

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE CAUSES AND EARLY
INTERVENTION STRATEGIES ON HIGH RATES OF ABSENTEEISM AND
TRUANCY IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE NSAWAM ADOAGYIRI
MUNICIPAL

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**A Project Report in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of
Education and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of requirements
for award of the Master of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree**

DECEMBER, 2018

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, CAROLINE ATTA-NIMOH, declare that this project report, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of project report as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: PROF. MARTIN AMOAH

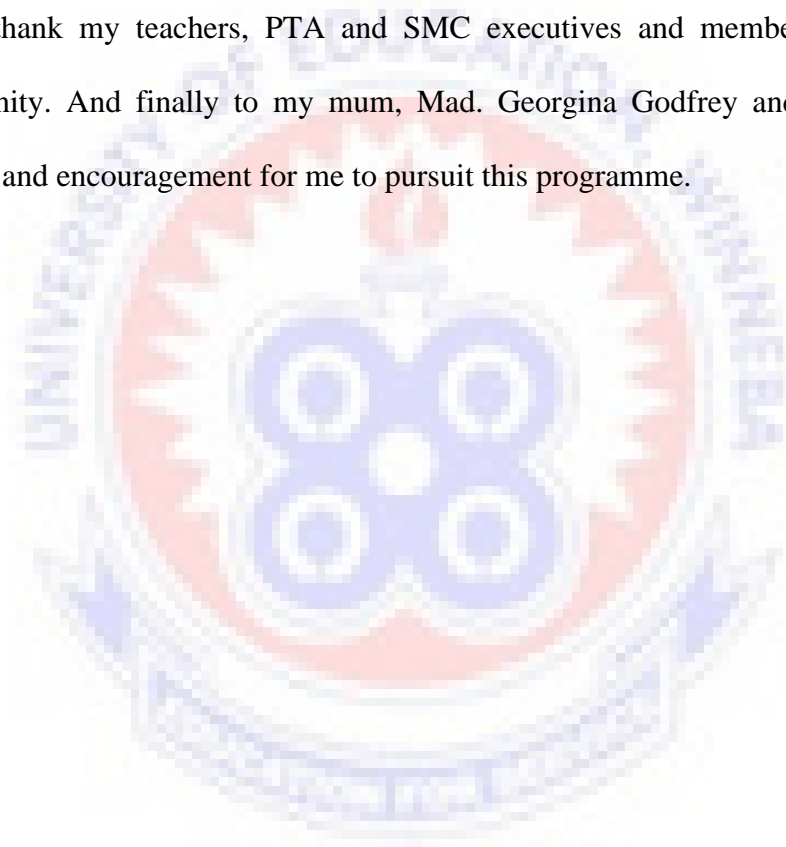
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DEDICATION

To my sons Marshall Anthony Azaglo and James Marcus Elim Azaglo.



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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to find out community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy, their prevention and early intervention strategies in Junior High schools in the Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipality. The objectives of the study were

to determine community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools, ascertain perceived dominant causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools and to establish the prevention and early intervention strategies to mitigate high rates of absenteeism and truancy in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipality. Cross sectional survey design was used for the study. The target population for the study consisted of all the teachers, parents and stakeholders such as NGO, CBO, Religious bodies, Traditional rulers, Educationist. The accessible population consisted of 280 teachers, 60 parents and 30 stakeholders. Convenience sampling was used to select a sample size of 185 for the study. Questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data for the study. The study found among others that the child's lack of motivation to achieve academically at school is a community's view on the cause of truancy. Parental neglect of child in the educational process is a domestic factor that contributes to students' truancy. All the prevention and early intervention strategies found, when implemented very well could help to improve students' school attendance to reduce truancy if not to avert truancy. It is recommended based on the findings and conclusions that the Ghana Education Service should organize regular training workshops for head teachers and teachers on how to avoid the school factors that cause students truancy in school to improve academic performance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

There is the perception that high rate of truancy exist in junior high schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal of the Eastern Region of Ghana which has been a major concern among parents of the students in the school community as it has been an issue for discussion at Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. Unconfirmed reports disclose that there is a higher degree of truancy among students in the area studied.

Governments, parents and benevolent societies all over the world spend time and resources to bring up students to become useful people for future leadership roles. As it is the case, the development of any nation depends on the education of its human resources. Schooling therefore has become a necessity for the acquisition of knowledge, training and a foundation for students' moral formation, bedrock for inventions and strong future sustenance. Consequently, the government of Ghana introduced free compulsory universal and basic education (FCUBE) to get young children educated. Again, several scholarship schemes both public and private have been instituted and given to students to further their education to higher institutions of learning. All these are measures to transmit values and knowledge to students and guide them in learning a culture, pattern their behavior in the ways of adulthood, and leading them toward ultimate responsibilities in the world.

Dougherty (1999) indicated that truancy and absenteeism have been problems within the school systems. School professionals have been working on addressing this issue ever since. Research, has shown that when children miss school, they miss out on learning, which leads to poor grades and feelings of failure, which in turn leads to more

absences (Phillips, 1995). It would seem then that school attendance is essential to one's academic success. According to the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau (2000) of the United States of America, 15,600 students or 1.6 %, of the total student enrollment in the Wisconsin public schools are truant or absent without an excuse each day. Also, during the 1998-1999 school year, 31.1 % of total absences in these public schools were as a result of truancy. This trend of truancy in Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau (2000) of the United States of America is very alarming and there is the perception that the same report is replicated in Africa of which Ghana and for that matter Nsawam-Adoagyiri District is not an exception.

Unsubstantiated reports indicate that there is a correlation between truancy and daytime crimes involving burglary and vandalism all over the world. Truant students are more likely to drop out of school. All of this places extra costs, financial and personal, on not only the student, but on the community as well as parents. Gabb (1982) posited that unexcused absence from school by a minor that exceed the number of such absences allowed under state law is deemed one of the major disruptive problems among students in Ghana. In 1995, high school dropouts were almost twice as likely to be unemployed as high school graduates (U.S. Department of Education & U.S. Department of Justice, 1996, p. 1). Unemployment is then a financial burden to both the welfare and unemployment systems. Another financial burden to the community is from the truants who commit crimes. This creates increased costs on the courts, the police, social welfare department and insurance companies.

Governments all over the world spend greater part of its budget solely on the improvements of the education sector which is the engine of growth of every nation to educate students who are the future leaders of every nation. It is for this reason that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), parents and teachers and other associations

and societies devote their time and resources to educate students to become useful citizens to take up future leadership roles in their various countries. Every child of school going age is obliged to go to school and it is for this reason that the government of Ghana introduced the free and compulsory universal basic education (FCUBE) to educate its citizenry. Students are also given scholarships in line with the government's policy on education for all for students to further their education to whatever level they wish to reach. Despite these interventions, there is still the perception of high degree of absenteeism in Ghana's educational institutions. This has motivated the researcher to find out community perceptions of the causes of absenteeism and its prevention and early intervention strategies.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As stated early on, there is the perception that high rates of absenteeism and truancy exist in junior high schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal of the Eastern Region of Ghana which has been a major concern among parents of the students in the school as if has been an issue for discussion at Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. Unconfirmed reports disclose that there is a higher degree absenteeism and truancy among students in the area studied as depicted in Table 1.1. Many of the same causes of high rates of absenteeism lead to truancy when it is left unidentified and untreated. Therefore, prevention and early intervention services that foster a sense of caring and support towards students with high rates of absenteeism are paramount in this situation. The study therefore seek to assess teachers perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy, their prevention and early intervention strategies in Junior High schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality.

Table 1.1 Statistics on Absenteeism in the Study Area

JHS YEAR GROUP IN THE CIRCUIT	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF DAYS ABSENT	PERCENTAGE ABSENT
2013/2014	1498	415	28
2014/2015	1512	420	28
2015/2016	1506	315	21

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy, their prevention and early intervention strategies in Junior High schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specifically the study seeks to:

1. Determine community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality.
2. Ascertain perceived dominant causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality.
3. Establish the prevention and early intervention strategies to mitigate high rates of absenteeism and truancy.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality?
2. What are the perceived dominant causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality?
3. What are the prevention and early intervention strategies to mitigate high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will be useful to the policy makers, educational directors, teachers, parents and stakeholders to generate of new ideas to educate students to avoid truancy to improve their performance.

The outcome of this study will also add to knowledge about community perceptions of the causes of absenteeism and the prevention and early intervention strategies to help reduce truancy.

The outcome of the study will serve as a basis for further research on community perceptions of the causes of absenteeism and the prevention and early intervention strategies on truancy.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study explored community perceptions of the causes of truancy and high rates of excused and unexcused absences, their prevention and early intervention strategies in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality.

The study however was delimited to only selected Junior High Schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality due to financial and time constraints. Therefore, its application to a larger population or wider area was not reliable. Therefore, for a more complex assessment or evaluation, the views of the remaining schools in the Municipal will have to be surveyed to overcome this problem.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

Due to financial constraints, material and time, the sample was limited to Junior High Schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality. Some respondents delayed in filling the questionnaire so the researcher had to maintain constant reminders. Most of the respondents were initially reluctant to take part in the study since they felt it was waste of time because, no monetary value was placed on it.

Comparable studies should be carried out in the other Junior High Schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality to overcome this problem. In spite of these limitations, the researcher was able to collect the needed data for the study.

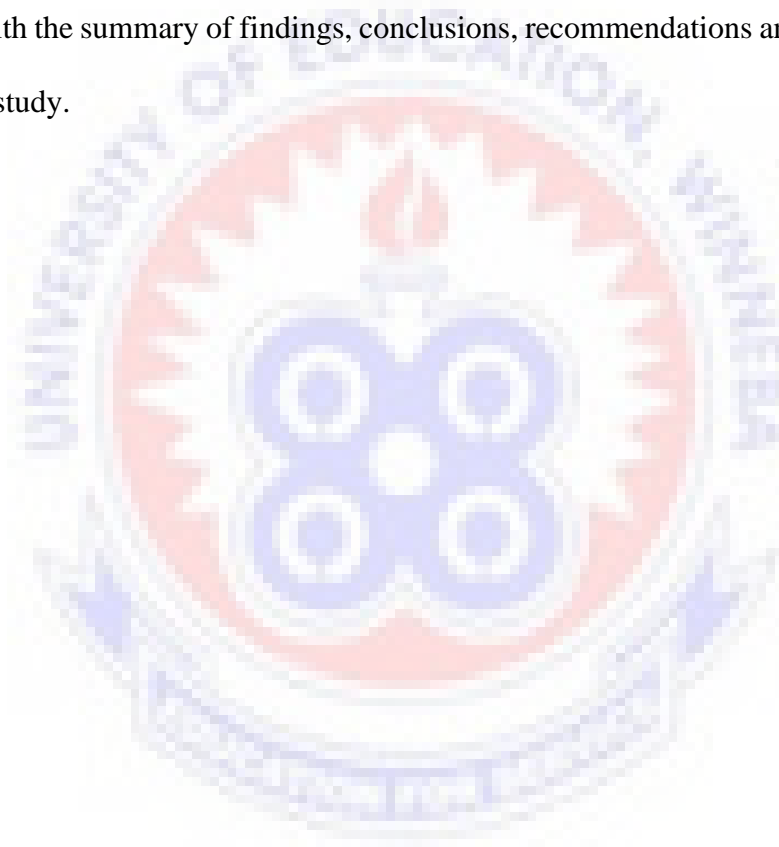
1.9 Organization of the Study

The study was divided into five chapters. Chapter One is the introduction which comprises, background to the study, statement of problem, purpose of the study,

objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitation of the study and the organization of the study.

