

AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF THE CAUSES OF ABSENTEEISM IN JUNIOR
HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KWADASO MUNICIPALITY



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award of Masters of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree**

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DECLARATION

CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I, AKWASI OTENG DOMFEH, declare that this dissertation, 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 thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training And Entrepreneurial Development.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. STEPHEN BAFFOUR ADJEI

SIGNATURE:

DATE:.....

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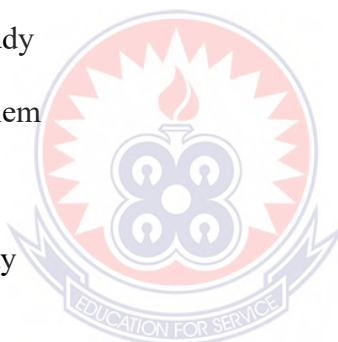
DEDICATION

To my lovely wife; Amanda Gyamfi Boakye; my immediate family and extended family especially Mr. Francis Sarpong.



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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to investigate the teachers' perception of the causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality. The objectives of the study were to find out home related causes of absenteeism, determine the school related causes of absenteeism and to develop measures to mitigate absenteeism in Junior High schools. Descriptive survey design using the quantitative method was adopted for the study. The target population for study comprised all the head teachers and assistants and teachers public Junior High Schools in the Agric Circuit of the Kwadaso Municipality. The accessible population for study was 90, comprising 12 head teachers and assistants, and 78 teachers in six Junior High Schools of the Agric circuit. The study employed census sampling technique to select all the 12 head teachers and assistants, and 78 teachers for the study. Closed-ended questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The study found among others that parent-child poor relation in the home and parental neglect of child was some home related causes of absenteeism. Also, unfriendly behavior of some teachers towards students and lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance was some school related causes of absenteeism. Again, institution of award systems for students' regularity and punctuality and community involvement on measures to facilitate students' school attendance were some measures to mitigate absenteeism. It is recommended that the Municipal Education Office in collaboration with heads of schools should formulate a well-developed policy on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly to reduce the act of absenteeism, if not to eliminate it.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprises the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, Operational definition of terms and organization of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

Education plays an essential role in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. It is a tool which can be used to train the future generations to inculcate skills and competencies. The way a child is raised has an adverse impact not only on oneself but on the whole society. Governments, parents and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) all over the world spend time and resources to bring up students to become useful people for future leadership roles. It is said that the future of every society depends entirely on the younger generation and as a result society is expected to give its value to the next generation. The society can be developed through the rotation of values and the transmission depends on the education of the younger generation. Since the coming into being of the educational institutions, society has charged these institutions with the responsibility of teaching the younger ones to have a responsible life in the society (Dankwa, as cited in Taylor & Buku, 2006).

The development of any nation depends largely on the education of its human resources. Access to education 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 (Taylor & Buku, 2006). Consequently, the

government of Ghana introduced free compulsory universal and basic education (FCUBE) to get young children educated (Ghana Education Service, 2012). 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 (2012) 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 it seems that the same report is replicated in Africa of which Ghana is part and specifically junior high schools in the Kwadaso Municipality. In support, Gabb (1994) indicated that absenteeism and unexcused absence from school by a minor that exceed the number of such absences allowed under the laws of Ghana 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). Unemployment is then a financial burden to both the

welfare and unemployment systems. Another financial burden to the community is from the truants and absentees who commit crimes. This creates increased costs on the courts, the police, social welfare department and insurance companies. It is believed that absenteeism has significant influence on students' education in junior high schools. This has necessitated the need for the study to investigate the causes of absenteeism in Junior High school in the Kwadaso Municipality.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

When students attend school on a regular basis, they take an important step towards reaching their full potentials, and are given the greatest opportunity to learn new things and develop their skills. Students who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in their examinations. The more time a student spends around other students, whether in the classroom or as part of a school team or club, the more chance they have of making friends and feeling included, boosting social skills, confidence and self-esteem (Taylor & Buku, 2006). While the parent is primarily responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly, where school attendance problems occur the key to successfully resolving these problem is engaging the child through collaborative working between the parent, the school and the local authority (Llywodraeth, 2011). Various studies have attempted an enquiry into the causes of absenteeism (Taylor & Buku, 2006: Llywodraeth, 2011: Wadesango & Machingambi, (2011). A study by Wadesango (as cited in Maina & Dolphine, 2011) found that absenteeism is rampant among some students in South African schools.

In support, Asiedu- Akrofi (1978) stressed the fact that in big towns and cities in Ghana, children find it easy to absent themselves from school because some children leave home on the pretext of going to school but they will never reach school.

He adds that others do go to school only to vanish after a few hours' stay. This is an indication that most students in cities or towns in Ghana deceive their parents for not going to school. This presupposes that a number of factors in towns or cities where commercial activities as well as other modern facilities are rampant prevent students from attending school for which their parents do not know. Oduro (2012) also revealed that in Kumasi (Ghana), 44% of the juveniles who escape schools and go to early employment actually need money to buy textbooks, school uniforms or to pay for their school fees. He indicated that 27% engage in trading in order to supplement the household budget. The school itself has also found to have influence on students' class attendance.

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 in Ghana 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. These interventions by Government and other stakeholder in education notwithstanding, it seems high rates of absenteeism still persists in Ghanaian schools (Kusi, 2012).

There is an unsubstantiated report from parents that absenteeism and truancy exist in junior high schools in the Kwadaso Municipal of the Ashanti Region of Ghana which has been a major topic for discussion at Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. Many of the same causes of high rates of absenteeism lead to truancy when it is left unidentified and untreated. Therefore, mitigating strategies that foster a sense of caring and support towards students with high rates of absenteeism are paramount.

In addition, Maina and Dolphine's (2011) study focused on schools in South Africa which has different climate and culture as far as Ghana is concerned. This

therefore necessitated a study to focus on public junior high schools, hence the need to design a study specifically to investigate the causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools. The study therefore sought to investigate the causes of absenteeism and its handling strategies in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of absenteeism and its handling strategies in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specifically the study sought to:

1. find out home related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality.
2. determine the school related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality.
3. develop measures to mitigate the act of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the home related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?
2. What are the school related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?
3. What measures can mitigate the act absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study will be significant in the following perspective.

The findings of the study will be useful to policy makers, educational directors, teachers, parents and other stakeholders in education to formulate policies to educate students on the need to avoid absenteeism to have enough time to study to improve their performance. The findings of this study will also add to the existing knowledge on the causes of absenteeism that sometimes lead to truancy. The findings of the study will serve as a blueprint for future researchers who will want to investigate the causes of absenteeism in educational institutions.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to the causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

The population for the study was delimited to head teachers, assistant head teachers and teachers in the 13 public Junior High Schools in the Agric Circuit of the Kwadaso Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. 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 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Due to time constraint, the researcher used only questionnaire to collect data for the study. The sample of the study was also limited to head teachers, assistant head teachers and teachers in public Junior High Schools in the Agric Circuit of the Kwadaso Municipality. Moreover, with the use of questionnaire it was not possible to probe further for detailed explanation. All these were likely to affect the validity of the findings or conclusions.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Absenteeism: A habitual pattern of absence from duty or obligation.

Student Absenteeism: A situation where student absents or herself from school without good reason or permission.

Teacher Absenteeism: A situation where teacher absents him or herself from school without good reason or permission.

Academic Performance or Achievement: The outcome of education- the extent to which a student, teacher or organization has achieved educational goals.

Job Satisfaction: The state of mind that affects the work someone currently does.

1.10 Organization of the Study

The study was organized into six chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction, comprising 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, operational definition of terms and the organization of the study.

Chapter Two deals with the review of relevant literature on what other researchers and authorities on the topic have written. Chapter Three covers the methodology, including the introduction, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, reliability and validity of the instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four consists of the analysis and discussions of the data collected while Chapter Five presents the result of the study while Chapter Six entails the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

The chapter provides a review of the related literature to the causes of absenteeism and its preventive strategies in junior high schools. The review dealt with what has been done both internationally and locally on the topic.

