511	.92630	.944	-1.7559	1.8861
	Family friends	1.07642	1.68966	.524	-2.2452	4.3980
	Sibling-brothers and sisters	.60976	1.65055	.712	-2.6350	3.8545
Family friends	Parents	-1.01131	1.47768	.494	-3.9162	1.8936
	Grandparents	-1.07642	1.68966	.524	-4.3980	2.2452
	Sibling-brothers and sisters	-.46667	2.01242	.817	-4.4228	3.4895
Sibling-brothers and sisters	Parents	-.54464	1.43280	.704	-3.3613	2.2720
	Grandparents	-.60976	1.65055	.712	-3.8545	2.6350
	Family friends	.46667	2.01242	.817	-3.4895	4.4228

Since the ANOVA showed a significant difference regarding the person students were staying with and the number of times students absent themselves from school, there was the need to perform a Post-Hoc analysis to find which pairs of means differ. The results showed that there was a mean difference of .065 for the respondents who were staying with their parents and grandparents. This mean difference was statistically significant .

Qualitative research question three: *How do parents, teachers and community leaders perceive the influence of family ties on students' absenteeism?*

In a qualitative study, one teacher from Praaso raised a concern that:

“Yes. What I have seen is that parents who live peacefully with their wards make sure they come to school always” (A teacher from Praaso, Interview)

Similarly, another teacher at Dwease expressed that:

“Yes. That has been the problem, parents who have divorced and for that matter do not stay together create a problem for their children. Such children do not come to school always. The results are enormous” (A teacher from Dwease, Interview)

In relation to the above quotation, one parent from Odumasi added that:

“Parents normally toss their children. E.g. go to your father for the fees and the Father will also say, go to your mother for fees. When these are done for a while a child decides not to go to school” (A parent from Odumasi Interview)

A participant from Nyaboo in a FGD said:

“Most of the students who come from broken homes suffer from social problems that make them not regular at school”

[A Religious Leader from Nyaboo, FGD]

Another discussant from Dwease and Praaso respectively also mentioned that:

“Many children do not stay with their real parents so sometimes they do not go to school” [A Traditional Leader from Dwease, FGD]

“Normally the child may be living with only the mother and when it is time to buy something concerning school it becomes a problem” [A Religious Leader from Praaso, FGD]

These quotations suggest that family ties have important association with students' absenteeism.

Quantitative research question four: *What is the relationship between students' academic performance (measured in average marks) and their absenteeism?*

Analysis of academic performance of the respondents

The academic performance of the students in Mathematics, English and Science as well as how frequently the students absent themselves from school was analysed. For descriptive purpose, the variables were categorised. The results on the performance of students in Mathematics showed that only 6.1% of them obtained very good and excellent grades (70%-100%). This category also doubles as the one with the least number of students falling within it. On the contrary, 38% of the students representing a greater proportion obtained weak pass/pass (30%-49%) in Mathematics. This means majority of students did not perform very well in the course. In addition, 25.2% of the students obtained credit passes (50%-59%), 13.7% obtained good grades (60%-69%). Nonetheless, as high as 16.9% of the student's failed (0%-29%) in Mathematics during the terminal examination.

Similar to their performance in mathematics, only 5.45 of the students had very good/excellent grades in English language in their terminal examination. Like Mathematics, weak pass/pass again recorded the highest number of students falling within its range of 30%-49%. There were 41.2% of the students who obtained weak pass/pass in English language during their terminal examination. For the remaining students, 17.4% had good grades (60%-69%), 26% had credit passes (50%-59%) while the remaining 9.8% failed their English language terminal examination.

In science, as high as 10% of the students failed-that is they obtained grades between 0% and 29%. Up to 39% of them obtained weak pass/pass in the subject while 30.9% of them had credit passes. Just like the other courses, only 5.9% of the students obtained very good/excellent grades in science during their terminal examination.

The average or overall performance of the students in the three courses revealed that just 3.4% of them had very good/excellent grades, 12.7% had good grades whereas 8.6% of them also failed the courses imply they obtained grades below 30% in the exams. There were 43.1% of the students who had weak pass/pass while 32.1% obtained credit passes.