Chapter Two is the review of the relevant literature while Chapter Three is the methodology which includes the introduction, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, reliability and validity of the instrument, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four deals with the analysis and discussions, and Chapter Five also deals with the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

Hart, Burts, Durland, Charlesworth, DeWolf and Fleege (1998) postulated that literature review is the selection of available documents (both published and unpublished) on the topic which contains information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfill certain aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated, and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed. The chapter provides a review of the related literature to the teacher perceptions about the causes and early intervention strategies on truancy in basic schools. The review dealt with what has been done internationally and what has been on the problem locally.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Researchers have difficulty properly and consistently defining student absenteeism (Reid, 2005; Teasley, 2004). Researchers use terms such as problematic absenteeism, truancy, and school refusal behavior interchangeably with the term absenteeism, making it difficult to understand the differences and similarities between the terms (Kearney, 2003, 2007; Reid, 2005). State and school districts also vary in how they define absenteeism due to their specific attendance policies and procedures (Kronholz, 2011).

According to Reid (2005), absenteeism is defined as simply not attending school, with or without an excuse. Problematic absenteeism often refers to being absent from school or class without a reason that would qualify as a legal and/or excused absence under the school's attendance policy, whether or not the parents have

knowledge or gave permission. The primary issue of chronic absenteeism, or truancy, is not that there is no excuse provided, rather the excuse is not a valid one. Reid (2005) described sub-types of student absenteeism: “specific lesson absence, post-registration absence, parentally condoned absence, psychological absence, school refusal behavior, and school phobia” (p. 59). Due to individuals’ different perspectives about which sub-types of absenteeism could be considered truancy most researchers provide situation specific definitions of truancy. School refusal behavior is a term that is used interchangeably with absenteeism and truancy (Kearny, 2007). The term is used to define absences from school due to difficulty attending school or remaining in school for the entire day. School refusal behavior covers many sub-types of students with problematic absenteeism, such as truancy, school phobia, and anxiety-based school refusal (Dube & Orpinas, 2009). Despite the sub-type of problematic absenteeism, the outcomes can still be detrimental to a student’s overall success in school (Henry & Huizinga, 2007; Roby, 2004).

According to Duodu (2003) truancy is a type of ‘delinquency’ or at least a “difficulty of adjustment” which is due primarily to what sociologists call “cultural conflict”. Similarly, Collins (1983) perceive truancy as the unexcused absence of a student which is often the first indicator that the student is losing his/her way and heading for trouble a few of which include dropping out of school and engaging in high risk behaviors. Thus, truancy is viewed as a gateway to criminal activity and students who are not in school on regular basis are more likely to become either victims or perpetrators of crime. The Los Angeles County Office of Education, blatantly exposing the precocious nature of truancy, asserts that it is “the most powerful predictor of delinquency”. Tyerman (1968) truancy is term for learners who are absent from school purely on their own initiative. In the words of Essuman and Ringdal (2002), truancy is

intentionally staying away from school without permission. They opined that this behavior is recurrent and not a one-time happening as leaving and not reaching school; walking alone or as a groups: spending the time playing football, riding by bicycle, hunting for birds or fruits or watching films at cinema halls are among others one common characteristics of truancy. According to Duodu, (2003) truancy is a habit acquired and exhibited by students which take different periods in the life of the truant student. He said among others that lateness; refused to attend school on the pretext of not having material needed in school for school work; on and off attendance of school where the truant might feign sickness or other such excuses; intentionally refusing to return to school after break period; and staying away from school doing co-curricular activities at school such as sports and games, and gardening, as a few manifestation of truancy in schools. An enabling environment must be created in a school that promotes a feeling of community, a place where the school, the parents, and the students work together towards a common goal of promoting lifelong learning. In order to accomplish this, we need to recognize each student's individual needs and meet those needs by building upon his or her strengths. For students, these needs may be academic, social, emotional, or physical in nature. They may stem from the child's genetic makeup or even his or her family, community, or school environment. For some students these needs manifest into excessive absences leading to truancy. These needs do not only results in, understanding the causes of truancy, but the prevention and early intervention strategies for addressing truancy and absenteeism. Therefore, the following sections will discuss the causes of truancy, the prevention and early intervention strategies used in fighting truancy and absenteeism. Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual framework on the perceptions about the Causes and Early Intervention Strategies on Truancy

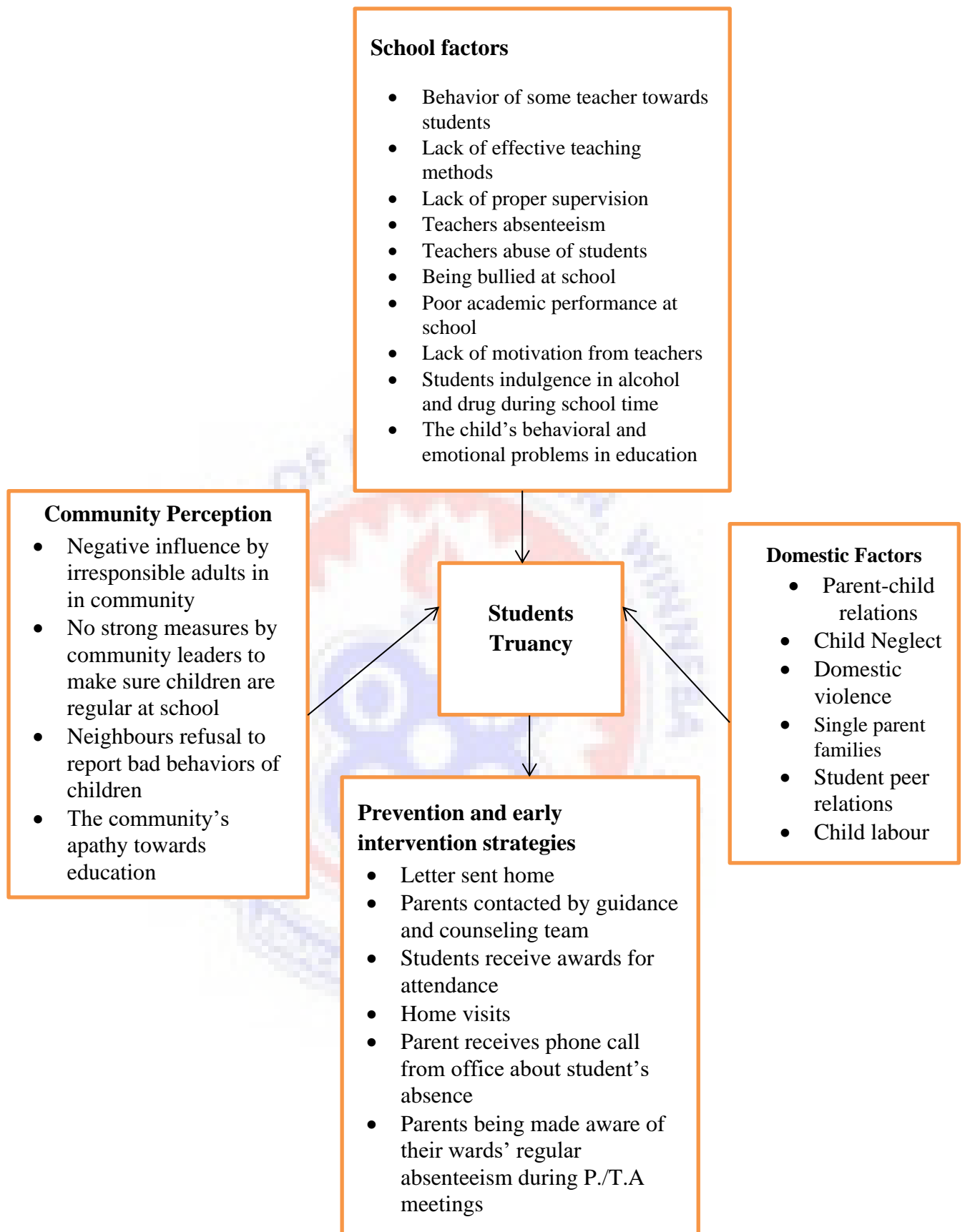


Fig. 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's construct 2018

ifies the presence of truancy in school. The left perception about causes of students' truancy. The

top rectangle signifies the domestic related factors that causes students truancy whilst the bottom rectangle present the prevention early intervention strategies.

2.2 Existence of Truancy in Secondary Schools in Ghana

The fact that truancy is a world-wide problem in education, one may conclusively accept without a shade of doubt that the menace exist in the secondary schools in Ghana. In a research study by Amisa (2002) investigating the causes of truancy in the Armed Forces Secondary School in Kumasi, Ashanti Region of Ghana, it was reported that truancy was real or prevalent in the school and that tutors, parents, administrators, the students themselves and the school environment were contributory factors to students truancy. However, there is no simple explanation for this unjustifiable absence by Students. Variables within the individual and within his or her family, home neighborhood and school are likely to be important. In the next sections of this chapter effort will be made to review available literature that relate to the causative factors of students' truancy.

2.3 Causes of Truancy

Every child is a unique individual, so are the causes of why he or she becomes truant. And, in most cases, it is not one single cause that leads to truancy, but rather a combination of risk factors that lead to some sort of school failure, which then leads to truancy (Reid, 2002). This section of the literature review will be dedicated to the description of the social, psychological, and educational causes of truancy.

2.3.1 Social

A relationship exists between truancy and social risk factors, like home environment and socioeconomic status. Home environment includes all aspects of the home environment, such as the number of parents in the home, the types of parenting styles, and the climate of the home. To begin with, the home environment risk factors of parenting style, parental lifestyle, and family conflict are identified as causes of truancy (Reid, 2002).

2.3.1.1 Parenting style

Parents whose children have bad experiences in school might not value the importance of schooling and getting school assignments and other work done. They might allow their wards to stay at home every time the child requests to do so as the parent does not care much about the schools and give excuses for school work not done.

Parents who have a neglectful style of parenting are not involved in their children's education. The neglect may include not getting their child the necessary supplies in order to be able to do their work, not getting their child to school, or not coming to meetings set up to address the attendance concerns (Woolfolk, 2005). Students who are victims of parental neglect as a result of death may also miss school because their parents are gone and they have to care for themselves and their siblings if any. Students who are victims of physical abuse by their parents may miss school because of injuries, thus making it critical to be able to identify the signs of abuse and neglect.