2.1 Empirical Review

Absenteeism has many varied implications on business organizations, in which the main direct and indirect influence is economic (Barrick & Strauss, 1994). However, the problem is especially difficult in schools, in which absenteeism causes additional damage, beyond the economic, and strongly affects the schools general existence (Ehrenberg et al, 1989; Taub, 1997). Loss of school days that diminish the students achievements cause damage to the school's reputation and induce student absenteeism, (Corville-Smith, 1995).

Failure to school by teachers has direct impact on the students' performance in school and also linked to students' non-attendance on the other hand. High employee absenteeism can have a negative effect on production and hurt the company's bottom line. Illness contributes to absenteeism, but chronic absenteeism can have its roots in other causes.

Similarly, Gulag et al. (2011) who researched absenteeism results in poor academic achievement, loss of friends and partners, disruption in class when absentees return affect the behavior of other students, difficulty in keeping accurate records, reduced ability to meet instructional targets and damaged school reputation .

This again indicates a relationship between attendance and performance. However the extent of impact has not been quantified in this evidence.

This present study also benefits enormously from the present Western Network for Education Development, a Non-governmental Organization [WNED], on Assessment of the effects of teacher absenteeism on quality teaching and learning in public senior high schools in Western region of Ghana. Quality education in rural settings of Ghana has become poor due to teacher inadequacy and teacher absenteeism (WNED, 2009). It further added that 70% of the sampled teachers agree that absenteeism has a significantly negative effect on teaching and learning. This has confirmed the findings of Gulag et al, (2011) which posit that unaccepted absence had a negative effect on peer relationship, which could cause absence of students in schools and especially second cycle schools. The absence from schools has different dimensions and also has involved different categories of students in various schools.

According to WNED (2009), the extent of absence from school varies in term of gender, population density of the area in question, age group as well as other categories. According to Malcolm, Wilson, Davidson and Kirk (2003), teachers identified effects of absenteeism on children are; academic under-achievement which increases costs and wastage, difficulty in making friends which could lead to boredom, loss of confidence and engagement in premature sexual activity which could lead to pregnancy resulting in dropout and stress among young careers.

Absenteeism and tardiness are not only detrimental to an employee's career, but to the organizations bottom line as well. Regardless of the reason, there is no doubt that the effects of absenteeism and tardiness on work are resoundingly negative (Kearney, 2007). On the other hand, widespread absenteeism could be an indication of

managerial issues, such as low employee morale coupled with unsafe work environment. The results indicated that student absenteeism affected academic performance and that the level of student absenteeism mattered in academic performance.

Similarly, research findings of Independent Advocacy Project (2010), a Non-governmental Organization on “Teacher absenteeism in Nigeria Public Schools” submitted a conclusions indicating that, absenteeism occurs among teachers and students alike and there is evidence of a correlation between high teacher absenteeism and high student absenteeism leading to low student achievement. It is worth noting that, the study area where these findings were obtained has similar features to the present study except for the difference in public schools administrations system as well as their curricular. Therefore, this is relevant in uncovering these conditions.

2.2 Causes of Absenteeism

It is commonly known and empirically established that, absenteeism occurs among teachers and students alike (Independent Advocacy Project, 2010). Initial research findings indicate that the causes of absenteeism among teachers include but not limited to poor salaries, lack of effective monitoring oversight, health conditions poor school and accommodation infrastructure, social issues as well as economic pressures (WNED, 2009). Similarly, non-attendance by students is primarily routed in economic conditions emanating from homes, which imply that in many poor homes children become breadwinners for their families at very early ages. On similar grounds, Maina and Dolphine (2012) in a paper titled “Student Absenteeism causes and effect on Academic Performance” indicated that student absenteeism affected

academic performance and that the level of student absenteeism mattered in academic performance.

Every curriculum year, absenteeism constitutes one of the significant problems that educational administrators and proprietors had to contend. According to Malcolm et al. (2003), teacher identified effects of absenteeism on children as; academic under-achievement, difficulty in making friends which could lead to boredom, loss of confidence. Also, prolonged absence can have deleterious effects for the child in later life.

2.2.1 Causes of Absenteeism

A basic employee requirement for most jobs is to show up on time every scheduled day ready to work. Although the proposed content for this research is focused on students' non-attendance, it is established by experts and participants in the field of education that absenteeism among teachers equally has negative repercussions on pupils' performance (Ehrenberg, Rees & Ehrenberg 1991). Existing literature has evaluated two types of absenteeism: excused and non-excused.

Excused Absence: This is work absenteeism that forms an aspect of teachers [or employee's] right that are enshrined in the law and in collective bargaining [trade union] agreements and are paid by the government [or its agency]; and absenteeism that is not recognized by the school / state law for reimbursement (Thomson, Griffiths & Davison, 2000).

Objectively, within excused absence there are planned behaviors that the school authority [immediate employer] knows about the teacher or students in advance, such as running errands on behalf of the school, extracurricular activities and

external studies, and less planned ones such as personal reasons (family funeral engagement, etc), absenteeism due to illness, personal , religious or study-related reasons, absence due to a sick child or sickness of a student, maternity leave; for personal reasons – mourning, marriage and so on; as well as absenteeism that is unconnected to the teacher or the student but related to the general working environment –such as strikes, labor-related issues, etc. All the reasons above that are common in Nigeria indeed find corroboration in the global north as reported by (Thomson et al, 2000 & Ehrenberg et al, 1991).

Unexcused absence: meaning absenteeism without an official or recognized (excused) reason, occurs when a teacher or student fails to provide the school authority with satisfactory explanation for the absenteeism, or gives no reason at all (Thomson et al, 2000) leading to proportionate deduction in the teacher’s salary or the student being punished. The literature shows that this form of behavior is the most important and interesting one, because teachers are “willing” to pay for it out of their salary (Latham & Purcell, 1977), it is however, difficult to quantify and therefore practical solutions can be rare.

When that teacher is repeatedly absent, student performance can be significantly impacted in a negative way. The more days a teacher is out of the classroom, the lower their students tend to score on standardized tests. It is established that in the United States, nationally, teachers are absent from the classroom on average 10 days per year (Finlayson, 2009) and some selected School District in that country, teachers are out of the classroom on average 14 days per year. The various known evidence submitted by researchers across the country Ghana and the continent Africa suggest variation in the causes of teachers absenteeism. According to WNED (2009), in purposive research undertaken in the Western Region

of Ghana, the following conclusions were reached. Teacher absenteeism is high among male teachers (49%). Results of field discussions and interviews indicate that absenteeism among male and female teachers is largely attributable to health (48%), economic (11%), social (11%) and school infrastructure (26%) reasons. Results of the study reveal that 30% of teachers in the sampled schools are associated with absenteeism, lateness to school and early departure from school. Teacher absenteeism in the sampled schools is high in deprived schools compared to endowed schools. Late arrival and early departure from school by teachers, are more common among teachers who live outside the school community (70%), and are responsible for 65% of the lateness/early departure. 70% of professional teachers were in school compared with 30% of the non- professional teachers who were present in school during the same period.

There is a negative relationship between length of service and absenteeism and about 40% of sampled teachers stay more than 5 km away, 30% of sampled teachers stay less than 1 km away from the school 70% of sampled teachers stay at least 2 km away from the school. The findings indicate that time – on –task is generally low (55%) in sampled schools. Majority of sampled teachers (53%) seldom finish their lessons on time as a result of low time-on-task. Another 9% of sampled teachers have never finished their official lessons. However, the research statistics did not address the puzzle in the entire country because it is confined to the western section of the country which has climatic conditions, vegetation pattern, population density, occupational livelihood, and level of income which vary directly from the same parameters in the southern section of the country. This research is essential in that regard as the study case is anchored in the southern zone.

In recent years, many developing countries have experienced high levels of teacher absenteeism. Using the experience of nine developing countries to study teacher absenteeism, Fehrler et al, (2006) reported findings in Zurich that between 11% and 30% of teachers were absent from their post in an academic year. This figure is low compared to the conclusion reached by the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD) as cited in Salifu and Agbenyega (2012) that 47% of teachers were absent during the research. The findings further point out that teacher absenteeism is even higher at the end of the week; the percentage that were absent on Fridays were 60% compared to 20% on Mondays.