Table 16: Academic performance variables

Item	Score	Frequency	Percent
Frequency of absenteeism	None	92	22.5
	1-2	106	26
	3-5	93	22.8
	6-9	65	15.9
	10 or more	52	12.7
Mathematics	Very Good/Excellent (70%-100%)	25	6.1
	Good (60%-69%)	56	13.7
	Credit (50%-59%)	103	25.2
	Weak Pass/Pass (30%-49%)	155	38
	Fail (0%-29%)	69	16.9
English	Total	408	100
	Very Good/Excellent (70%-100%)	22	5.4
	Good (60%-69%)	71	17.4
	Credit (50%-59%)	107	26.2
	Weak Pass/Pass (30%-49%)	168	41.2
Science	Fail (0%-29%)	40	9.8
	Total	408	100
	Very Good/Excellent (70%-100%)	24	5.9
	Good (60%-69%)	58	14.2
	Credit (50%-59%)	126	30.9
Overall Performance	Weak Pass/Pass (30%-49%)	159	39
	Fail (0%-29%)	41	10
	Total	408	100
	Very Good/Excellent (70%-100%)	14	3.4
	Good (60%-69%)	52	12.7
Overall Performance	Credit (50%-59%)	131	32.1
	Weak Pass/Pass (30%-49%)	176	43.1
	Fail (0%-29%)	35	8.6
	Total	408	100

Source: Author's Survey, 2019

Analysis of the relationship between academic performance of students and the number of times they absent themselves from school

The fourth objective of the study was to find out how students' academic performance measured in average marks affects the number of times they absent themselves from school. As a result of this, their test scores in three main core subjects such as Mathematics, English and Science in addition with their overall performance in the above three subjects were compared with the number of times students have absented themselves from school in a term to ascertain their association with absenteeism. Thus, linear regression was used to establish the relationship between the above subjects with absenteeism. The use of linear regression was as result of the fact that both dependent and independent variables were continuous.

Table 17: Linear Multiple Regression on Test Score in Mathematics, English and Science and the number of times students absent themselves from school

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	6.677	1.156		5.776	.000
Test score in Maths	-.024	.028	-.062	-.866	.387
Test score in English	.003	.030	.007	.104	.917
Test score in Science	-.024	.030	-.058	-.804	.422

F-statistics= 1.486, p-value= 0.218 R= .104, R²=0.011,

Table 17 shows a linear multiple regression results on the test scores in Mathematics, English and Science in relation to the number of times students absent themselves from school. The results showed that test score or marks obtained in Mathematics does not significantly impact on the number of students who absent themselves from school ($\beta=-.062$; $p=0.387$). The results further showed that test score or marks obtained in English does not significantly influence the number of times students absent themselves from school ($\beta=-.007$; $p=0.917$). Again, the results showed that test score or marks obtained in Science does not significantly impact on students' absenteeism ($\beta=-.058$; $p= .804$).

Table 18: Test Score in All subjects and students' absenteeism

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	6.164	.815		7.566	.000
Test Score in all subjects (math's, English and science)	-.393	.180	-.108	-2.180	.030

F-stats= 4.750, P-value=0.03, R²= 0.012, R=0.108

Table 24 shows results on the relationship between test score in all subjects (Mathematics, Science and English) and students' absenteeism. The results showed that test score or marks obtained in all subjects significantly impact their absenteeism ($\beta=-.393$; $t=-2.180$; $p=0.03$). There is a statistically significant relationship because the p-value which is 0.03 is less than 0.05. In this case, the R² suggested that a change in test score in all the subjects by one

mark explained 1.2% variation in the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. Hence, it is said that there is a statistically significant association between test score or marks obtained in all subjects and students' absenteeism.

Qualitative research question four: *How do parents, teachers and community leaders perceive the influence of students' academic performance on their absenteeism?*

In order to add to the quantitative data collected from the study participants, focus group discussions and interviews were conducted. The results from the focus group discussions and interviews shed light on the quantitative data.