Home environment causes of parental lifestyle, includes the risk factor of parents who abuse alcohol and/or drugs (Reid, 2002). These parents are unavailable to support their children in their education and do not even bother to do so. These children

may miss school because their parents are unable to get them to school as they may be already drunk in the morning their children are supposed to go to school or the children staying home to take care of their younger siblings because the parent is too drunk, to take care of the home. At times these children have to stay home to take care of their drunken parent to get them meals and do the necessary house chores.

Another home environment risk factor as stated by Reid (2002) is family conflict, which includes arguing, violence, divorce, and poor sibling and parent to child relationships. In view of this, the student may be absent from school as a direct result of any one of these situations which may eventually lead to poor academic performance and therefore decrease the student's interest in schooling.

2.3.1.2 Low socioeconomic status of parents

Another risk factor that causes truancy is low socioeconomic status of parents as postulated by Reid (2002). Socioeconomic status according to Woolfolk (2005) is one's relative standing in the society based on income, power, background, and prestige. However, low socioeconomic status becomes a high risk factor for truancy, when combined with other risk factors. Woolfolk (2005) indicated that other risk factors are low self-esteem, learned helplessness, and cultural resistance as some of the student who come from families with low socioeconomic background have low self-esteem because of economic limitations in their daily activities which makes them to think that they are inferior and therefore are not supposed to be better at school as those with high socioeconomic background.

Cultural resistance is another social risk factor related with low socioeconomic status. Woolfolk (2005) stated that cultural resistance values are group beliefs about refusing to adopt the behaviors and attitudes of the majority culture. The consequence

of this is that students with low socioeconomic status will insist on keeping their group identity and refuse to rise above poverty unknowingly or knowingly and absent themselves from school, uncooperative attitude towards teachers and even refuse to study as postulated by Woolfolk (2005).

2.3.1.3 Child labor

Child Labor is also one of the factors that contribute to truancy and unexcused absence among students which are partly, caused by parents. In a paper titled, “The peripheralization of youth in labor market: Problems Analyses and Opportunities: Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany”, published in contemporary Education Policy (1983) stated that in both Britain and Germany a significant number of young people are being driven to the periphery of labor market. Such young people affected in this way typically are those who find very little that is positive in their experience of school. This effect of child labor underscores the reason for the global abhorrence.

Mendelievich (1979) stated that 4% of the world’s population who are fifteen years old or less participate in the labor force. Most of these working children live in the developing countries and normally work as unpaid family workers who help their families on the farm or in the small shops and commercial establishments. Children who work for third parties outside the family do not receive their wages but their parents get them.

The children also lose their income if they do attend school and their parents perceive that the cost of earning income far outweighs the benefits of education. Thus, it is really not uncommon to find students who are victims of child labor either making early appearance in school and cutting classes soon after or coming to school late and also leaving school earlier than normal closing hours.

It has been disclosed (Robinson, 2000) that in England many parents have serious doubt about the relevance and usefulness of today's school in preparing children for adult life. Some parents are also not interested in school for various reasons and have not lost any opportunity for not being at school. Some parents keep their children at home to help them with household activities while others collude with anxious students who are afraid to leave and go to school. This attitude of the parents encourages their wards to have low attendance in school.

In the United States of America, it has been quite explicit (Rice 1981) that parents of low socio-economic standing produce drop-out children. Many parents, who complete only fifth grade, often consider their wards graduating from junior high school to be sufficient. They sometimes discourage their children from attending school. Their older daughters are urged to stay at home to look after the younger sibling or to do house duties. The sons are also expected to go out and look for work to do to earn income to help the family.

In a discussion of the best way to manage truancy, Duodu (2003) states that the children he studied demonstrated some behavior disorders which are the outcomes of parental rejection, inconsistency, lack of love or over-protection. He added that such unfortunate wards experience too little real love and protection they lack sufficient motivation to accept their own society's demands and code of right and wrong. The study of Duodu (2003) thus finally concludes that four main factors are responsible for making the home environment a fertile ground for breeding truancy. These factors include poverty in the student's home which make the parents unable to provide all the school needs of the students such as uniforms, stationery and school fees. The parents' failure to fulfill this obligation can lead the student to the threshold of truancy.

Maltreatment of Children which is the maltreatment suffered at the hands of some parents and guardians can force some students into truancy. Maltreatment may take the form of denial of food or physical injuries administered to children. A child in this situation may not be regular at school. Lack of appreciation of the values of education as some parents and guardians decide when their wards should go to school and when they should stay at home to perform other chores. They can ask their wards to stay at home or even recall them from school to look after their younger siblings for parents or guardians to attend to their businesses or other social engagements (Duodu, 2003).

Duodu (2003) again stated that the breakdown of communal responsibility, that is when communal ownership and responsibility towards students have completely eroded the elderly, most of whom are themselves guardians, no longer question students why they are not in school when school is in session. This situation is due to the fact that the elderly in communities have decline this social responsibility for fear of attracting disrespectful behavior from students and incurring the displeasure of the student's parents or guardians. The literature so far presents a clear picture of many parents having lukewarm or negative attitude towards their wards' education and attendance to school, the obvious repercussion of which is truancy and irregular attendance of students to school.

A research conducted by Amisa (2002) reveals certain marked characteristics identified with families that constitute a fertile breeding ground/environment for truancy. The features were thus identified as families where parents unemployment or irregular employment in the norm; families where the father is away from home for long periods, either for reasons of work or other reasons; families on low income; families with an above average number of children; families overcoming or

experiencing marital disharmony such as parental divorce or separation; families in which the parents are uncooperative and or hostile to authority in general, and to school authorities in particular; families where the parents are not interested in their children's progress in school, and families where the parents do not insist that their children attend school or take note of their absence in school or do not insist on prompt arrival at school as manifested by their children oversleeping, being late and disliking school journey.

The literature reviewed under home environment as a causative factor of students truancy produce a glaring picture that students with severe truancy problems typically have many interrelated problems that are outside the school's influence.

According to Reid (2002) these problems which are among other things, lack of parental supervision, abusive and non-supportive home environment, and parents with overwhelming problems of their own are frustrating because they cannot be resolved by the school.

2.3.2 Psychological

According to Rettig and Crawford (2000), it is normal to associate fear and anxiety with the psychological development of childhood but do not interfere with their everyday functioning. Some children's fear is a phobia regarding some specific event, person, or situation at school which is irrational and interferes with their attendance, School phobia is usually seen when a child first begins kindergarten or during the transition from basic to senior high school.

Protracted absences from school and physical outbursts are all symptoms of school phobia. At school some students intentionally complain of being sick in order for school authorities to send them home to go and play. Heredity and environment are the two origins of school phobia (Rettig & Crawford, 2000). Some students who are

School phobia may be inherited through genetics, from one or both parents who has an anxiety disorder. Environmental factors that contribute to School phobia may also come from the environmental settings such as family issues like death, divorce, substance abuse, child abuse, uncomfortable school experiences. The researcher is of the view that, there is some relationship between social and psychological factors in connection with the causes of excused absences and truancy.

2.3.3 Educational

Educational issues are also factors that can contribute to student's truancy. Reid (2002) stated that some of these factors include enforcement of attendance policies, teacher to student relations, student to peer relations, high rate of bullying at school, and curriculum. May be it is not only home environment factors that has been inhibiting the student's schooling but rather the educational environment. It may be that a teacher's method of teaching is not appropriate for the students to understand and so to minimize truancy, needs assessments should be conducted by teachers to know the causes of truancy from the school environment perspective.

Supervision in the school is very important if the school is to maintain moral, academic standards and student's regularity and punctuality in class, therefore lack of effective supervision can cause students to become truants. According to Mankoe (2002), the ultimate purpose for supervision within a school therefore, is to create favorable circumstances for learning which, in actual fact, are devoid of any avoidable hindrances, through a healthy working relationship within the school. The relevance of supervision lies in its role in making effective schooling. Mortimore (cited in Swanstrom, 1995), describes effective school as one in which students progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake. In other words, effective school

adds extra value to its students' outcomes in comparison with other schools serving similar intakes. To Swanstrom (1995) what brings the difference between an effective school and that of less effective one is supervision. Supervision thus takes care of scrutinizing the curriculum, syllabuses and contents of subject areas, teaching and learning materials in terms of appropriates, quantity and quality and time, the materials which are available, timetabling, students' school attendance and suitability of learning environment and, above all, the teachers' knowledge, technical and social skills and methods of instruction.

The immediate stakeholders of effective supervision within the school setting include the head of institution, the staff and students leaders. These individuals, by virtue of their administrative roles in the school, are responsible for ensuring that there is generally a congenial atmosphere for free and effective teaching and learning in the school. According to Duodu (2003) the school head is bound by his position to ensure that all students in his or her benefit from all services the school provides without any hindrance. It is the administrative role of the head, in that regard, to promote cordial relationships between the staff and students.

Amisa (2002) provided the impact of supervision in schools as follows:

- i. Supervision develops and updates teachers' knowledge and competence.
- ii. It improves attitudes to work and individuals in the school.
- iii. It reduces the rate of irregular attendance, absenteeism, truancy and lateness of students.
- iv. It enables the head to give an instant summative evaluation of both teachers and students under him or her.
- v. It sets a right tone in the school for effective teaching and learning.
- vi. It helps to achieve the school's set goals.

He stated that the absence of effective supervision however, creates unpleasant situation which usually hinders the teaching and learning process and disturbs the tone of the school.

McDowell and Hostetler (1996) reiterated that guidance and counseling, as a process of supervision, should not be ignored or neglected in the school. Their reason is based on the fact that students who are receiving insufficient encouragement and guidance with their academic work get frustration and withdraw from school. Their reason is based on the fact that students who are receiving insufficient encouragement and guidance with their academic frustration will be more likely to consider first, tardiness and truanting, and later, discontinuing their studies.

2.3.3.1 Student's attitude

The students own character and attitude have a role to play in high rates of excused and unexcused absence. This includes the students' performance and attitude as well as peer group influence. Students who do not perform academically have low interest in schooling. Labeling of and discrimination against low-achievers in school is prevalent in secondary schools. Such students who are repeatedly brushed off into a bin labeled, 'non-readers', 'first grade repeaters'. 'opportunity class', 'poor students' and the like, immediately develop disinterestedness in academic work and run away from school (Chaube & Chaube, 2001). Amisa, (2002), also revealed that pressure and boredom are most mentioned by students as negative aspects of school academic work. They further explain that pressure to meet academic standards that seem unattainable may lead to discouragement, truancy and, eventually drop out of school. This observation has also been confirmed by Akumme (2003), that students who have low

grades all the time, they become frustrated, see themselves as failures and seek to cover up their frustration in truancy.

As stated by Duodu (2003), truancy occurs when students are unable to cope with the academic demands of the school. He attributes low achievement mainly to mental retardation and, or visual or hearing impairment. The students own character and attitude have a role to play in truancy. In relation to this, He attests to the fact that truants are identified with such vices as pilfering, fighting and constant disrespectfulness and may find the life uncomfortable in school or class. They therefore resort to truancy in order to escape external discipline that may be intended as a corrective measure.