It seems that absenting themselves from school at the end of the week. The average number of days per week teachers absents themselves from school for a full teaching week and/or more is very common with more than 98% of teachers having practiced this in the past one year. Teachers in this category are largely those who stay outside the communities and commute between the school communities and their community of residence. The results of discussions indicate that some head teachers are not regularly attending the schools thereby making it difficult for them to serve as effective supervisors.

The findings of WNED (2009) further revealed a negative relationship between length of service and absenteeism suggesting that young teachers absent themselves more frequently than older ones. This is understandable because long serving teachers (more than 10 years) assume responsible positions (headmasters or mistresses) thereby enticing them to be available almost all the time, as their positions sometimes compel them to live in the school communities. The advantage is that when a teacher lives in the community for a long time he or she identifies himself/ herself with the community. They also suggest that teachers who have served for at least 10 years

rarely absent themselves from school. This illustration implies that the more years a teacher spends in a school the lower the probability of the teachers practicing absenteeism.

This finding does not however agree with that of Miller, Flory, Miller, Harty, Newcom and Halperin (2008) and Clotfelter et al. (2007) that new or beginner-teacher with less than 5 years of experience take less time off during the school year. According to them beginner- teachers use an average of 5 days of sick leave per school year whereas teachers with five to ten years of experience take an average of eight or more days. The study reveals that there is a relationship between gender and teacher absenteeism.

WNED (2009) found that teachers with high level of qualification are more committed to teaching and with minimal tendency/ level of absenteeism. The data revealed that 70% of professional teachers were in school compared with 30% of the non- professional teachers who were present in school during the same period. This difference can possibly be attributed to the fact that unlike non- professional teachers who under different authority, the professional teachers are directly under the GES and are easily monitored by the circuit supervisors under the GES rules and regulations (Ghana Education Service, 2002).

This finding, however, does not agree with the conclusion reached by Clotfelter et al, (2007) on a study of teachers in the United States of America which indicates that professional teachers absented themselves more frequently than non-professional teachers. The authors indicated that 57% of professional teachers were not present in their classrooms at least once in the week, compared to 36% of the non- professional teachers.

For women, family income, education and pre- school age children all affect absenteeism, but it is the presence of children aged under-three that has the impact. In general, among men, marital status and children aged 2-5 are the primary determinants of absenteeism (Bridges & Mumford, 2001). Child bearing years: during their child-bearing years, teacher absenteeism rates among women are significantly higher than among men, in almost all the countries, including Ghana and Nigeria, where absenteeism studies have been carried out (Ubogu, 2004). Women are more likely than men to report a major illness. Women were also more likely to take time off when a child was ill or injured (Scott & McClellan, 1990)

Bridges and Mumford (2001) found that in general women have similar pattern of absenteeism to men and differences stem primarily from prevalence to absenteeism among women with very young children. Researchers (Scott & McClellan, 1990: Hackett, 1990: Thomson, Griffiths & Davison, 2000) also disagree about the direction of connection between teachers' age and the degree of their absenteeism. Some researchers have found a negative (weak) connection between age and absenteeism (Hackett, 1990), particularly among men.

As age rises, absenteeism appears to decrease, possibly due to stronger commitment to work, and less commitment at home (Thomson, Griffiths & Davison, 2000). A connection is indicated in the literature between teacher's age [seniority] and personal position in the school [the level of the job], and as age and seniority increase, teachers get better conditions in term of bigger scope of job, far more responsibility, and higher salary (Lawler, 1992).

In a survey among respondents by way of questionnaire conducted by Independent Advocacy Project (IAP 2010), the most 12 common reasons reported

for being absent from work were different types of illnesses; self (23.7%), moonlighting (25.2%), Head teachers is absent creating administrative laxness (25.4%.

Others such as running degree programs without being detected (18.7%), poor salaries and emoluments (32%), lack of effective administrative supervision, monitoring and control including no surprised visits (45.6%), unattractive decaying facilities and dilapidated structures (24%) and no disciplinary measures against absentees (31%). Yet others include rural schools (12.5%), weak Parent- Teachers association that seldom meet (20%) and school assignment or extracurricular activities. The concrete statement findings of the given statistics include: Lack of daily transportation to schools in the remote rural areas that sometimes requires teachers going thereby commercial motorbikes that are very costly, meaning that they could not afford to report to work every week day; A female teacher at Ikorodu was particularly virulent in pouring out her frustration: “People always say it is the fault of the teachers whenever there is any issue with schools. Do you know how much it costs me to transport myself from my house to school? If I have to be in school every school day, my salary will not even be enough to cover my transport. This means that it is either I chose when to go to school and when not to go, or find ways of making extra money through doing petty business that takes me away from school. The situation is that bad, and it is getting worse. Nobody seem to be doing anything about this, it is all about teachers not being committed (IAP, 2010).

Supervisory agency and Education Service and Ministry officials do not visit some of these schools at all, because the schools are in the rural areas and the roads are almost non-existence. It should however be noted that, the conclusions reached by a number of these literature especially that of Independent Advocacy Project (IAP, 2010) suffers over generalization. This is the result of the fact that only few

selected basic and secondary schools were used for the research as a representation of the situation in the entire Nigeria and by extension Ghana.

Students' absenteeism

A comprehensive review is drawn down on teacher absenteeism largely because it is related to student absenteeism student achievement and school success (Ehrenberg, Rees & Ehrenberg 1991) which needed be addressed through some mitigating strategies. According to Independent Advocacy Project (IAP, 2010) and Malcolm et al. (2003), for school community positive relationship to commune in the administration of schools, there is the need to identify causes of students absenteeism. The family economy has been identified as major cause of habitual absentees. For a poverty-stricken family, it may mean a continuation of the poverty and unemployment cycle that may run in the family which trickles down to the school going children (Malcolm et al, 2003).

Health grounds were found to be the most common reason of students for being absent. It has the highest response average in a purposive conducted survey. According, the most commonly found illness were fever (2.4), and followed by headache with an average response of 1.67. Other diseases like diarrhea come in third with 1.61 average responses. The fact least common reason for them for being absent is stomachache with 1.39 averages.

Personal Attitude of the student to the effect that they do not wake up early is the most common reason why he/she is absent. This account for 1.91 mean. Another reason commonly cited is that they can't concentrate on their studies and that they were not able to study their lessons. This resulted from 1.45 and 1.37 mean respectively. Feeling lazy and playing computer games also keep them away from

school, (Malcolm et al, 2003). Student-teacher related influences also acts as a push factor for their absenteeism. When the students are scolded for their bad behavior by the teacher, this tends to make them be absent from their classes. It was found to have significant average response together with other reasons that they cannot understand their lessons.

Maina and Dolphine's (2012) study on Absenteeism, Causes and Effect on Academic Performance in a district in Kenya in March, 2012 with a target sampled population of 3,763 students from mixed public secondary schools. The results indicated that the level of student absenteeism mattered in academic performance. It was found out that the main cause of student absenteeism was lack of school fees which was essentially economic motivation. The study also observed that many student counselors did not treat student absenteeism as a problem requiring their intervention.

The study further indicated that student age did not affect absenteeism. These findings cannot entirely reflect the Ghanaian situation due to the structure of curriculum and educational arrangements. It is worthy of note that, enough literature is not prevalent addressing the condition of students' absenteeism either in broader context or specific case studies. This therefore elicits unpublished and unconfirmed speculations in the secondary sources including the internet. Among these causes of absenteeism according to Ehrenberg, Rees and Ehrenberg (1991) were: lack of subject interest; lack of personal interest in studies; available opportunities for entertainment like malls; movie halls as well as too much pampering from family account for non-attendance of students to schools. The poor teaching skills of a teacher also keep away student from the school. Lack of allied activities like sport programs also causes absenteeism.

Poor infrastructure facility in school such as no place in a library to sit is also one of the reasons of absenteeism. Some the students are doing private coaching for their external examinations or are preparing for their external examination through private tuition such activities cause absenteeism in school and college. Excess of homework and sometimes fear from examination keep away students from school/college (www.wikianwsers.com). If school or college is far off, the percentage of absenteeism may increase. Over expectation of parents also deteriorate the attendance of a student when he/she is unable to cope with parent nature of making comparison among their own children or with friends of their child.