One parent said:

“Yes, repetitions of such students etc. prevent them from attending school always. All the same when such students try to go to school always they improve” [A participant from Praaso, interview]

Another parent also responded:

“Children who are academically weak think that s/he will not waste his/her time to go to school just to score zero or low works” (A participant from Konongo, interview)

One parent further added that:

“My children are four and the performance of the last born is better than the rest and such goes to school almost all the time. The first three children normally absent themselves” (A parent from Praaso, Interview)

One Teacher said:

“Our students who are academically good come to school all the time. They only absent themselves when they are seriously sick” (A participant from Praaso, interview)

Another teacher remarked:

“Academic standard of a child helps a lot. Children who normally come to school always are those with good academic records. Such students perform well in all subjects and students are motivated to come to school all the time” (A participant from Dwease, FGD)

‘Absenteeism tends to be higher among low ability students and low among higher ability students. This becomes worst when the low ability students are laugh at by their colleagues because of their weak performance’ (A participant from Odumasi, FGD)

“The academic performance has a role to play because a child who performs very in school is always present in school. However, the one who is not and knows that s/he does not fancy so that much” (A participant from Konongo, FGD)

From the qualitative data, it could be seen that there is a relationship between absenteeism and students’ academic performance.

Summary of Findings

The study found that there was no relationship between the fathers’ level of education and their children’s absenteeism. Again, the study found that there was no relationship between educational level of mother and

students' absenteeism. The findings from the qualitative data appeared to contradict with the quantitative data regarding education level of parents and its influence on the absenteeism of the students. It was identified that parents who have higher education are able to ensure prompt payment of the fees of their wards.

The study found no statistically significant association between father's income and their children's absenteeism. The study, however, found a statistically significant association between mother's income and children's absenteeism. The study also found no relationship between the economic activity of the parents and their children's absenteeism. The study found an association between mothers' income and their students' absenteeism.

The study found no statistically significant association between number of times guardians/parents visit students in school and students' absenteeism. The study however, found a statistically significant association between numbers of times guardians/parents attend PTA meetings and their children's absenteeism; thus, parents are encouraged to attend PTA meeting. The study again found a significant relationship between the person students are staying with and students' absenteeism. The findings from the study showed that average marks obtained in Mathematics, English and Science independently do not have any significant association with students' absenteeism. In that vein, the number of times a pupil is absent from school has no association with lower academic performance in English, Mathematics or Science. Nonetheless, the results showed that test score or marks obtained in all subjects (English, Mathematics or Science collectively) significantly impact on students' absenteeism.

Discussion

Relationship between Parents' level of education and their children's absenteeism

The study found no statistically significant influence of father's level of education on the number of times students have absented themselves from school in a term. The implication is that fathers' level of education is not associated with the number of times students' absent themselves from school in a terms. This finding appears difficult to be explained and for that matter is beyond my expectation. Like the fathers' level of education, mothers' level of education was not significantly associated with absenteeism among students. This implies that mothers' level of education does not influence their wards to be absented from school. Hence, it can be said that parents' level of education is not a good predictor of absenteeism among students in the study area and Ghana in particular. This finding contradicts a previous study that has established that students whose parents have had a college of education have a lower rate of school absenteeism (Balkis et al., 2016). This contradiction could be linked to the study design and the study area. This finding is, therefore, important to educational stakeholders as it will guide them in the formulation of educational policies aimed at reducing absenteeism among students in Ghana and the study area in particular.

Relationship between parents' economic status and students' absenteeism

Unlike the fathers' level of income, the study revealed an association between mothers' level of income and the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. This implies that mothers' level of income contributes to absenteeism among students. The reason is that mothers with

higher income are able to afford the educational expenditure of their wards compared with those with lower income. This was confirmed in the qualitative data analysis. For instance, financial constraints as a component of economic status result in absenteeism among students which is in line with the study conducted by Amalu and Abang (2016) in cross river state. Amalu and Abang in their study on school absenteeism among primary school students in cross river state indicated that financial constraints serve as a cause of absenteeism among students.