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2.3.3.2 Teachers' Attitude

There is no doubt about the fact that teachers are very important in educating the child in the classroom setting. The attitude of teachers on their work in the classroom and that of the students may influence the students positively or negatively. For instance, a teacher who has a positive feeling towards students may inspire, and encourage students to be punctual in class and be serious in the learning environment. In contrast, a relaxed, and typically absent teacher whose attitude towards work and students would impact negatively in the learning process and is likely to cause problems for his or her students attendance to school.

A teacher's apathetic attitude towards teaching, consequently have a negative response from students which include truancy. Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005), describe this type of teaching as "cold and aloof"; 'unplanned and slipshod' 'dull and routine'. This nominal attitude demonstrated by a teacher makes his or her teaching easily predictable by some students who may in turn 'endure' the teacher's lesson or opt for something else, if there is an opportunity to do that.

According to Grant (2002) for effective teaching and learning the atmosphere in the classroom must be friendly. The atmosphere should make students feel they can trust their teacher and that they should know by the teacher's attitude that he or she is ready to help them. This instills confidence in the student and tremendously attracts and retains them in the classroom. They (students) see, in effect, the interaction with their teachers quite fruitful. In many cases however, the atmosphere has been terrible and unfriendly in the classroom. These attitudes of teachers put some fear and insecurity in the students which eventually makes them unable to speak in the presence of their teachers or to speak to their teachers for fear of being reprimanded or shouted on. This

situation, at the end of it all makes the student become truant as he or she would not have the interest and happiness to attend classes. Duodu (2003) stated that a dull student feels a hopeless failure; his life may be one of humiliating round of rebuke, disgrace and punishment.

2.3.3.3 Peer Group Influence

The Dictionary of Development and Educational Psychology (1986) explains the concept, 'peer group' in two different senses'. It perceives the concept: first, as a term for a small group of friends or associates who share common values, interests and activities; and, second, as a term for virtually all persons of the same age- a definition which reflects the fact that schools that tend to be age-graded. A similar description of the term is presented by Havighust and Nengarton (1966), stating that the child grows up in two social worlds. One of such worlds is the adult world consulting the child's parents, teachers and other relatives with whom the child has interaction. The second group, they identify as the world of the child's peers or age groups comprising his or her friends, playmates, clubs, gangs and school groups.

Peer group influence then, depicts the influence that friends (or members of these groups) exercise on one another or the term implies the influence exerted by a much wider category of age-mates. Havighust and Nengarton (1966) admit that there are groups in which it is mandatory that everybody who is on the 'in' must be scornful of the school and rebellious towards teachers.

According to Rice (1981), in the United State of America, peer group has been reported to be a major factor that determines whether students will go to school or not. It is further declared that most adolescents like to do what their friends have been dropping out of school, for example, to get work to do which earns them good income,

they will be persuaded to do likewise. A strong peer group influence or pressure can affect students' school attendance. Hence students who become acculturated into a pattern of life that rejects education or join a delinquent group that rebels against the established system of education are strongly influenced by the peer groups to be out of school.

Willis (1977) conducted an observation on twelve non-academically achieving students in a school in England and the study revealed that the boys absented themselves from class after registration and they were able to use signs which they communicated to their members in order to get out of class. This behavior contributed to poor attendance by the boys. Again, in England, Jones (2001) had earlier made a report that, "peer groups have powerful influence on a child's school life". A case cited of a student who committed suicide after a period of absence from school. The child had been affected by a complexity of influence by peers and by bullying at school.

2.3.3.4 Community factors

The literature suggested that community and neighborhood factors can influence student attendance (Henry & Huizinga, 2007; Teasley, 2004). Teasley (2004) found that students who live in low-income neighborhood and communities are more likely to be truant, as they are often exposed to violence and drugs. Students from low-income neighborhoods are more likely to attend schools that are poorly funded. Poorly funded schools often have overcrowded class rooms and a lack of resources, making it more challenging for students to have a successful school experience. Peer pressure and negative peer role models have also been identified as factors that can influence absenteeism, especially during high school (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hartnett, 2008; Henry & Huizinga, 2007). During high school teenagers are at a developmental stage where they are prone to environmental influences (Hartnett, 2008). Teenagers are

struggling to form their own identity, while they are also struggling for acceptance from their peers. Henry and Huizinga (2007) found involvement with delinquent peers to be one of the main factors that influenced students' decision to skip school. With peer pressures being so hard to resist during this developmental stage; high school students are at an increased risk to become truant.

The related literature so far makes it unequivocally revealing that even though home, school and community factors are responsible for truancy among students in school, the students are themselves contributing factors to truancy.

2.4 Prevention and Coping Strategies

As there exist so many problems, so are there many solutions to these problems if one care to do so, and so far as truancy and absenteeism exist, there are also prevention and early to the problem. The difficulty comes with assessing a specific school's environment or a specific student's attendance pattern and determining which one to use since there is no magic formula (Reid, 2002). There are various prevention and early intervention strategies on students' truancy and unexcused absence. Some of them are;

2.4.1 Well-developed policies

Dougherty (1999) posited that it is absolutely essential to have well-developed school policies regarding student attendance and that teachers, parents, and students, should understand the attendance policy and make sure that the policy is strictly adhered to and enforced consistently. Policies on attendance should be reviewed at regular intervals to curb the menace of truancy and absenteeism when it begins to rear its ugly face. When developing new Policies that are developed to curb absenteeism and truancy

of students should take into consideration, teacher's, parent's, and student's perspectives of the causes in order to find the solution to the canker. There should be a policy on excused and unexcused absences and with procedures for finding solutions to them.

2.4.2 Parents involvement

Parents are those who give birth to children, nurture them to maturity and take them to school; therefore they have a lot of influence on their children. Parental involvement is therefore paramount in the schooling of students or children. According to U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice (1996), parents are the most influential when it comes to getting children to school. Therefore, it would seem then that developing a relationship with parents built on trust and respect is essential.

The relationship of parents and students to facilitate student's attendance to school as well as other strategies for involving parents in order to reduce absenteeism and truancy cannot be over emphasized. The strategies of communicating with every parent or with contact persons for parents even though, may be an enormous task, especially when language can be a barrier, but when the pain is taken to regularly communicated with parents through phone, mail, newsletters, or in person, attendance can be improved.

2.4.3 Community involvement

Dougherty (1999) indicated that community awareness of resources to support the parents and students exhibiting risk factors associated with truancy is another strategy School professionals need to not only be aware of, but also know how to access

these resources, which may include mental health counseling, parent training, or tutoring.

2.4.4 School environment

The performance of students improves in a serene and an enabling school environment as students are motivated when they study in a peaceful environment. According to Reid, (2002) school professionals need to provide a safe environment that not only recognizes student successes, but one that challenges their individual learning style as well. This is a true reflection of what educational authorities should provide for student to help prevent truancy.

2.4.5 Attendance incentive programs

According to Epstein and Sheldon, (2002) schools that reward students for attendance have improved attendance records. Students are rewarded when they have up to date attendance for a predetermined period, usually not more than a school term so that the student can be measured. The rewards should vary, in the school and from the community. The school could organize speech and prize giving day to award deserving students including punctuality and regularity in attendance to school. The community could also organize durbar in collaboration with the school to honor deserving students and other activist in the community.

2.4.6 Tutors and mentors

Tutors and mentors have been used in community and school organizations for hundreds of years. However, research shows that Tutors and mentors are not used as much as they could be in relation with as prevention and early intervention strategies

for truancy. Tutors assist in academic teaching and learning, and mentors are friends of students who give them training and shape them (Baker & Jansen, 2000). These roles would seem to meet the needs of those students with social and educational risk factors for truancy as stated in the previous section. Tutors and mentors can help students they deal with to reduce if not to prevent truancy and unexcused absence.

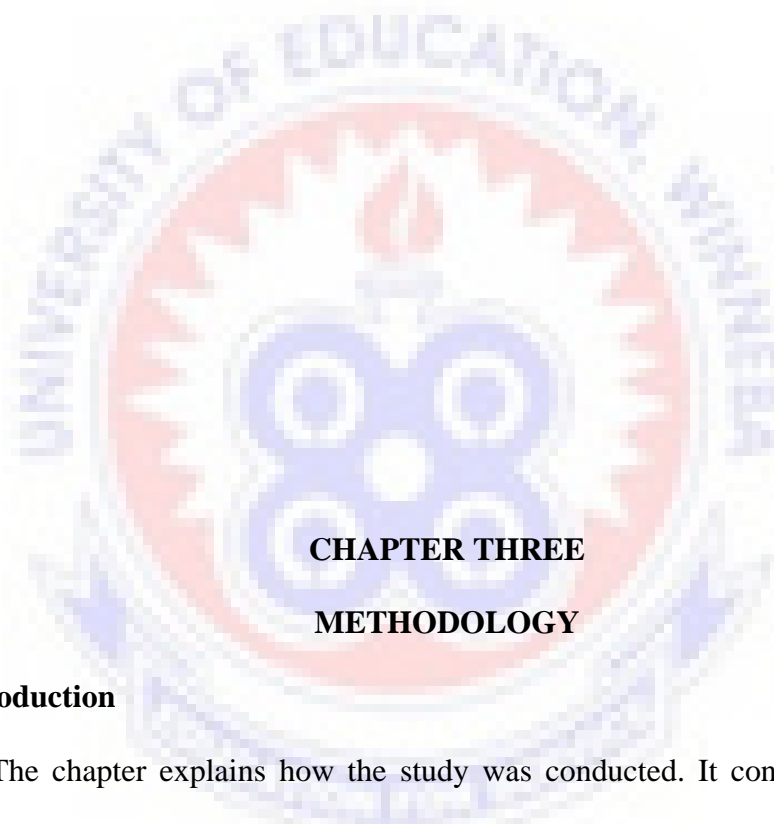
2.4.7 Small groups

Baker and Jansen(2000) said that small group experience gives the students the opportunity to identify their barriers or causes of truancy and empowers them to creatively problem solve. Small groups often have other residual effects like teaching appropriate social skills, building relationships, and connecting with others with similar experiences. Small groups which are organized by school authorities and trained in small group therapy also help in prevention and early intervention strategy for students with high rates of absenteeism and truancy (Baker & Jansen, 2000).