Too much socialization causes absenteeism. It mostly happens during teen age and college when the students form a group to freak, and resulting in peer group influencing over one another. When more than desired facilities are provided by parents such as mobiles to keep the ward in luxury coupled with high amount of money as pocket money. The students start enjoying those facilities and eventually increasing the rate of absenteeism (Malcolm et al, 2003). However, these submissions are unconfirmed by any purposive research, and besides they lack quantifications in terms of actual estimates of students who suffer each of these causes.

2.3.2 Causes of Lateness

Similar to absenteeism, lateness to school by pupils is linked by findings to several conditions. It is important for the students and teachers to be punctual at school, for the smooth running of the school. Showing up on time is the discipline of a school. Also “Punctuality is not only on a duty, but is also a part of good manners; it is favorable to fortune, reputation, influence, and usefulness; a little attention and energy will form the habit, so to make it easy and delightful. Punctuality is a great way to make a positive personal impact on both teaching and learning. Being punctual

is also a fundamental tool for anyone who wants to be perceived as being the very best (Ubogu, 2004).

Regardless of the gender, lateness is found to be common among both male and female students. This is as a result of their involvement in domestic activities by their parent, distance to school; school discipline, family background and school location are among causes of lateness among secondary school students (Ubogu, 2004). Other anonymous sources project these as the most common causes of lateness to school by students. But these cannot still be applied entirely to students of different cultural settings and perception of education.

At another level, going late to bed because of watching films and home movies, resulting into wake up late in the morning, distance to school and keeping friends who are not students are causes of lateness among secondary school students (Ubogu, 2004; Heather, Wilson, Davidson & Kirk, 2003). The findings of Heather et al, (2003) reflected largely students of average family economy, distant homes and urban residence.

2.3 Factors Influencing Students' School Attendance

A study by Heather et al. (2003), revealed that the issue is students who stay away from school without permission will not only be left behind in the learning process, but worse still they will probably end up in drug abuse, gangsterism, alcohol consumption, free sex, gambling and loitering. Certainly, playing truant is a discipline problem, and where do these truants go to and what they do during the same of their absence from school are related concerns. There are many factors why children stay away from school without permission. In Malaysia for example, these factors include influence of peers, fear of being bullied, fear of teachers, dislike of certain

subjects, thinking that they will fail, no encouragement from parents or family problems, and the school factor. All of these factors have resulted in students having no motivation to learn; therefore they turn their attention to hang around at other places or loitering. Research findings have also shown that students who do not interested to be in school. Students' absenteeism is a major concern for educators at all levels of educational institutions.

White (2005) found out that absenteeism disturbs the dynamic teaching-learning environment and adversely affects the overall "well-being of classes". Acknowledging the severity of the absenteeism problem, educators are exploring creative techniques to increase class attendance, such as innovative teaching methods and better equipped classrooms. Heather et al. (2003) opined that students' attendance to school has a link with teacher support, student engagement and achievement. All of the factors they used to define levels of student engagement were dependent upon the students being present at school. Students who were not present simply could not be engaged.

In an attempt to find out some of the factors influencing students' class attendance, Heather et al. (2003) suggested motivation as a strong positive effect on student attendance. The finding of Heather et al. shows that better and more motivated students attend classes more frequently. Additionally, students who support themselves financially through work and/or loans while pursuing their education appear to attend classes more regularly. These students appear to know the value of their money, realize the importance of going to school and take their education more seriously as indicated by more frequent class attendance.

Teachers who have won teaching awards tend to attract a higher percentage of students to their classes. Specifically, classes taught by such instructors reflected

approximately a nine percent higher attendance rate than those taught by teachers with no teaching award (Heather et al., 2003). Clearly, this is an important finding since it confirms that a good teacher can make a significant difference, not only by increasing class attendance but also by stimulating students to understand the subject matter. Asiedu- Akrofi (1978) stressed the fact that in big towns and cities in Ghana, children find it easy to absent themselves from school because some children leave home on the pretext of going to school but they will never reach school. Asiedu- Akrofi adds that others do go to school only to vanish after a few hours' stay. This is an indication that most students in cities or towns in Ghana deceive their parents for not going to school. This presupposes that a number of factors in towns or cities where commercial activities as well as other modern facilities are rampant prevent students from attending school for which their parents do not know.

Oduro (2012) revealed that in Kumasi (Ghana), 44% of the juveniles who escape schools and go to early employment actually need money to buy textbooks, school uniforms or to pay for their school fees. He indicated that 27% engage in trading in order to supplement the household budget.

The school itself has also found to have influence on students' class attendance. Maehr and Midgley (1991) recounted numerous factors such as lack of students 'connection to teachers or other staff members, bullying and harassment from senior students to the junior students, social isolation of the school such not being involved in the inter school activities and other curricular activities, among others, are some of the factors that can reinforce a student's dislike and distrust of school which eventually affect their attendance to school. The home where a child is often seen most also influences class attendance. Everybody sees the home as a protective determinant

for the child's development. Rumberger (1987) opined that parental monitoring and participation in their wards' education influence students attendance in school.

He stated that families who are more involved with their wards schooling tend to be consistent with the expectations of the school and make sure their wards benefits from them. On the other hand, students are likely to become confused about how they should behave if the schools and families have different rules and expectations. Such confusion kills most students' interest from attending school. In the words of Johnson (1994), poverty has elastic effects on students' school attendance. A situation where parents lack enough resources and funds to sponsor their children's education renders education and learning impossible for children. Thus, many students abandon school to engage in child labour to make ends meet and by this, they spend much time on this act than schooling.

This situation terribly affects students' class attendance. Reid (2003) found that schools that were characterized as small in class size, had lower institutional control, had less rigorous rule enforcement, had closer parent-school relationships, had student involvement in the management of schools and had lower rates of absences than schools that were custodial-oriented, had high levels of control and had inflexible organizational systems. Reid also found low attendance rates in schools that had low academic performance. Regardless of the reason for student absenteeism, a key issue in why it matters is that class attendance is likely to be beneficial for learning, irrespective of the specific teaching mode or modes used by the instructor (Reid, 2003).

In an earlier, quite revealing study, published in the American Economic Review, Reid (2005) measured the impact of time commitments by students to various course activities on the student' performance in a given class. The class author found

that, by far, the most valuable and important time commitments in a course was the time actually spent in the classroom and the time spent studying for any or all exams was not a statistically significant determinant affecting student performance in that class, which reinforced the idea that the most important learning in a course takes place in the classroom and that students who do a conscientious job on a daily basis preparing for and participating in class outperform those students who skip class and try to cram for exams (Reid, 2005). Although acknowledging that attendance per se does not ensure that learning will take place, a reasonable number of studies analyzing the impact of students' attendance on their academic performance Ubogu (2004) found a positive and significant relation between attendance and academic performance, with the effect being larger in high absenteeism contexts. Such a positive relation will most likely not be as meaningful in district cultural and economic environments. Factors that can affect students' academic performance are as follows;

Family factors: These include lack of guidance or parental supervision, poverty drug or alcohol abuse in home and differing attitudes of parents towards education. The support and availability of parent, their financial situation and standard of living can affect students' academic performance. The family or home, as the first agent of socialization is responsible for providing the child with basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, clothing, love (affection) and security. Little children gain their first experience from the family and significant others and gradually live up to its standards and values. The family conditions, is therefore necessary in ensuring a child's total development (Kerr & Jermierr, 1978). Kerr and Jermierr (1978) cited lack of interest of the parent in the schooling of the child, the personal problems of the child either at home or in school and boredom in the school's activities as some of the factors which might leads of child to absent himself or herself from school.

The geographical Location of the Educational Institutions: The unfavorable geographical location of a school leads to absenteeism among students affecting teaching and learning. Students tend to have lower interests in attending schools where its geographical location is unfavorable (Kerr & Jermierr, 1978).

School factors: Certain pedagogical dilemmas such as unappealing academic environment lead to absenteeism which affects teaching and learning. The general purpose of formal school education is to help students acquire certain attitudes, skills and knowledge which will enable them to live functionally with others, to understand their environment and solve problems, earn a living and contribute towards the development of the society. However, the school is viewed as one area which has influence on students absenteeism considering certain factors such as the climate of the school and the quality of teaching and learning materials used. The attitude of teachers, other students, administrators and inflexibility in meeting the diverse cultural and learning styles of students are all factors which affect teaching and learning (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Epstein and Sheldon further indicated that school characteristics and culture can influence student absenteeism which later affects teaching and learning. Harte (2008), views the school as a social unit charged with the responsibility of giving formal education to children and its environment should therefore be conducive to aid effective teaching and learning to help reduce the influence of absenteeism.