It is well explained in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) that performance of an action is mostly dependent on at least some degree of non-motivational and availability of needed resources (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, the absence of the needed resources would prevent an individual from performing an action such as going to school which requires resource support. This trend explains why as a result of parents' inability to provide for the books of their wards, they are not able to go to school. For instance, it was explained that students might have the desire to go to school, but if their parents do not have money, they may be absent from school. This is exemplified in the TPB.

This statement depicts that parent's inability to provide the necessary educational needs or logistics for their wards could result in absenteeism among students. Their inability to provide the needed educational needs of their wards may result from their poor economic activity. Students from such family also tend to work to support their families and meet their basic needs of life. The above discussion points to the fact that parents' economic status plays an essential role in absenteeism among J. H. S students. This is not

surprising because a large body of literature has established association between absenteeism and child poverty (economic status) (D'Agostino et al., 2018; Ingul et al., 2012; Morrissey, T. W., Hutchison, L. A., & Winsler, 2014; Rotham, 2001; Romero & Lee, 2007; Tamiru et al., 2016; Zhang, 2003). The implication for policy and practice is that absenteeism could have negative implications on academic achievement and performance of people from low income families (Gershenson et al., 2017).

It was explained that parents who are into economic activity might get money to pay for their wards fees and other educational needs and so their children would not be absenting themselves from school. Apart from that, some of the participants raised the concern that parents who are engaged in economic activity are able to feed their children and provide them with pocket keeping money.

Thus, parents with good economic status do not only pay fees but also they provide other books for their wards to improve their learning in school. However, one parent admitted that as a result of the fact that she is not engaged in any economic activity, her children mostly absent themselves from school because she is not able to provide certain critical educational materials such as books. This result could be linked to poverty which has also been found to contribute to absenteeism (Badu et al., 2017 ;). It is a fact that parents who are wealthy would be able to provide the basic needs of their children compared with those who are financially unsound as evident in the above literature. Thus, one parent said that she struggles to pay for the school fees (including extra classes, printing fee, cultural fee, light bill, computer fee and

sports fee) of her ward and that the school authorities have been sacking the ward from school.

Relationship between family ties and students' absenteeism

The study found that the number of times guardians/parents visit students in school significantly does not impact on the number of times students absent themselves from school. This means that the number of times guardians/parents visit to students in school is not a good measure of checking absenteeism among students at the basic level. However, the study reported that the number of times of attending PTA meeting was significantly associated with the number of times students absent themselves from school. Thus, attendance at PTA meeting should be encouraged among parents as it explains absenteeism among students. The study further found that there was association between the person students are staying with and the number of times they absent themselves from school in a term. This finding suggests that parents should regularly monitor and check the kind of people they give their wards to them to stay with since this could impact on their absenteeism. The above findings suggest that family ties have important association with students' absenteeism. Empirical evidence has shown that students who live with parents or at least one parent are more likely to attend school than students who are living with no parents at all (Henry, 2007; Yuksek & Solakoglu, 2016).

Relationship between academic performance of students and the number of times they absent themselves from school

The study revealed that none of the individual subjects considered (Mathematics, English and Science) was associated with the number of times

students absent themselves from school in a term. However, the study found an association between the collective subjects (Mathematics, English and Science) and the number of times students absent themselves from school. This finding was in line with the qualitative finding. Past and current studies have shown that students with a higher rate of absenteeism have a negative view about their academic ability and the vice versa (Balkis et al., 2016; Corville-Smith et al., 1998; Reid, 1982; Southworth, 1992). Some studies have indicated that absence from class is associated with lower testing performance (Gottfried, 2015; Gottfried & Kirksey, 2017). This finding is critical to educational stakeholders including Ghana Education Service, Ministry of Education, and Head Teachers in the formulation of educational policies aimed at decreasing absenteeism among students in Ghana especially the study area.

Summary of the chapter

The study found that there was no relationship between fathers' level of education and their children's absenteeism. Again, the study found that there was no relationship between educational level of mother and students' absenteeism. The findings from the qualitative data appeared to contradict with the quantitative data regarding education level of parents and its influence on the absenteeism of the students. It was identified that parents who have higher education are able to ensure prompt payment of the fees of their wards. The qualitative data however showed that parents' level of education influences absenteeism among J. H. S students in the study area because such parents are able to ensure prompt payment of the fees of their wards.