Summary

It could be summarized based on the related literature so far reviewed that there are many risk factors that contribute to the causes of high rates of student absenteeism and truancy. There are also a lot of prevention and early intervention strategies forestall or minimize student absenteeism and truancy. Truancy is frequent practice of staying away or running away from school or class to involve in some activities at times without the knowledge or notice of parents or guardians and teachers. Truancy is more of

attitude or a ‘delinquency’ or at least a “difficulty of adjustment” than just not attending school. It has also been established that school authorities should look at individual student’s needs when dealing with students’ truancy and absenteeism.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter explains how the study was conducted. It considered the areas concern with the methods used in the research. These include: the research design, population, sample size and sampling procedure, research instrument, piloting for validity and reliability, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher used descriptive survey design for the study. Descriptive survey design is a fact-finding study that involves adequate and accurate interpretation of findings. According to Gay and Airasian, (2003) descriptive survey is concerned with conditions that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs and attitude that are held, processes that are on-going and trends that are developing. Amin (2005) indicated that the descriptive method of research is used to gather information about the present existing condition

A descriptive research presents a picture of the specific details of a situation and collects data, and answer research questions concerning the status of the subject of study to draw meaningful conclusions. Descriptive survey design has the advantage of providing the researcher with more information from a large number of respondents. The researcher therefore, use the questionnaire and interview guide together more information for the study.

3.2 Population

Population is a group of individuals or people with the same characteristics and in whom the researcher is interested. Kusi (2012) defined population as a group of individuals that the researcher generalizes his or her findings to. Population is the group of individuals that the researcher generalizes his findings to.

The target population for the study consisted of all the teachers, literate parents and stakeholders such as NGO, CBO, Religious bodies, Traditional rulers, Educationist etc. in Junior High schools and communities in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality of the Eastern Region. However, the accessible population

consisted of 280 teachers, 60 literate parents and 30 stakeholders in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri District of the Eastern Region.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Gall and Borg (2007) defined sampling as a technique used for selecting a given number of subjects from a target population as a representative of the population in research. To determine an appropriate sample size for the study, an updated list of all the headmasters and teachers, parents and stakeholders in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri District was obtained from the District Director of Education, PTA secretary and Traditional Council respectively.

Convenience sampling was used to select 50% of the teachers, parents, and stakeholders in the community. According to Creswell (2005), in this approach the researcher chooses particular persons due to their availability, willingness, and convenience to the researcher. In other words, this approach is also referred to as “accidental or opportunity sampling” (Cohen *et al.* 2000 p: 102) in which the researchers select respondents who are found nearby.

Convenience sampling “involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained or those who happen to be available and accessible at that time” (Cohen *et al.*, 2007 p: 113-114). Researchers select persons for their studies who are easily accessible. The researcher being a parent, a teacher and a stakeholder, found it so convenient to identify the teachers, parents and stakeholders deemed appropriate to gather data on their perception on students absenteeism in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri District. The main reason for adopting this technique was the fact that parents are able to give elaborate information on the pupils since they are responsible

for their upkeep and the teachers are responsible for their academics and school attendance. The stakeholders who have in-depth information on the topic were used.

The researcher arrived on the sample size of 185 respondents based on the fact that this figure was deemed suitable and representative enough of the characteristics of the larger population. Thus, it provided a fair idea about the characteristics of the larger population in the area of the study. The sample distribution is as presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Respondents

Respondents	Total Number.	Total Sampled	% Sampled
Teachers	280	140	50
Parent	60	30	50
Stakeholders	30	15	50
Total	370	185	100

3.4 Data Source

The researcher used both primary and secondary data for the study. The primary data was collected and used for analysis, while the secondary data gathered enabled the work to be based on academic perspective.

Primary data

Closed ended questionnaire and interview guide were the technique used to collect the primary data for the study.

Secondary data

Secondary data was gathered from books, encyclopedias, published and unpublished materials. The main sources of the secondary data were the University library and various text books.

3.5 Data collection instrument

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005) a research tool or instrument is a specific mechanism or strategy, the researcher uses to collect, manipulate, or interpret data. The researcher used questionnaire and interview guide as the data collection instrument for the study. Questionnaires are instruments designed to collect data for decision making in research. It is a systematic compilation of questions that are administered to a sample population in research (White, 2005).

The questionnaires were designed and administered personally by the researcher to all the 185 respondents to collect data for the study. The respondents were given two weeks to fill in the questionnaire after which they were collected.

Six each of the parents and stakeholders were interviewed. Interviewing involves asking questions and getting answers from participants in the study. In the present study, a semi-structured interview schedule was used. The face-to-face semi-structured interview guide provided a clear set of instructions for interviewees and provided reliable, comparable qualitative data. Semi-structured interviews also allowed informants, who were parents and stakeholders, the freedom to express their views in their own setting.

According to O'Leary (2005), interviews during field work generally started with some defined questioning plan, but pursued a more conversational style of interview that saw questions answered in an order natural to the flow of the conversation.

According to Silverman (1993), one way of controlling reliability is to have a highly structured interview with the same format and sequence of words and questions for each respondent. Silverman (2003) noted that, semi-structured interviews although able to develop comprehensive information on an issue, usually are not suitable to be

used on large number of respondents and it demands a lot of time during the interview process.

3.6 Piloting

According to Bell (2008), piloting is done to get the bugs out of the instrument for respondents not to experience difficulties in filling the questionnaire and also to have preliminary analysis to see if the wording and format of the questionnaire items are appropriate.

To determine the validity and reliability of the instruments, 30 questionnaires comprising 10 stakeholders, 10 teachers and 10 parents were administered during the pilot-testing using a different set of stakeholders, teachers and parents selected randomly from four JHS of Nsawam which was outside the study area but have similar characteristics. The purpose was to enable the researcher make changes if any, to the questionnaire items which may be inappropriate and also ascertain the level of ambiguity of the questions for corrections to be made. Ambiguous questions were modified.

Validity

Validity is the degree to which a test measure what it is supposed to measure. The validity of the instrument was ascertained through literature searches, expert opinions from my research methods lecturer and my supervisor.

Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which an instrument yields consistency in its result after repeated trials. To ascertain this, the questionnaire were administered on 30

respondents sampled for the pilot study as stated early on, twice in the pilot study with two weeks grace period between the first and second test and the result correlated to know the reliability coefficient. The reliability test yielded Cronbach alpha of 0.85

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher sought permission from the District Director of Education of before conducting the study. The questionnaires containing close ended questions were administered to respondents. This was done during school days between 10am – 2:00pm. The researcher visited the selected schools and discussed with the headmasters and their assistants about the study. After obtaining permission from the headmasters concerned, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents and the questionnaires were collected after two weeks grace period.

Arrangements were made with stakeholders and parents as to when the interview will take place without any inconveniences. The researcher visited the sampled respondent at a date agreed upon for the face to face to interview. Respondents who were chosen to be interviewed were carefully selected based on such variables as the location of their gender and academic background. Some of the respondents were also selected for the interviewed because the researcher sought to obtain clarification to some responses they provided to the questionnaire. For easy identification and comparism of questionnaire and interview responses, the researcher coded the respondents based on their location and status. Permission was sought from each interviewee before the interview sessions were audio-recorded. The researcher personally conducted the interviews.

3.8 Data Analysis

The data were cleaned of mistakes and errors which may have been made. A codebook for the questionnaire was prepared to record all the responses and then the data were computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software package version 20.0. The data were analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequencies to answer all the research questions.

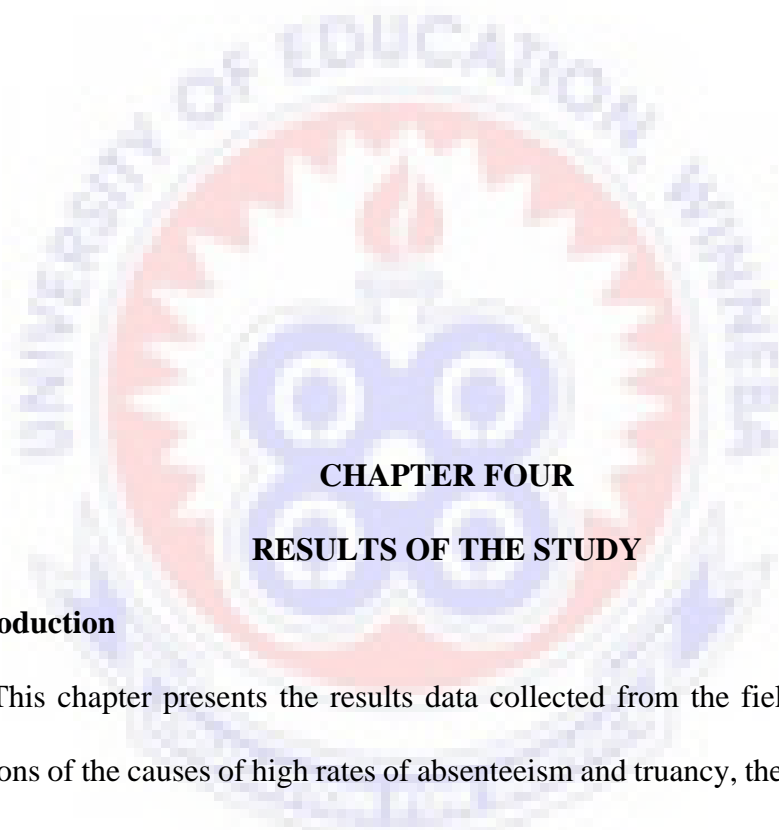
Qualitative analysis was done on the data gathered through the interviews. Each of the participants was given a code. The recorded conversations were transcribed, analyzed and summarized thematically after the interview sessions. Using the constant comparative method of analysis, the researcher read through the transcript for each interview to get a sense of the uniqueness of that story. Each transcript was carefully reviewed, sentence by sentence, in order to identify words and phrases that were descriptive and represented a particular concept. Central themes were extracted as the transcript was read and re-read several times. The various respondents were coded accordingly: PR- Parents, SH-Stakeholders.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

As the study used human participants in gathering primary data to explore teacher perceptions about the causes and early intervention strategies on truancy in basic schools, certain ethical issues were addressed. The thoughtfulness of these issues was necessary for the purpose of ensuring the privacy as well as the security of the participants. The researcher explained in details the purpose of the study to the respondents to have cooperation to take part in the study and volunteer information.

The respondents were given ample time to respond to the questionnaires to avoid errors and inaccuracies in their answers. The respondents were assured of the

confidentiality of their identity and the information that they would disclose. The respondents' cooperation was eagerly sought after, and they were assured that the data gathered from them would be treated with the utmost confidentiality.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results data collected from the field on community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy, their prevention and early intervention strategies in Junior High schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality based on the research question.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents' gender, age and their educational qualification is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	96	52
Female	89	48
Total	185	100
Age		
31-40	54	29
41-50	76	41
51-60	55	30
Total	185	100
Educational Qualification		
Bachelor's Degree	81	44
Post Graduate Diploma	42	23
Master's Degree	62	33
Total	185	100

From Table 4.1, it can be seen that 52% of those who took part in the study were males. Forty-eight percent were also females. With respect to respondents' ages, 29% were aged between 31-40 years, 41% were aged between 41-50 years while 30% were aged between 51-60 years.

With respect to respondents educational qualifications, 44% possessed the Bachelor's Degree, 23% possessed the post graduate Diploma while 33% possessed the Master's Degree.

4.2 Research Question 1: Community perceptions of the causes and early interventions of truancy in Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality

The first research question sought to find out the perceptions of parents, teachers and other stakeholders in education with respect to the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in the Junior High School in the Municipality.