Distance and Transport: In rural centres mostly, students who have to travel long distances to school tend to absent themselves from school for about two days in a week because of high transport cost and sometimes crossing of rivers to attend school.

Domestic Problems: Female students whose parents have little babies rely on some of these students (daughters) to take care of these little babies and thus they tend to absent themselves from school or cut classes to take care of the babies, especially, when the parents are out of home.

Students Variable: These include drug and alcohol abuse, lack of social competence, mental health difficulties, poor physical health and peer pressure. Harris (2010) claims that peer groups are more powerful than parents in changing the values of an individual. Also, the choice of peer groups could have an effect upon the academic outcome of a student leading to absenteeism (Harris, 2010).

2.4 Academic Achievements of Students with High Class Attendance

It is believed that time is the most important determinant of student success and each unit of time in the class itself provided, among all the class related activities, the greatest improvement in student's performance. This pre-supposes the regular students' attendance in school improves students' academic performance. Thus, time in any course is the time actually spent in the classroom and it has the greatest impact on overall students' performance because the time spent in class each day for a particular course does the most to improve the student's grade and that regular class attendance can aid significantly by acting as an insurance policy in avoiding a D or F grade in a given class. In a way, regular attendance to school improves a student's academic performance (Harte, 2008).

A research article on "The impact of Class Attendance on Students' Performance in a Course" by Rene (2007) concluded that while holding constant all other explanatory variables the grade, the mean GPA for the students with strong

attendance was, on average, one entire letter grade higher than that of students with poorer attendance.

Academic Achievements of Students with Low Class Attendance

In general, research has indicated that greater absenteeism is associated with lower achievement (Rene, 2007). The relationship between students achievement and attendance has been argued to be a recursive one in which those students who are lower performing are more likely to reduce their attendance rate which in turn impacts their subsequent achievement and so on until finally they drop out (Rene, 2007). Harte (2008) opined that lack of students' attendance was statistically significant in explaining why a student received a D rather than an A, a B or C grade in a specific class. The same data were also used by them to determine the relative impact of each absence in the student's final letter grade for particular course. The empirical result showed that absence from class was statistically significant in lowering the letter grade of the typical student (Harte, 2008).

On the contrary, Suryadarma, Suryahadi, Sumarto and Rogers (2006) notes the difficulty inferring the effect of absenteeism on performance because an absent student may compensate for the missed opportunity outside of class with other learning techniques. If the student is unmotivated to learn, however, being absent from class is a symptom of an overall lack of effort. To measure the direct effect of class attendance on learning in a single section of a lecture- based, undergraduate economics principles course, Suryadarma, Suryahadi, Sumarto and Rogers (2006) matches student- specific class absences with performance on multiple-choice exam questions that pertain to material covered during the student's absence and estimates a qualitative choice model of exam decision-making. The authors finds that missing class increases the likelihood of missing test material covered that day compared to students that were present.

While student absenteeism increased over the semester, the probability of an incorrect response to exam questions due to being absent also becomes smaller for exams later rather than earlier in the semester. An implication is that the timing of class absences matters in the effect on exam performance (Suryadarma, Suryahadi, Sumarto & Rogers, 2006).

Poor class attendance produces more dropouts than all of the other reasons combined. That includes variables such as going to a community college, moving to an unknown location, academic problems, choosing work over school, school discipline, unstable home environments, pregnancy, being incarcerated, health problems, being a runaway, caring for children and substance abuse. We have the greatest chance of improving the current level of student academic performance and reducing the current dropout rate by requiring poor attending students to attend school. When you know about poor attendance, do not support it, do not ignore it and do not condone it through your silence. Zhang (2003) explained that students who miss too many classes end up doing poorly, withdrawing, or requiring significant help in the form of one-on-one meeting or tutoring in order to catch up.

2.5 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 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' absenteeism. Some of them are;

Well-developed policies

Dougherty (2012) 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.

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

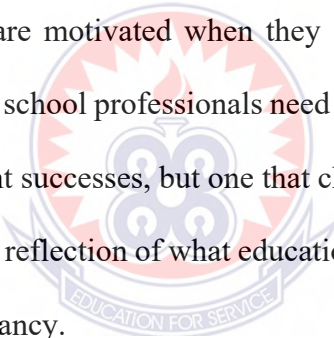
communicated with parents through phone, mail, newsletters, or in person, attendance can be improved U.S. Department of Education & U.S. Department of Justice, 1996).

Community involvement

Dougherty, (2012) 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.

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.



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 (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002).

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 and absenteeism. 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 and absenteeism 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.

Small groups

Baker and Jansen(2000) said that small group experience gives the students the opportunity to identify their barriers or causes of absenteeism 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).

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Researchers have difficulty properly and consistently defining 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 (Kearney, 2003).

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, 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 (Kearney, 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. Despite the sub-type of problematic absenteeism, the outcomes can still be detrimental to a student's overall success in school (Dube & Orpinas, 2009).

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) perceives 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 absenteeism, but the prevention and early intervention strategies for addressing absenteeism (Duodu, 2003). Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual framework on the Causes and preventive measures on absenteeism.