The study found no statistically significant association between father's income and their children's absenteeism. The study however found therefore a statistically significant association between mother's income and children's absenteeism. The study also found no relationship between the economic activity of the parents and their children's absenteeism. The study found an association between mothers' income and their students' absenteeism. The qualitative data showed that parents' economic activity influences absenteeism among J. H. S students.

The study found no statistically significant association between number of times guardians/parents visit students in school and students' absenteeism. The study however, found a statistically significant association between numbers of times guardians/parents attend PTA meetings and their children's absenteeism; thus, parents are encouraged to attend PTA meeting. The study again found a significant relationship between the person students are staying with and students' absenteeism. The findings from the study showed that average marks obtained in Mathematics, English and Science independently do not have any significant association with students' absenteeism. In that vein, the number of times a pupil is absent from school has no association with lower academic performance in English, Mathematics or Science. Nonetheless, the results show that test score or marks obtained in all subjects (English, Mathematics or Science collectively) significantly impact on students' absenteeism. The findings have adequately support the literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore factors influencing J. H. S students' absenteeism in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality of Ghana. The previous chapter was devoted to results and discussion on factors of J. H. S students' absenteeism in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality of Ghana. Convergent parallel mixed methods approach with qualitative and quantitative strands of research was adopted. The study was conducted in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed to recruit the study participants. A sample size of 408 students, 60 parents, 60 teachers and 42 Community (Opinion) leaders were used. Questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion guides were used to take data from the study participants. The questionnaire was pre-tested at Patriensa Presby Junior High School and 25 students were used during the pre-test without any problem. As part of the pre-test some teachers and parents were interviewed. Quantitative data were analysed using frequencies, percentages, linear regression and Analysis of Variance(ANOVA) while qualitative data were analysed using content analysis supported by direct quotations. The response or participation rate was 100%.

Based on the preceding discussions, this chapter of the study is devoted to summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations identified to improve the absenteeism situation among students in the Asante Akyem

Central Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana and beyond. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the summary of findings in relation to factors contributing to J. H. S students' absenteeism in Asante Akyem Central Municipality of Ghana. The second section concludes the entire study on factors contributing to J. H. S students' absenteeism in Asante Akyem Central Municipality of Ghana. The third part recommends strategies for minimizing the impacts of factors contributing to J. H. S students' absenteeism in Asante Akyem Central Municipality of Ghana.

Summary of Findings based on Research Questions

Research question one: Relationship between parents' level of education and students' absenteeism

The first objective evaluated the influence of parents' level of education on the number of times the students absent themselves from school in a term. ANOVA analytical framework was used to determine the relationship between the independent variable (level of education of the parents) and the dependent variable (number of time the students absent themselves from school). There was no relationship between the fathers' level of education and the number of times students have absented themselves from school in a term. Similarly, the study found that no relationship exists between educational level of mother and students' absenteeism.

That notwithstanding, the findings from the qualitative data appeared to contradict with the quantitative data regarding educational level of parents and its influence on absenteeism of students. It was identified that parents who have higher education are able to ensure prompt payment of the fees of their wards. Also, such parents are able to monitor their children and make sure

they are always in school. Thus, it was revealed from the FGDs that knowledge on the benefits of education is also essential to help reduce absenteeism among students. To this end, parents with lower levels of education may lack the necessary knowledge and for that matter does not know why their children should attend school. Such parents may feel reluctant to encourage their wards to go to school on a regular basis. The relationship between parents' level of education and absenteeism was not one sided. As a consequence, some parents believed that since they did not go to school, they will do their best possible to ensure that their children have access to good quality education. Others were also of the view that they did not attend school and so they would not enrol their children in school. This observation is because they do not value education.