Table 4.2: Community Perceptions on the Causes of High rates of Absenteeism and Truancy in Junior High schools

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Community leaders not put up measures to make sure children go to school	94(51%)	91(49%)	0	0
2. Neighbours not reporting bad behaviors of children to their parents	78(42%)	87(47%)	20(11%)	0
3. Stakeholders in the community not making sure students have school materials	42(23%)	82(44%)	37(20%)	24(13%)
4. Parents refusing to talk to their children who bully others at school	67(36%)	37(20%)	46(25%)	35(19%)
5. PTA executives not making parents aware of their wards truancy at meetings.	50(27%)	66(36%)	69(37%)	0
6. Recalcitrant adults in the community influencing students.	72(39%)	69(37%)	26(14%)	18(10%)
7. The community apathetic behavior towards education.	55(30%)	78(42%)	52(28%)	0

From Table 4.2, it can be seen one out of two of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that community leaders not put up measures to make sure children go to school was one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High School. During the face to face interview section most of the respondents indicated that when there are no measures to compel children to go to school she or he will not go to school. This is what one stakeholder said,

“Community leaders are always unconcerned about the rate of absenteeism in the community which is very bad”(female interviewee at Adoagyiri on 18th March 2018)

Also, almost half of the respondents agreed that neighbours not reporting bad behaviors of children to their parents were one the community perception on high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High School, one out of two of the respondents strongly agreed while one out of ten of the respondents disagreed. One of the respondents indicated during the interview that,

“Children who exhibit bad behavior towards schooling are not reported to their parents by others which enable the children to do whatever they like which at times leads to disinterest in schooling” (a male teacher interviewee on 8th April 2018 at Adoagyiri).

Again, almost one out of two of the respondents agreed that stakeholders in the community not making sure students have school materials was one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High School, one out of four of the respondents strongly agreed, one out of five of the respondents disagreed while one out of eight of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Besides, one out of three of the respondents strongly agreed parents refusing to talk to their children who bully others at school was one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High School, one out of five of the respondents agreed, one out of four of the respondents disagreed while approximately one fifth of the respondents strongly disagreed. One of the respondents interviewed stated,

“Children who are molested and bullied by their peers and others choose to stay at home for the fear of being bullied by such people” (a female teacher interviewee on 15th April, 2018 at Adoagyiri).

Again, one third of the respondents strongly disagreed that PTA executives not making parents aware of their wards truancy at meetings was one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High School, one out of three of the respondents agreed while almost one out four of the respondents strongly agreed.

Also, one out of three of the respondents strongly agreed that recalcitrant adults in the community influencing students was one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High School, one third of the respondents agreed, one out of seven of the respondents disagreed while one out of ten of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Finally, almost one out of two of the respondents agreed that the community's apathetic behavior towards education was one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High School, one third of the respondents strongly agreed, while another one out of three of the respondents disagreed.

4.3 Research Questions 2: Domestic factors of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipality?

There are some perceived domestic and school factors that causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy of students in Junior High schools. The respondents were asked to rate their opinion on some perceived dominant domestic and school factors that causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy of students in Junior High school. The result is shown in Table 4.3 and Table 4.4.

Table 4.3: Some of the Perceived Dominant Domestic Factors that Contribute to Students' Truancy

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1. Poor parent-child relations in the home	72(39%)	65(35%)	28(15%)	20(11%)
2. Parental neglect of child in the educational process	87(47%)	98(53%)	0	0
3. Low socioeconomic status of parent of student	76(41%)	85(46%)	24(13%)	0
4. Domestic violence in the home of the student	63(34%)	67(36%)	56(30%)	0
5. Existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student	57(31%)	84(45%)	2(11%)	24(13%)
6. Parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol in the home	48(26%)	92(50%)	45(24%)	0

Table 4.3 shows that about one third of the respondents strongly agreed that parent-child relations was a dominant domestic factor that contribute to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, one third of the respondents agreed, one out of seven of the respondents disagreed while one out of ten of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Table 4.3 again shows that one out of two of the respondents also agreed that child neglect was a dominant domestic factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools while almost half of the respondents strongly agreed. One of the respondents interviewed stated and I quote,

“Mostly those children who do not have proper care from their parents in the house do whatever they like and sometimes absent themselves from school without the knowledge of their parents” (a headteacher on the 24th of March, 2018 at Adoagyiri).

Also, Table 4.3 shows that almost one out of two of the respondents agreed that low socioeconomic status of parent was a dominant domestic factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, more than one third of the respondents strongly agreed, while one out of eight of the respondents disagreed.

Moreover, about one third of the respondents agreed that domestic violence was dominant domestic factors that contribute to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, one out of three of the respondents strongly agreed, while another one out of three of the respondents disagreed.

Also, half of the respondents agreed that child labour was a dominant domestic factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, one out of three of the respondents strongly agreed one out of ten of the respondents disagreed while one out of eight of the respondents strongly disagreed. One of the interviewees stated.

“Some children do not attend school regularly as their parents involve them in farming and other activities to earn some income for the home”(a SMC executive at Adoagyiri on 27th of March, 2018).

Finally, Table 4.3 shows that about one third of the respondents strongly agreed that parental drug and alcohol abuse is a dominant domestic factor that contribute to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, one out of three of the respondents agreed, one out of seven of the respondents disagreed while one out of ten of the respondents strongly disagreed. Another respondent who was interviewed indicated,

“Parents of children who are in the habit of drinking alcohol do not have the eye and mind to see to it that the child goes to school. The child is there at liberty to attend school regularly or not” (a male interviewee on 5th April, 2018 at Adoagyiri).

Table 4.4: Some of the Perceived Dominant School Related Causes of Truancy

	Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Strongly
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Statement	Agree			Disagree
1. Improper behavior of some teacher towards students in the school.	76(41%)	85(46%)	24(13%)	0
2. Lack of attendance Policies to guide school attendance.	58(31%)	74(40%)	35(19%)	18(10%)
3. Lack of effective teaching method to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process.	48(26%)	33(18%)	56(30%)	48(26%)
4. Lack of proper supervision on students movement and attendance to school.	39(21%)	98(53%)	48(26%)	0
5. Teachers' absenteeism in the teaching and learning environment.	33(18%)	48(26%)	65(35%)	39(21%)
6. Teachers abuse of students in the school environment.	32(17%)	51(28%)	66(36%)	36(19%)

Table 4.4 shows that almost half of the respondents agreed that the behavior of some teacher towards students was a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, more than one third of the respondents strongly agreed while one out of eight of the respondents disagreed. One of the interviewees stated,

“Some teachers dislike some students for no apparent reason. As a parent, at times my child tells me that there is a teacher in the school who always find something wrong with whatever he does” (a female parent on 12th April, 2018 at Adoagyiri).

Table 4.4 also shows that more than one third of the respondents agreed that lack of attendance policies was a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, one out of three of the respondents strongly agreed, almost one fifth of the respondents disagreed while one out of ten of the respondents strongly disagreed. Table 4.3 again shows that almost half of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of effective teaching method is a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in

junior high schools, almost one fifth of the respondents agreed one out of three of the respondents disagreed while one out of four of the respondents strongly disagreed. This is what one of the respondents interviewed had to say,

“Some children who were found loitering in the streets during school time informed me upon questioning that when his teacher teaches he does not understand and that is keeping him out of school sometimes”

(PTA chairman at Adoagyiri Presby on 20th April, 2018).

Again, half of the respondents agreed that lack of proper supervision was a dominant school factor that contributes to students’ high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, one out of four of the respondents disagreed while one out of five of the respondents strongly agreed.

Also, one out of three of the respondents disagreed that teachers’ absenteeism is a dominant school factor that contributes to students’ high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, one out of four of the respondents agreed, while one out of five of the respondents strongly disagreed while 18% of the respondents strongly agreed.

Finally, Table 4.4 shows that about one third of the respondents disagreed that teachers’ abuse of students was a dominant school factor that contributes to students’ high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools, almost one third of the respondents agreed almost one fifth of the respondents strongly disagreed while one out of six of the respondents strongly agreed.

4.4 Research Questions 3: Prevention and early intervention strategies to mitigate high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality?

The respondents were asked to rate their opinion on some prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance. The result is shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Prevention and Early intervention Strategies used to address School Attendance (truancy).

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Letter sent to the homes of students concerned	87(47%)	98(53%)	0	0
2. Parents contacted by guidance and counseling team on the students behavior	63(34%)	89(48%)	33(18%)	0
3. Attendance policy given to parents at the beginning of the academic year	75(40%)	83(45%)	27(15%)	0
4. Students receive awards for regular attendance to school at the end of every term	48(26%)	95(51%)	28(15%)	14(8%)
5. Home visits are instituted to prompt students and parents on the policies on school attendance	68(37%)	93(50%)	24(13%)	0
6. Parent are called on phone from office about student's absence	59(32%)	81(44%)	32(17%)	13(7%)
7. Students' school attendance are discussed at PTA meetings	95(51%)	80(49%)	0	0

Table 4.5 shows that more than half of the respondents agreed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that letters are sent to the homes of students concerned while almost half of the respondents strongly agreed. This was what one of the respondents stated during the interview section,

“I think parents should be informed of their children's poor attendance to school in order to remedy the situation as they may not know whether the child reached the school from home or not” (a teacher interviewee on the 20th April, 2018 at Adoagyiri).

Besides, almost all of the respondents (82%) agreed or strongly agreed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that parents of students concerned are contacted by guidance and counseling team on the students behavior while one fifth (18%) disagreed.

Again, almost half of the respondents agreed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that attendance policy is given to parents at the beginning of the academic year, more than one third of the respondents strongly agreed while one out of seven disagreed. This was what another respondent stated during the interview section,

“In my view, parents should be warned that if a child absents her or himself for a certain number of days the child would be withdrawn from the school to serve as a deterrent to the canker of absenteeism” (SMC chairman at Adoagyiri R/C school on 21st April, 2018).

Also, one out of two of the respondents agreed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that students receive awards for regular attendance to school at the end of every term, one out of four of the respondents strongly agreed one out of seven disagreed, while one out of ten strongly disagreed.

Moreover, half of the respondents agreed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that home visits are instituted to prompt students and parents on the policies on school attendance, about one third of the respondents strongly agreed while one out of seven disagreed. This was what another respondent stated during the interview section,

“I believe that if the school authorities visit the homes of students who are involves in absenteeism, it will go a long way to minimize

absenteeism in our schools” (a female interviewee at Adoagyiri on the 28th April, 2018).

Also, almost half of the respondents agreed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that parent receives phone call from office about student’s absence, one third of the respondents strongly agreed, one out of six disagreed while about one out of ten strongly disagreed.

Finally, one out of two of the respondents strongly agreed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that students’ school attendance are discussed at PTA meetings letters are sent to the homes of students concerned while almost half agreed.