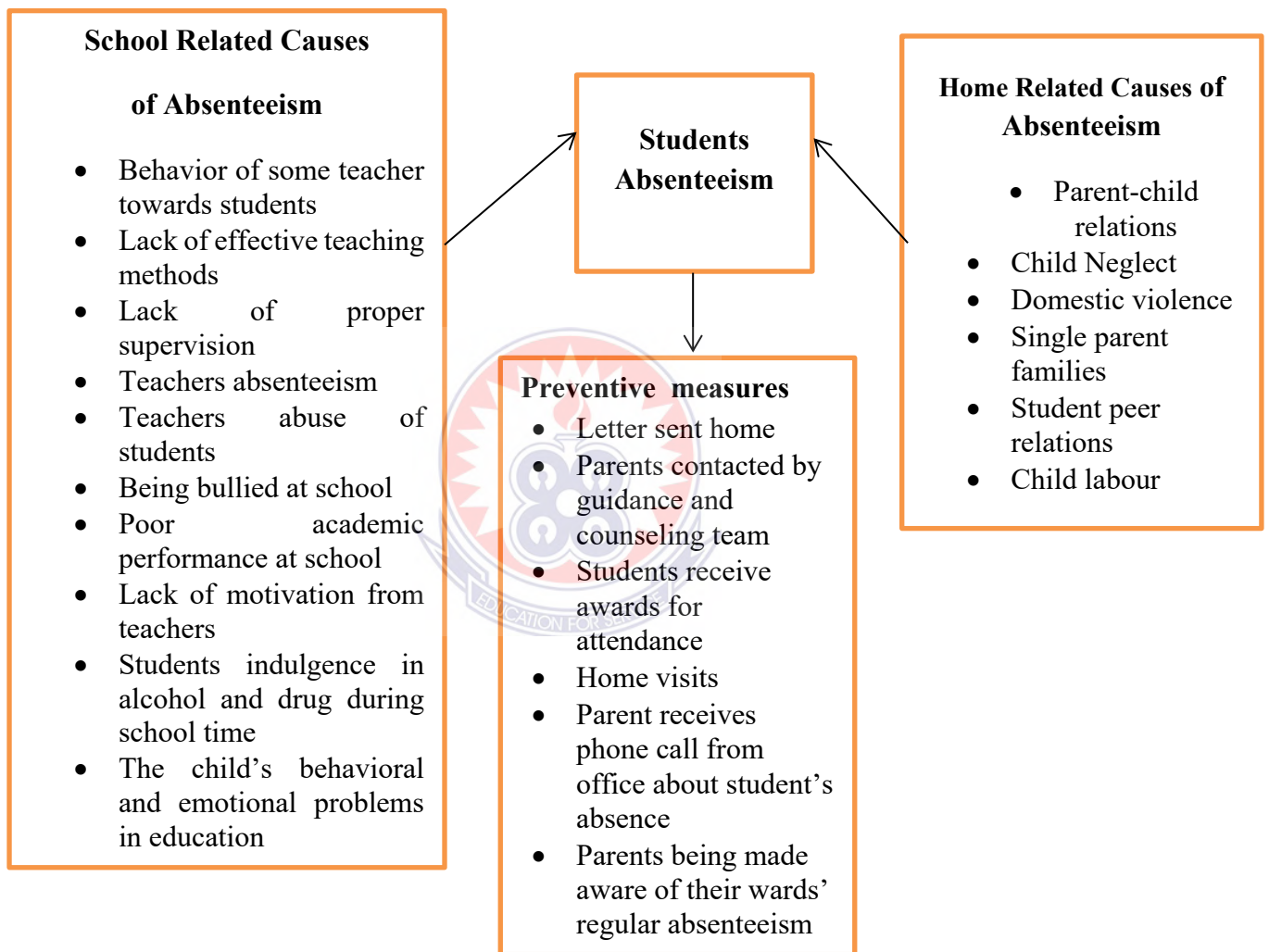


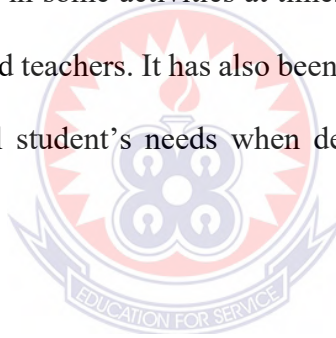
Fig. 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's construct 2018

The central rectangle signifies the presence of absenteeism in school. The left rectangle signifies the school related causes of students' absenteeism. The right rectangle signifies the home related causes of students' absenteeism whilst the bottom rectangle presents the preventive measures on absenteeism.

2.7 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. There are also a lot of preventive measures to forestall or mitigate student absenteeism and truancy. Absenteeism 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. 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 presents the methodology of the study which includes the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instrument, piloting for validity and reliability, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy that one chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, effectively addressing the research problem. Research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (De Vaus, 2001).

The researcher used descriptive survey design for the study. 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. Descriptive survey design was used for the study because the method helps find or gather relevant data in detail and to make detailed analysis. Descriptive research design allowed the researcher to gather data from head teachers, assistant head teachers and teachers to have a better insight on the causes of absenteeism and its handling strategies in Junior High schools. Amin (2005) indicated that the descriptive method of research is used to gather information about the present existing condition.

Descriptive survey design has the advantage of providing the researcher with more information from a large number of respondents. Nonetheless, one major

weakness of descriptive survey design is how to retrieve all the questionnaires administered.

3.2 Population of the Study

According to Polit and Hungler (2004), population is an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications. The target population for study comprised all the head teachers, assistant head teachers and teachers in the 13 public Junior High Schools in the Agric Circuit of the Kwadaso Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The accessible population for study was 90 head teachers, assistants head teachers and teachers in the Six Junior High Schools of the Agric circuit, comprising six head teachers, six assistants head teachers and 78 teachers.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample is subset of population and consists of individual, object or event that forms the population (Fraenkel & Wallen 2006). According to Borg and Gall, (2007), sampling is a technique used for selecting a given number of subjects from a target population as a representative of the population in research work.

The study employed census sampling technique to select all the 90 head teachers, assistants head teachers and teachers in the six junior high schools of the Agric circuit for the study, comprising six head teachers, six assistants head teachers and 78 teachers. This was because the researcher was interested in those who have rich information such as the head teachers and their assistants and teachers who are involved in the day to day administration and also interact with students on daily basis in the school and therefore were in a better position know the causes of absenteeism in the

school. Creswell (2012) postulated that census sampling increases sample as it covers the whole population, and it is unbiased.

3.4 Sources of Data

The researcher used both primary and secondary data for the study. The primary data were collected and use for analysis, while the secondary data were sourced as literature and information on the research topic.

Primary data

The researcher used closed ended questionnaire to collect primary data from for the study.

Secondary data

Secondary data were also gotten from books, encyclopedias, published and unpublished materials and from the University library and other text books.

3.5. Data Collection Instrument

The researcher used closed-ended questionnaire to collect data for the study. The researcher personally designed the questionnaires with support from his supervisor for the head teachers, assistant head teachers and teachers based on the literature. These closed ended questionnaires were self-administered to the respondents to collect data for the study.

According to White (2005), questionnaire is an instrument that is designed to collect data for making decision in research. A questionnaire can also be described as a systematic compilation of questions that are administered to a sample of a population in research (White, 2005).

The close-ended questionnaire was meant to assist respondents to provide uniformity of response. Questionnaire also provides easier and accurate analysis of the data and a high degree of respondent's objectivity. A questionnaire is cost effective and less time consuming as compared to other research tools. The main reason for using questionnaire was to obtain factual information, opinions and attitudes from large number of subjects within a short period of time (White, 2005).

3.6 Pilot-Testing

Bell (2008) indicated that the reason for piloting is 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 were administered to 30 head teachers, assistant head teachers and teachers selected randomly from Asuoyeboah M/A Junior High School which was located outside the study area in the pilot study. The purpose of the pilot is to enable the researcher to make necessary changes to items which may be inappropriate, determine the level of ambiguity of the questions for corrections and determine the percentage of responses. Ambiguous items were revised and inappropriate items deleted.

Validity

Validity of an instrument in research is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. The researcher tested the face and content validity of the questionnaire. Face validity refers to the likelihood of a question being misunderstood or misinterpreted. Content validity refers to whether an instrument adequately covers all the topics concerned (Fraenkel & Wallen 2006). The validity of the instrument was

established through expert opinions from my supervisor, literature searches, and pilot-testing of the questionnaire.

Reliability

Reliability of an instrument in research is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistency in its results or data after repeated trials (Fraenkel & Wallen 2006). The questionnaire was administered on the same group of respondents twice during the pilot study with a two weeks grace period between the first and second test and the coefficient of reliability from the two tests correlated to find the reliability co-efficient. The reliability test yielded Cronbach alpha of 0.82 which meant that the instrument was highly reliable.

3.7. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher sought permission from the Kwadaso Municipal Director of Education to conduct the study after which the researcher visited the schools sampled to seek permission to conduct the research work. The researcher established rapport with the respondents and briefed them on the purpose of the study and thereafter administered the questionnaires to the respondents to fill. The questionnaire was administered to respondents during break time in each of the schools. The researcher collected the completed questionnaires from the respondents after two weeks has elapsed.

3.8. Data Analysis Procedure

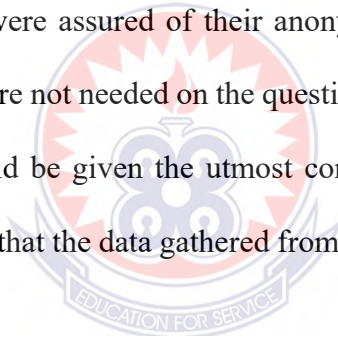
The data were cleaned with the aim of identifying mistakes and errors which may have been made and blank spaces which have not been filled. A codebook for the questionnaire was prepared to record the response. After sorting out the questionnaires,

the data were entered into the computer and process using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. The data were analysed with descriptive statistics and present in tables using frequencies and percentages based on the research questions.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

Since the study used human participants in gathering primary data to investigate the causes of absenteeism and its preventive measures in basic schools, certain ethical issues will be addressed. The respondents will in no way be forced to participate in the study; they will participate in their own volition. The respondents were given ample time to respond to the questionnaires to avoid errors and inaccuracies in their answers.

The participants were assured of their anonymity and confidentiality of their identity as their names were not needed on the questionnaire and that the data that were gathered from them would be given the utmost confidentiality that it deserved. The participants were assured that the data gathered from them would be used for academic purposes only.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study based on the research question. The results are presented in tables with frequencies and percentages. The study was conducted to investigate the causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The results are presented using tables, frequencies and percentages. Ninety questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The researcher was able to retrieve all the 90 questionnaires administered, getting a response rate of 100%.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents which include gender, age educational qualification and teaching experience are shown in Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4.

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	52	58
Female	38	42
Total	90	100

Source: Field Data 2020

Table 4.1 shows that majority of the respondents (58%) were males while 42% of the respondents were females.