Research question two: Relationship between parents' economic status and students' absenteeism

The second objective of the study examined the influence of parents' economic status on the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. A linear regression was used to analyze the data on the fathers' and mothers' income in relation to the number of times students absent themselves from school. The study found no statistically significant association between father's income and the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. The study however, found therefore a statistically significant association between mother's income and the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. The study also found no relationship between the economic activity of the parents and the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term.

Despite this, the evidence from qualitative data revealed that economic status of parents influence the number of times students absent themselves from school. Parent's inability to provide the necessary educational needs or logistics for their wards could result in absenteeism among students. Their inability to provide the needed educational needs of their wards may result from their poor economic activity. On the other hand, parents who are into economic activities might get money to pay for their wards fees and other educational needs and so their children would not be absenting themselves from school. This result could be linked to poverty which has also been found to contribute to absenteeism.

Research question three: Relationship between family ties and students' absenteeism.

The third objective of the study examined the relationship between family ties and the number of times students absent themselves from school. The study found no statistically significant association between number of times guardians/parents visit students in school and the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. The study however, found a statistically significant association between numbers of times guardians/parents attend PTA meetings and the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term; thus, parents are encouraged to attend PTA meetings. The study again found a significant relationship between the person students are staying with and the number of times they absent themselves from school in a term in a term. Peaceful coexistence between students and their families or person they are staying with thus have

influence on the number of times they absent themselves from school in a term.

Research question four: Relationship between students' academic performance (Measured in average marks) and students' absenteeism

The fourth objective of the study conducted analysis of the relationship between academic performance (measured in average marks obtained in Mathematics, English and Science) of students and the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. The findings from the study showed that average marks obtained in Mathematics, English and Science independently do not have any significant association with the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. In that vein, the number of times a pupil is absent from school has no association with lower academic performance in English, Mathematics or Science. Nonetheless, the results showed that test score or marks obtained in all subjects (English, Mathematics or Science collectively) significantly impact the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. This finding is supported by evidence in literature where students with a higher rate of absenteeism have a negative view about their academic ability and the vice versa.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore factors contributing to Junior High School Students' absenteeism in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality of Ghana. The study presents some important findings which contributes to literature. First,

the study found an association between mothers' income and the number of times the students absent themselves from school in a term. Two, participation of parents' in PTA meetings was also found to have an association with the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term.

Out of the four hypotheses tested, three were validated. It was established that there was a statistically significant relationship between mothers' income, persons' students are staying with and academic performance (Mathematics, Science and English collectively) in relation to the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. This is an important contribution to knowledge.

The findings of this study therefore have implications for the implementation and formulation of educational policy aimed to reduce absenteeism among JHS students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Regular participation in PTA meetings by parents/guardians

The study found that the number of times parents or guardians participated in PTA meetings had an association with the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. Owing to the significance of this to reducing absenteeism, the study recommends that parents and guardians should endeavour to participate in PTA meetings periodically. Attempts should be made by school management boards to sanction parents who absent themselves from PTA meetings.

Economic empowerment of women

The study found that the mothers' income has a statistically significant association with the number of times students absent themselves from school in a term. This is because women tend to take custody of their children during divorce. As a result, when they are unable to earn higher income, they find it difficult to provide learning materials for their wards and this child poverty results in absenteeism. Therefore, the study recommends that emphasis should be placed on improving the economic potentials of women. By so doing, they would earn higher income and be able to take proper care of their children.

Provision of Adequate Teaching and Learning Resources for Junior High Schools

The Ghana Education Service should provide adequate teaching and learning resources for junior high schools in order to improve student academic performance with the view to reducing absenteeism. This recommendation is based on the findings that there is a relationship between academic performance and absenteeism.

Areas for future research

- a. Future research should investigate personal attributes of the students that influence absenteeism. This current study examined factors that influence absenteeism among students, but excluded personal factors such as age and health status among others since these factors also have impact on students' absenteeism.
- b. Future research should also look at the influence of absenteeism on academic performance of the students. This study treated absenteeism as a dependent variable and as such, the study could not establish

relationship between absenteeism and academic performance. This gap should be filled by further probe into this area.

- c. Future research should be conducted to examine the factors that influence absenteeism among students in public and private schools since this study only focused on public schools.
- d. Since this study did not cover school factors, it is recommended that a relationship between schools factors (personnel, teaching and learning resources) and absenteeism should be explored.