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.0 Introduction

The chapter deals with the discussions of the data collected based on the research questions to explore community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy, their prevention and early intervention strategies in Junior High schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality.

On research question one, it was found that community leaders not putting up measures to make sure children go to school was a cause of students’ absenteeism and truancy. The finding means that the children can choose to go to school or not after leaving home and eventually result in absenteeism and truancy.

It was also found that neighbours' not reporting bad behaviors of children to their parents was a cause of students absenteeism and truancy which means that the students will not be reprimanded by their parents to stop their bad behaviours which can lead to truancy.

It was found that, stakeholders in the community not making sure students have school materials was one of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The finding implies that students will not have school materials and this will decrease their interest in schooling.

It was again found that parents refusing to talk to their children who bully others at school were a cause of high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The finding means that bullying other in school leads to high rates of absenteeism and truancy since the child will be pursued and may stop coming to school regularly.

It was found PTA executives not making parents aware of their wards truancy at meetings was one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The finding means that parents will not be aware of their wards truancy and therefore the absenteeism and truancy may persist.

It was revealed that recalcitrant adults in the community influencing students were one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The finding implies that will follow adults with bad behaviours and this will lead to absenteeism and truancy

It was also revealed that the community's apathetic behavior towards education was one the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The finding implies that the disinterestedness of the community in education will lead students to play absenteeism and truancy at school as the students too will lose interest in schooling.

All the results in research question one are in line with Henry and Huizinga (2007) and Teasley (2004) who indicated that literature suggested that community and

neighborhood factors can influence student attendance. Teasley (2004) found that students who live in low-income neighborhood and communities are more likely to be truant, as they are often exposed to violence and drugs. Students from low-income neighborhoods are more likely to attend schools that are poorly funded. Peer pressure and negative peer role models have also been identified as factors that can influence absenteeism in communities, especially during high school (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hartnett, 2008; Henry & Huizinga, 2007). During high school teenagers are at a developmental stage where they are prone to environmental influences (Hartnett, 2008). Teenagers are struggling to form their own identity, while they are also struggling for acceptance from their peers. Henry and Huizinga (2007) found involvement with delinquent peers in the community to be one of the main factors that influenced students' decision to skip school. With peer pressures being so hard to resist during this developmental stage; high school students are at an increased risk to become truant.

The related literature so far makes it unequivocally revealing that even though home, school and community factors are responsible for truancy among students in school, the students are themselves contributing factors to truancy.

On research questions two, it was found that parent-child relations was a dominant domestic factor that contribute to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The result agrees with Reid (2002) who indicated that another home environment risk factor as stated by is family conflict, which includes arguing, violence, divorce, and poor sibling and parent to child relationships. In view of this, the student may be absent from school as a direct result of any one of these situations which may eventually lead to poor academic performance and therefore decrease the student's interest in schooling.

It was again found that child neglect was a dominant domestic factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools

The result supports Woolfolk (2005) who postulated that parents who have a neglectful style of parenting are not involved in their children's education. The neglect may include not getting their child the necessary supplies in order to be able to do their work, not getting their child to school, or not coming to meetings set up to address the attendance concerns. Students who are victims of parental neglect as a result of death may also miss school because their parents are gone and they have to care for themselves and their siblings if any.

It was revealed low socioeconomic status of parent is a dominant domestic factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The result is in line with Reid's, (2002) statement that another risk factor that cause truancy is low socioeconomic status of parents. Socioeconomic status according to Woolfolk (2005) is one's relative standing in the society based on income, power, background, and prestige. However, low socioeconomic status becomes a high risk factor for truancy, when combined with other risk factors. Woolfolk (2005) indicated that other risk factors are low self-esteem, learned helplessness, and cultural resistance as some of the student who come from families with low socioeconomic background have low self-esteem because of economic limitations in their daily activities which makes them to think that they are inferior and therefore are not supposed to better at school as those with high socioeconomic background.

It was also revealed that domestic violence was a dominant domestic factor that contribute to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The result is consistent with Reid (2002) that another home environment risk factor is family conflict, which

includes arguing, violence, divorce, and poor sibling and parent to child relationships. In view of this, the student may be absent from school.

It was further revealed that child labour was a dominant domestic factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy.

In a paper titled, "The peripheralization of youth in labor market: Problems Analyses and Opportunities: Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany", published in contemporary Education Policy (1983) stated that in both Britain and Germany a significant number of young people are being driven to the periphery of labor market. Such young people affected in this way typically are those who find very little that is positive in their experience of school. This effect of child labor underscores the reason for the global abhorrence.

Mendelievich (1979) stated that 4% of the world's population who are fifteen years old or less participate in the labor force. Most of these working children live in the developing countries and normally work as unpaid family workers who help their families on the farm or in the small shops and commercial establishments. Children who work for third parties outside the family do not receive their wages but their parents get them. The children also lose their income if they do attend school and their parents perceive that the cost of earning income far outweighs the benefits of education. Thus, it is really not uncommon to find students who are victims of child labor either making early appearance in school and cutting classes soon after or coming to school late and also leaving school earlier than normal closing hours.

It was finally revealed that parental drug and alcohol abuse was dominant domestic factors that contribute to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. Reid (2002) indicated that one of the home environment causes of parental lifestyle includes the risk factor of parents who abuse alcohol and/or drugs. These parents are unavailable

to support their children in their education and do not even bother to do so. These children may miss school because their parents are unable to get them to school as they may be already drunk in the morning their children are supposed to go to school or the children staying home to take care of their younger siblings because the parent is too drunk, to take care of the home. At times these children have to stay home to take care of their drunken parent to get them meals and do the necessary house chores.

It was revealed that the behavior of some teacher towards students was a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. There is no doubt about the fact that teachers are very important in educating the child in the classroom setting. The attitude of teachers on their work in the classroom and that of the students may influence the students positively or negatively. For instance, a teacher who has a positive feeling towards students may inspire, and encourage students to be punctual in class and be serious in the learning environment. In contrast, a relaxed, and typically absent teacher's negative attitude towards work and students would impact negatively in the learning process and is likely to cause problems for his or her students' attendance to school.

A teacher's apathetic attitude towards teaching, consequently have a negative response from students which include truancy. Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005), describe this type of teaching as "cold and aloof"; 'unplanned and slipshod' 'dull and routine'. This nominal attitude demonstrated by a teacher makes his or her teaching easily predictable by some students who may in turn 'endure' the teacher's lesson or opt for something else, if there is an opportunity to do that.

According to Grant (2002) for effective teaching and learning the atmosphere in the classroom must be friendly. The atmosphere should make students feel they can trust their teacher and that they should know by the teacher's attitude that he or she is

ready to help them. This instills confidence in the student and tremendously attracts and retains them in the classroom.

It was also revealed that lack of attendance policies is a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. Dougherty (1999) posited that it is absolutely essential to have well-developed school policies regarding student attendance and that teachers, parents, and students, should understand the attendance policy and make sure that the policy is strictly adhered to and enforced consistently. Policies on attendance should be reviewed at regular intervals to curb the menace of truancy and absenteeism when it begins to rear its ugly face. When developing new Policies that are developed to curb absenteeism and truancy of students should take into consideration, teacher's, parent's, and student's perspectives of the causes in order to find the solution to the canker. There should be a policy on excused and unexcused absences and with procedures for finding solutions to them.

It was again revealed that lack of effective teaching method is a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The fact that majority of the respondents disagreed, shows that lack of effective teaching method was not a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools.

It was further revealed that lack of proper supervision was a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. Supervision in the school is very important if the school is to maintain moral, academic standards and students regularity and punctuality in class, therefore lack of effective supervision can cause students to become truants. According to Mankoe (2002), the ultimate purpose for supervision within a school therefore, is to create favorable circumstances for learning which, in actual fact, are devoid of any avoidable hindrances, through a

healthy working relationship within the school. The relevance of supervision lies in its role in making effective schooling. Mortimore (cited in swanstrom, 1995), describes effective school as one in which students progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake. In other words, effective school adds extra value to its students' outcomes in comparison with other schools serving similar intakes. To Swanstrom (1995) what brings the difference between an effective school and that of less effective one is supervision. Supervision thus takes care of scrutinizing the curriculum, syllabuses and contents of subject areas, teaching and learning materials in terms of appropriates, quantity and quality and time, the materials which are available, timetabling, students' school attendance and suitability of learning environment and, above all, the teachers' knowledge, technical and social skills and methods of instruction.

It was found that teachers' absenteeism was a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The fact that majority of the respondents disagreed, shows that teachers' absenteeism was not a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools.

It was finally found that teachers' abuse of students is a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy. The fact that majority of the respondents disagreed, shows that teachers' abuse of students was not a dominant school factor that contributes to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools which may be due to effective supervision. The result is in contrast with Reid (2002) who stated that some of the factors that contribute to students' high rates of absenteeism and truancy include high rate of bullying at school.

On research question three, it was found that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that letters were sent to the homes of students concerned. The result is in line with U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice (1996) that the strategies of communicating with every parent or with contact persons for parents even though, may be an enormous task, especially when language can be a barrier, but when the pain is taken to regularly communicate with parents through phone, mail, newsletters, or in person, attendance can be improved.

It was also found that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that parents of students concerned were contacted by guidance and counseling team on the students' behavior. The result is in tandem with U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice (1996) that parents are the most influential when it comes to getting children to school. Therefore, it would seem then that developing a relationship with parents built on trust and respect is essential. The relationship of parents and students to facilitate student's attendance to school as well as other strategies for involving parents in order to reduce absenteeism and truancy cannot be over emphasized.

It was again found that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that attendance policy was given to parents at the beginning of the academic year. The result means that parents were given attendance policy at the beginning of the academic year to guide students' school attendance. The result agrees with Dougherty (1999) posited that it is absolutely essential to have well-developed school policies regarding student attendance and that teachers, parents, and students, should understand the attendance policy and make sure that the policy is strictly adhered to and enforced consistently. Policies on attendance

should be reviewed at regular intervals to curb the menace of truancy and absenteeism when it begins to rear its ugly face. When developing new Policies that are developed to curb absenteeism and truancy of students should take into consideration, teachers, parents, and students perspectives of the causes in order to find the solution to the canker.

It was also found that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that students receive awards for regular attendance to school at the end of every term. The result is in consistence with Epstein and Sheldon, (2002) schools that reward students for attendance have improved attendance records. Students are rewarded when they have up to date attendance for a predetermined period, usually not more than a school term so that the student can be measured. The rewards should vary, in the school and from the community. The school could organize speech and prize giving day to award deserving students including punctuality and regularity in attendance to school. The community could also organize durbar in collaboration with the school to honor deserving students and other activist in the community.

It was again found that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that home visits are instituted to prompt students and parents on the policies on school attendance. The result means that follow-up visits were organized to prompt students and parents on the policies on school attendance already in their possession.

It was revealed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that parent received phone call from office about student's absence. The result substantiates that of Dougherty (1999) that community

awareness of resources to support the parents and students exhibiting risk factors associated with truancy include communicating with parents.