Table 4.2: Age of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
21-30 years	10	11
31-40 years	24	27
41-50 years	20	22
51-60 years	36	40
Total	90	100

Source: Field Data 2020

Table 4.2 shows that 11% of the respondents were in the age bracket of 21-30 years, 27% of the respondents were in the age bracket of 31-40 years, 22% of the respondents were in the age bracket of 41-50 years while 40% of the respondents were in the age bracket of 51-60 years.

Table 4.3: Highest Educational Qualification of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diploma	12	13
Bachelor's Degree	46	51
Master's Degree	32	36
Total	90	100

Source: Field Data 2020

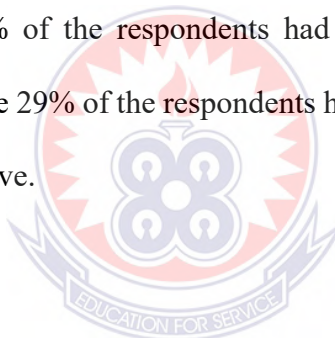
Table 4.3 shows that 13% of the respondents had Diploma as their educational certificate, 51% of the respondents had Bachelor's Degree as their educational certificate while 36% of the respondents had Master's Degree as their educational certificate.

Table 4.4: Teaching experience of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	10	11
6-10 years	20	22
11-15 years	34	38
Above 16 years	26	29
Total	90	100

Source: Field Data 2020

Table 4.4 shows that 11% of the respondents had been in the teaching service for between 1-5 years, 22% of the respondents had been in the teaching service for between 6-10 years, 38% of the respondents had been in the teaching service for between 11-15 years while 29% of the respondents had been in the teaching service for between 16 years and above.



Research Question 1: What are the home related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?

The respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following home related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools. The result is shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Home related Causes of Absenteeism

Statement	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Parent-child poor relations in the home	24(27)	46(51)	20(22)	-
Parental neglect of child in the educational process	28(31)	48(53)	14(16)	-
Low socioeconomic status of parent of student	42(47)	48(53)	-	-
Playing computer games in the home	18(20)	48(53)	24(27)	-
The existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student	26(29)	40(44)	18(20)	6(7)
Parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol in the home	31(34)	42(47)	17(19)	-

Source: Field Data 2020

Table 4.5 shows that 27% of the respondents strongly agreed that parent-child poor relations in the home was a home related cause of students absenteeism, 51% of the respondents agreed while 22% of the respondents disagreed. The finding implies that parent-child poor relations are home related cause of students' absenteeism.

Also, 31% of the respondents strongly agreed that parental neglect of child in the educational process was a home related cause of students' absenteeism, 53% of the respondents agreed while 16% of the respondents disagreed. The finding implies that parental neglect of child in the educational process is a home related cause of students' absenteeism.

Again, 47% of the respondents strongly agreed that low socioeconomic status of parent of student was a home related cause of students' absenteeism while 53% of the respondents agreed while 22% of the respondents disagreed. The finding implies

that low socioeconomic status of parent of student is a home related cause of students' absenteeism.

Moreover, 20% of the respondents strongly agreed that playing computer games in the home was a home related cause of students absenteeism, 53% of the respondents agreed while 27% of the respondents disagreed. The finding implies that playing computer games in the home is a home related cause of students' absenteeism.

Again, 29% of the respondents strongly agreed that existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student was a home related cause of students absenteeism, 44% of the respondents agreed, 20% of the respondents disagreed while 7% of the respondents strongly disagreed. The finding implies that existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student is a home related cause of students' absenteeism.

Lastly, 34% of the respondents strongly agreed that parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol in the home was a home related cause of students absenteeism, 47% of the respondents agreed while 19% of the respondents disagreed. The finding implies that parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol is a home related cause of students' absenteeism.

Research Question 2: What are the school related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?

The respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following school related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools. The result is shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: School related Causes of Absenteeism

Statements	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Unfriendly behavior of some teachers towards students in the school	28(31)	46(51)	8(9)	8(9)
Lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance	42(47)	28(31)	20(22)	-
Lack of effective teaching methods to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process	30(33)	44(49)	16(18)	-
Lack of proper supervision on student's movement and attendance to school.	34(38)	34(38)	22(24)	-
Absenteeism of teachers in the teaching and learning environment	38(42)	26(29)	14(16)	12(13)
Teachers abuse of students in the school environment	34(38)	40(44)	16(18)	-

Source: Field Data 2020

Table 4.6 indicates that 31% of the respondents strongly agreed that improper behavior of some teachers towards students in the school was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism, 51% of the respondents agreed, 9% of the respondents disagreed while another 9% of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result means that improper behavior of some teachers towards students is a school related cause of students' absenteeism.

Also, 47% of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism, 31% of the respondents agreed while 22% of the respondents disagreed. The result means that lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance is a school related cause of students' absenteeism.

Besides, 33% of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of effective teaching methods to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process was one of the

school related cause of students' absenteeism, 49% of the respondents agreed while 18% of the respondents disagreed. The result means that lack of effective teaching methods to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process a school related cause of students' absenteeism.

Again, 38% of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of proper supervision on student's movement and attendance to school was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism, 38% of the respondents agreed, while another 22% of the respondents disagreed. The result means that lack of proper supervision on student's movement and attendance to school is a school related cause of students' absenteeism.

Also, 42% of the respondents strongly agreed that absenteeism of teachers in the teaching and learning environment was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism, 29% of the respondents agreed, 16% of the respondents disagreed while 13% of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result means that absenteeism of teachers in the teaching and learning environment is a school related cause of students' absenteeism.

Lastly, 38% of the respondents strongly agreed that teachers' abuse of students in the school environment was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism, 44% of the respondents agreed while 18% of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result means that teachers' abuse of students in the school environment is a school related cause of students' absenteeism.

Research Question 3: What measures can mitigate the act of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?

The respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following measures that can mitigate the act of absenteeism in Junior High schools. The result is shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Measures that Can Mitigate the Act of Absenteeism

Statement	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Formulate a well-developed policies on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly	36(40)	54(60)	-	-
Develop relationship with parents and students built on trust and respect to facilitate student's school attendance	38(42)	34(38)	18(20)	-
Institution of award systems for students' regularity and punctuality to school at the end of every term	46(51)	44(49)	-	-
Community involvement on measures to facilitate students school attendance	36(40)	38(42)	16(18)	-
Provision of safe and serene school environment to motivate students to be regular and punctual to school	34(38)	40(44)	16(18)	-
Organize tutors to assist students in academic teaching and learning, and training by mentors to shape students	32(36)	36(40)	12(13)	10(11)

Source: Field Data 2020

Table 4.7 depicts that 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that formulation of well-developed policies on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism while 60% of the respondents agreed. The result means that formulation of well-developed policies on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly is a measure that can mitigate the act of students' absenteeism.

Also, 42% of the respondents strongly agreed that development of healthy relationship with parents and students built on trust and respect to facilitate student's school attendance was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism, 38% of the respondents agreed while 20% of the respondents disagreed. The result means that development of healthy relationship with parents and students, built on trust and respect to facilitate student's school attendance is a measure that can mitigate the act of students' absenteeism.

Again, 51% of the respondents strongly agreed that institution of award systems for students' regularity and punctuality to school at the end of every term was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism while 49% of the respondents agreed. The result means that institution of award systems for students' regularity and punctuality to school at the end of every term is a measure that can mitigate the act of students' absenteeism.

Moreover, 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that community involvement on measures to facilitate students' school attendance was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism, 42% of the respondents agreed while 18% of the respondents disagreed. The result means that community involvement on measures

to facilitate students' school attendance is a measure that can mitigate the act of students' absenteeism.

Also, 38% of the respondents strongly agreed that provision of safe and serene school environment to motivate students to be regular and punctual to school was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism, 44% of the respondents agreed while 18% of the respondents disagreed. The result means that provision of safe and serene school environment to motivate students to be regular and punctual to school is a measure that can mitigate the act of students' absenteeism.