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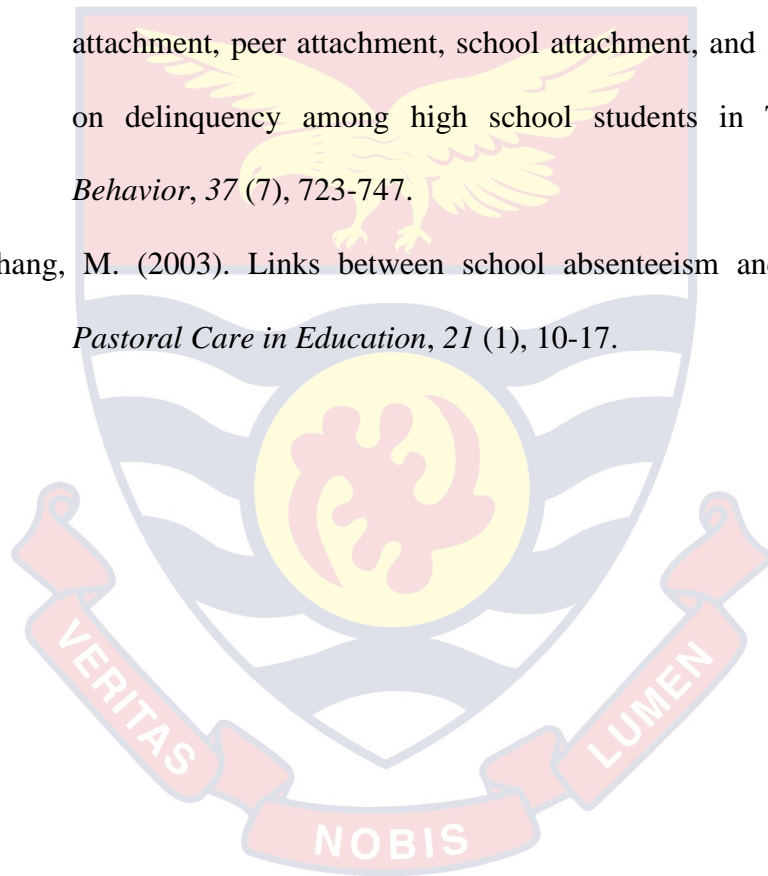
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APPENDIX A

Ref. No.....

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This is strictly an academic exercise, partial fulfillment of MPhil Educational Psychology programme. The purpose is to elicit some factors that can contribute to the improvement of education in Asante Akyem Central Municipality.

PERSONAL DATA FOR STUDENTS

1. Sex Male [] Female []
2. Age (in years) 11 [] 12 [] 13 [] 14 [] 15 [] 16 [] 17 [] 18 []
3. Class JHS 1 [] JHS 2 [] JHS 3 []

FAMILY TIES

4. Who is currently taking care of your education?
Parents [] Grandparents [] Family friends [] Sibling-brothers and sisters []
5. How would you rate your relationship with the person you are staying with?
Very good [] Good [] Very poor [] Poor []
6. How many times do your guardians/parents visit your schools in a term...times

7. Does your guardian/parents attend the parent-teachers' association meetings?

Yes [] No []

ABSENTEEISM AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

8. Number of times/days a student was absent from a school within a term (refer to the school register/terminal report) -----

9. Marks scored by students in the following subjects (refer to terminal report of the pupil)

	Subject	Marks scored in percentage	Average scored in the three subjects
a.	Mathematics		
b.	English		
c.	Science		

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

PARENTS' ECONOMIC STATUS

FATHER

10. Are you working?

Yes [] No []

11. If yes, what is your current work?

Farming [] Trading [] Driving [] Civil/public servant []

Artisan [] Private sector []

12. Are you fully employed?

Causal [] fully employed []

13. What time do you go to work?

Before 6 am [] between 6 and 8 am [] After 8am []

14. What time do you return from work?

Before 3 pm [] between 3 and 5 pm [] After 5 pm []