It was finally revealed that one of the prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance was that students' school attendance were discussed at PTA meetings letters are sent to the homes of students concerned while 49% agreed. This means that students' school attendances are discussed at PTA meetings as prevention and early intervention strategies to address school attendance.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter sum up the findings of the study, presents the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings and make suggestions for further study.

6.1 Summary

The study was conducted to find out community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy, their prevention and early intervention strategies in Junior High schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality. The objectives of the study were to determine community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality, ascertain perceived dominant causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in Junior High schools in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the

Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality and to establish the prevention and early intervention strategies to mitigate high rates of absenteeism and truancy.

The researcher used descriptive survey design for the study. The target population for the study consisted of all the teachers, parents and stakeholders such as NGO, CBO, Religious bodies, Traditional rulers, Educationist etc. in Junior High schools and communities in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality of the Eastern Region. However, the accessible population consisted of 280 teachers, 60 parents and 30 stakeholders in the Adoagyiri Circuit of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri District of the Eastern Region. Convenience sampling was used to select 50% of the teachers, parents, and stakeholders in the community. The researcher arrived on the sample size of 185 respondents. The researcher used questionnaire and interview guide as the data collection instrument for the study.

6.2 Key Findings

Key findings for community perceptions on regular absenteeism

On community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools the study found were that the community leaders have not put up measures to make sure children go to school, neighbours not reporting bad behaviors of children to their parents, stakeholders in the community not making sure students have school materials, parents refuse to talk to their children who bully others at school, PTA executives not making parents aware of their wards truancy at meetings, recalcitrant adults in the community influencing students, the community apathetic behavior towards education.

Key findings for dominant domestic factors on students' truancy

The dominant domestic factors that contribute to students' truancy the study found were poor parent-child relations in the home, parental neglect of child in the educational process, low socioeconomic status of parent of student, domestic violence in the home of the student, the existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student and parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol in the home.

The dominant school related causes of truancy the study found were improper behavior of some teacher towards students in the school, lack of attendance Policies to guide school attendance, lack of effective teaching method to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process, lack of proper supervision on students movement and attendance to school, teachers absenteeism in the teaching and learning environment and teachers abuse of students in the school environment.

Key findings of the prevention and early intervention strategies

The prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance the study found were sending letters to the homes of students concerned, contacting parents by guidance and counseling team on the students behavior, giving of attendance policy to parents at the beginning of the academic year, awarding students for regular attendance to school at the end of every term, institution of home visits to prompt students and parents on the policies on school attendance, calling parents on phone from office about student's absence and discussing students' absence at PTA.

6.3 Conclusions

The study concluded that the community had some perceptions about the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy in junior high schools. Notable among them were the child's behavioural and emotional problems in education, the child's poor

academic performance at school, the child's experience with being bullied in the course of education and the school's lack of effective and consistently applied attendance policies to improve students' attendance

The study also concluded that there were some dominant domestic factors that contribute to students' truancy. Significant among them were parental neglect of child in the educational process, low socioeconomic status of parent of student, domestic violence in the home of the student and the existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student

The study further concluded that there were some dominant school related causes of truancy. Prominent among them were lack of attendance Policies to guide school attendance, lack of effective teaching method to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process, lack of proper supervision on students movement and attendance to school and teachers absenteeism in the teaching and learning environment.

The study finally concluded that there were some prevention and early intervention strategies used to address school attendance. Noteworthy among them were sending letters to the homes of students concerned, contacting parents by guidance and counseling team on the student's behavior and giving of attendance policy to parents at the beginning of the academic year. All these prevention and early intervention strategies when implemented very well could help to improve student's school attendance to reduce truancy if not to avert truancy.

6.4 Recommendations of the Study

1. Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that parents should be educated on the need to avoid domestic factors that cause

students' truancy and high rates of excused absence at parent teacher association meetings in order to improve students' school attendance.

2. The Ghana Education Service should organize regular training workshops for headteachers and teachers on how to avoid the school factors that cause students truancy in school to improve academic performance.
3. The Ghana Education Service should strictly enforce the institution of policies on student's school attendance and its implementation to the fullest to improve students' school attendance to enhance students' academic performance.

6.5 Suggestions Further Research

The study was conducted to find out community perceptions of the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy, their prevention and early intervention strategies in Junior High schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality. Further study could be conducted the causes of high rates of absenteeism and truancy, their prevention and early intervention strategies in Junior High schools in the remaining districts of the Eastern Region.

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear Respondent,

I am a graduate student of the University of Education, Winneba- Kumasi Campus. I am conducting a study to investigate community perceptions about the causes and early intervention strategies on truancy in basic schools in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal, in fulfillment for the award of Master of Arts in Educational Leadership.

I would be happy if you could kindly respond to the questionnaire attached as you have been selected as a respondent in the study. The information you would provide would be treated with confidentiality.

I count on your cooperation in this regard.

Yours faithfully,

CAROLINE ATTA NIMOH

(POST GRADUATE STUDENT)

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE RESPONDENTS

SECTION A: RESPONDENTS PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please tick your choice(s) in the spaces provided

1. Indicate your gender.

Male () Female ()

2. Your age

(a) 31 – 40 ()

(b) 41 –50 ()

(c) 51 – 60 ()

3. What is your highest Academic qualification?

(a) Bachelor's Degree ()

(b) Post Graduate Diploma ()

(c) Master's Degree ()

4. Work experience

(a) 1-5years ()

(b) 6-10years ()

(c) 11-15 years ()

(d) 16 years and above ()

SECTION B: COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE CAUSES AND EARLY INTERVENTION STRATEGIES ON TRUANCY IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Please, respond to the statements by ticking [√] the number on the 4-point likert scale using the following keys: 1=**Strongly Agree (SA)**, 2= **Agree (A)**, 3=**Disagree (D)**, 4=**Strongly Disagree (SD)**, as sincere as possibly.

Which of the following Community perceptions contribute to truancy among Junior High School Students?

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
5	Community leaders not put up measures to make sure children go to school				
6	Neighbours not reporting bad behaviors of children to their parents				
7	Stakeholders in the community not making sure students have school materials				
8	Parents refusing to talk to their children who bully others at school				

9	PTA executives not making parents aware of their wards truancy at meetings.				
10	Recalcitrant adults in the community influencing students.				
11	The community's apathetic behavior towards education.				

SECTION C: SOME OF THE PERCEIVED DOMESTIC FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS' TRUANCY

Please, respond to the statements by ticking [$\sqrt{\quad}$] the number on the 4-point likert scale using the following keys: **1 = Strongly Agree (SA)**, **2 = Agree (A)**, **3 = Disagree (D)**, **4 = Strongly Disagree (SD)**, as sincere as possibly.

Which of the following domestic factors contribute to students truancy.

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
12	Parent-child relations in the home				
13	Parental neglect of child in the educational process				
14	Low socioeconomic status of parent of student				
15	Domestic violence in the home of the student				
16	The existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student				
17	Parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol in the home				

SECTION D: SOME OF THE SCHOOL RELATED CAUSES OF TRUANCY

Please, respond to the statement by ticking [√] the number on the 4-point likert scale using the following keys: **1 = Strongly Agree (SA)**, **2 = Agree (A)**, **3 = Disagree (D)**, **4 = Strongly Disagree (SD)**, as sincere as possible.

Which of the following are school related causes of truancy?

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
18	Improper behavior of some teachers towards students in the school				
19	Lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance				
20	Lack of effective teaching methods to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process				
21	Lack of proper supervision on student's movement and attendance to school.				
22	Absenteeism of teachers in the teaching and learning environment				
23	Teachers abuse of students in the school environment				

**SECTION E: PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION STRATEGIES
USED TO ADDRESS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

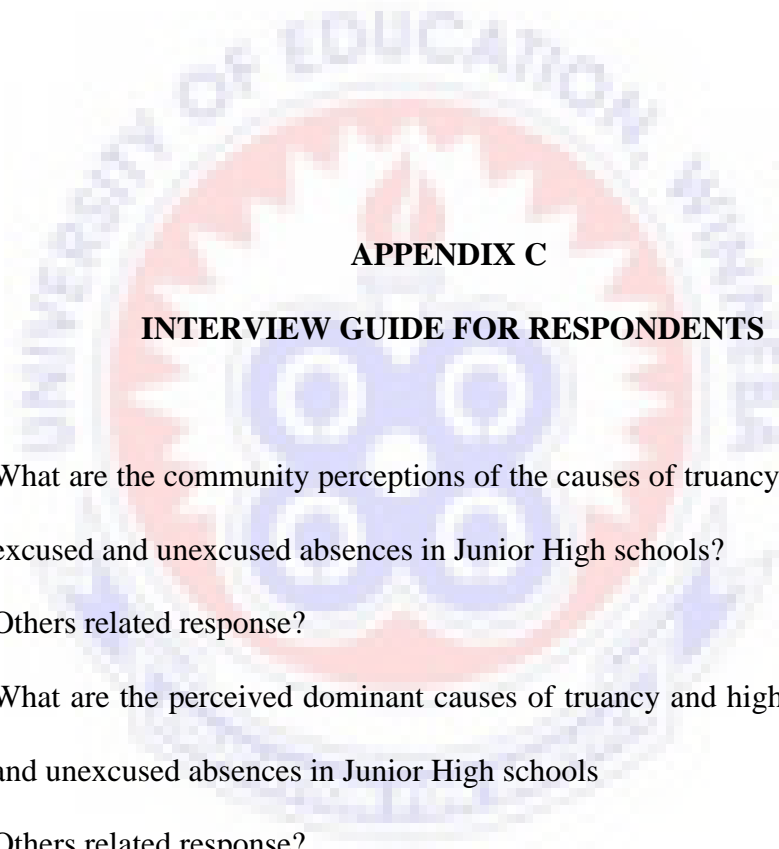
Please, respond to the statements by ticking [\surd] the number on the 4-point liker scale using the following keys: 1=**Strongly Agree (SA)**, 2= **Agree (A)**, 3=**Disagree (D)**, 4=**Strongly Disagree (SD)**, as sincere as possibly.

Which of the following are early intervention strategies that can be used to address truancy among school children?

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
24	Letters are sent to the homes of students concerned				
25	Parents are contacted by guidance and counseling team on the students behavior				
26	Attendance policy is given to parents at the beginning of the academic year				
27	Students receive awards for regular attendance to school at the end of every term				
28	Home visits are instituted to prompt students and parents on the policies on school attendance.				

29	Parent are called on phone from office about student's absence				
30	Students' school attendance are discussed at PTA meetings				

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION



APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RESPONDENTS

1. What are the community perceptions of the causes of truancy and high rates of excused and unexcused absences in Junior High schools?
Others related response?
2. What are the perceived dominant causes of truancy and high rates of excused and unexcused absences in Junior High schools
Others related response?
3. What are the prevention and early intervention strategies to mitigate truancy and high rates of excused and unexcused absences in Junior High schools?
Others related response?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