15. What is your average monthly income?

MOTHER

16. Are you employed?

Yes [] No []

17. If yes, what work do you do?

Farming [] Trading [] Driving [] Civil/public servant []

Artisan [] Private sector []

18. Are you fully employed?

Causal [] fully employed []

19. What time do you go to work?

Before 6 am [] between 6 and 8 am [] After 8am []

20. What time do you return from work?

Before 3 pm [] between 3 and 5 pm [] After 5 pm []

21. What is your average monthly income?.....

PARENTS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION

FATHER

22. Are you educated?

Yes [] No []

23. If yes, what is your level of education?

BECE/MSLC [] GCE/SHS [] Cert A. [] Diploma/degree []

Masters/PhD []

MOTHER

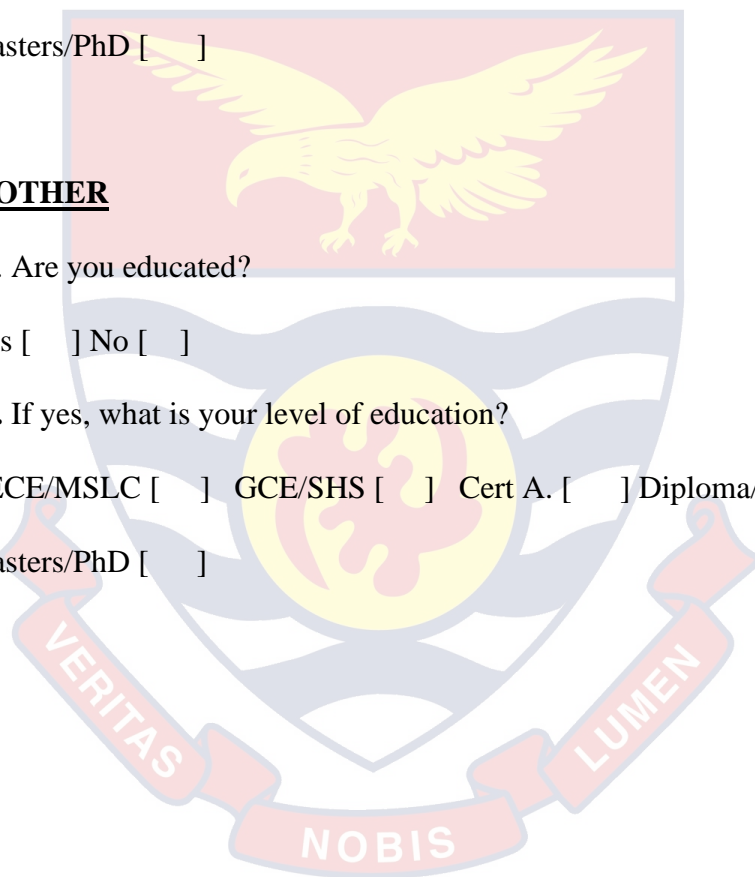
24. Are you educated?

Yes [] No []

25. If yes, what is your level of education?

BECE/MSLC [] GCE/SHS [] Cert A. [] Diploma/degree []

Masters/PhD []



APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES

This is strictly an academic exercise, partial fulfillment of MPhil Education Psychology programme. The purpose is to elicit some factors that can contribute to the improvement of education in Asante Akyem Central Municipality.

PERSONAL DATA FOR STUDENTS

1. Gender
2. Education level
3. Age

FACTORS INFLUENCING ABSENTEEISM

4. Is absenteeism a problem in this community?
5. Does the economic situation of members in this community has any role to play in students' absenteeism?
6. Does parents' level of education have any role to play in students' absenteeism?
7. Do the family ties have effect on attendance?
8. Does students' academic performance have a role to play in absenteeism?
9. Does attendance at the PTA meeting affect absenteeism?
10. Apart from PTA meeting, do opinion leaders meet the teachers in the community to think of way of curbing absenteeism?
11. In your opinion, does academic performance of students' influence absenteeism?

12. Are there already existing measures to curb absenteeism in this community?

13. What can be done to solve the problem of absenteeism?