Lastly, 36% of the respondents strongly agreed that organizing tutors to assist students in academic teaching and learning, and training by mentors to shape student was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism, 40% of the respondents agreed, 13% of the respondents disagreed while 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result means that organizing tutors to assist students in academic teaching and learning, and training by mentors to shape student is a measure that can mitigate the act of students' absenteeism.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter dealt discusses the results of the study in relation to the objectives of the study. The study sought to address three research questions:

1. What are the home related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?
2. What are the school related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?
3. What measures can mitigate the act absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality?

On research question one which sought to find out home related causes of absenteeism, it was revealed that parent-child poor relations in the home was a home related cause of students absenteeism. The finding implies that parent-child poor relations in the home will promote students' absenteeism.

It was also revealed that parental neglect of child in the educational process was a home related cause of students' absenteeism,. The finding implies that parental neglect of child in the educational process will force students to fend for themselves resulting in students' absenteeism.

It was again revealed that low socioeconomic status of parent of student was a home related cause of students' absenteeism. The finding implies that low socioeconomic status of parent of student will make students lack so many resources in the learning process culminating into students' absenteeism.

The study found that playing computer games in the home was a home related cause of students' absenteeism. The finding implies that playing computer games in the home will interest students and make them spend contact hours in games thereby causing is a home students' absenteeism.

The study again found that existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student was a home related cause of students' absenteeism. The finding implies that existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student will enable student to indulge in child labour resulting in students' absenteeism.

The study finally found that that parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol in the home was a home related cause of students' absenteeism. The finding implies that parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol will aid students to go wayward and possibly result in students' absenteeism.

All the findings and analysis in research question one are in line with Malcolm et al, (2003) that the family economy has been identified as major cause of habitual absentees. For a poverty-stricken family, it may mean a continuation of the poverty and unemployment cycle that may run in the family which trickles down to the school going children.

Malcolm et al, further indicated that family related causes of students absenteeism include lack of guidance or parental supervision, poverty drug or alcohol abuse in home and differing attitudes of parents towards education. The support and availability of parent, their financial situation and standard of living can affect students' academic performance. The family or home, as the first agent of socialization is responsible for providing the child with basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, clothing, love (affection) and security. Little children gain their first experience from the family and significant others and gradually live up to its standards

and values. The family conditions, is therefore necessary in ensuring a child's total development (Kerr & Jermierr, 1978). Kerr and Jermierr (1978) cited lack of interest of the parent in the schooling of the child, the personal problems of the child either at home or in school and boredom in the school's activities as some of the factors which might leads of child to absent himself or herself from school.

A situation where parents lack enough resources and funds to sponsor their children's education renders education and learning impossible for children. Thus, many students abandon school to engage in child labour to make ends meet and by this, they spend much time on this act than schooling.

On research question two which sought to find out school related causes absenteeism in junior high schools, the study found that unfriendly behavior of some teachers towards students in the school was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism. The result means that unfriendly behavior of some teachers towards students will promote students' absenteeism as it may demoralize students to attend school regularly.

The study also found that lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism. The result means that lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance will let students involve in absenteeism as there will be nothing to deter them from doing so.

The study again found that lack of effective teaching methods to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism. The result means that lack of effective teaching methods to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process will encourage students to absent themselves from school.

It was also found that lack of proper supervision on student's movement and attendance to school was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism. The result means that lack of proper supervision on student's movement and attendance to school will enable students to be absent from school without notice.

The study also revealed that absenteeism of teachers in the teaching and learning environment was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism. The result means that absenteeism of teachers in the teaching and learning environment will enable students also to be absent from school.

The study finally found that teachers' abuse of students in the school environment was one of the school related cause of students' absenteeism. The result means that teachers' abuse of students in the school environment will enable students to develop hatred for those teachers and therefore shun away from them with absenteeism.

All the results and analysis in research question two are consistent with White (2005) that student-teacher related influences act as a push factor for their absenteeism. When the students are scolded for their bad behavior by the teacher, this tends to make them be absent from their classes. It was found to have significant average response together with other reasons that they cannot understand their lessons.

Ehrenberg, Rees and Ehrenberg (1991) postulated that lack of subject interest; lack of personal interest in studies; available opportunities for entertainment like malls; movie halls as well as too much pampering from family account for non-attendance of students to schools. The poor teaching skills of a teacher also keep away student from the school. Lack of allied activities like sport programs also causes absenteeism.

Poor infrastructure facility in school such as no place in a library to sit is also one of the reasons of absenteeism. Some the students are doing private coaching for

their external examinations or are preparing for their external examination through private tuition such activities cause absenteeism in school and college. Excess of homework and sometimes fear from examination keep away students from school/college (www.wikianwsers.com). If school or college is far off, the percentage of absenteeism may increase. Over expectation of parents also deteriorate the attendance of a student if the student is unable to cope with parent nature of making comparison among their own children or with friends of their child (Ehrenberg, Rees & Ehrenberg, 1991).

On research question two which sought to find out measures that can mitigate the act of absenteeism the study revealed that formulation of well-developed policies on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism. The result means that formulation of well-developed policies on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly, will help to deter students to be absent from school. The result agrees with Dougherty (2012) who 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. There should be a policy on excused and unexcused absences and with procedures for finding solutions to them.

The study also revealed that development of healthy relationship with parents and students built on trust and respect to facilitate student's school attendance was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism. The result means that development of healthy relationship with parents and students, built on trust and respect to facilitate student's school attendance and thereby avoid absenteeism. The result is in line with Dougherty (2012) that 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.

It was revealed that institution of award systems for students' regularity and punctuality to school at the end of every term was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism while 49% of the respondents agreed. The result means that institution of award systems for students' regularity and punctuality to school at the end of every term will motivate students to attend school regularly. 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 (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002).

It was also revealed that community involvement on measures to facilitate students' school attendance was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism. The result means that community involvement on measures to facilitate students' school attendance will facilitate students' attendance to school. The result is in tandem with Dougherty's, (2012) assertion that 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.

It was also revealed that provision of safe and serene school environment to motivate students to be regular and punctual to school was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism. The result means that provision of safe and serene school environment will motivate students to be regular and punctual to school. The result substantiates the assertion of Reid (2002) that 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.

The study finally revealed that organizing tutors to assist students in academic teaching and learning, and training by mentors to shape student was one of the measures that could mitigate the act of students' absenteeism. The result means that organizing tutors to assist students in academic teaching and learning, and training by mentors to shape student will motivate students to boost their interest to be regular in the school to

learn. 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 and absenteeism. 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 and absenteeism 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.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study in line with the research questions.

6.1 Summary

The study was conducted to investigate the causes of absenteeism and its handling strategies in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality. The objectives of the study were to find out home related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality, determine the school related causes of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality and to develop measures to mitigate the act of absenteeism in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality.

The researcher used descriptive survey design using the quantitative method for the study. The target population for study comprised all the head teachers, assistant head teachers and teachers in the 13 public Junior High Schools in the Kwadaso Municipality. The accessible population for study was 90, comprising 12 head teachers and assistants, and 78 teachers in the six Junior High Schools of the Agric circuit. The study employed census sampling technique to select all the 90 head teachers and assistants, and teachers for the study. Closed-ended questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and presented in tables using frequencies and percentages based on the research questions.

6.2 Main Findings

The study uncovered that parent-child poor relations in the home, parental neglect of child in the educational process, low socioeconomic status of parent of student, playing computer games in the home, existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student and parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol in the home were all home related causes of students absenteeism.

The study further unearthed that unfriendly behavior of some teachers towards students in the school, lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance, lack of effective teaching methods to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process, lack of proper supervision on student's movement and attendance to school, absenteeism of teachers in the teaching and learning environment, and teachers abuse of students in the school environment were school related causes of absenteeism.

The study finally revealed that, formulation of a well-developed policy on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly, development of relationship with parents and students built on trust and respect to facilitate student's school attendance, institution of award systems for students' regularity and punctuality to school at the end of every term, community involvement on measures to facilitate students school attendance, provision of safe and serene school environment to motivate students to be regular and punctual to school, and the organizing tutors to assist students in academic teaching and learning, and training by mentors to shape students were some measures that could mitigate the act of students absenteeism.

6.3 Conclusions

It is concluded based on the findings that there were some home related causes of absenteeism which helped in promoting students' absenteeism which needed to be addressed to facilitate students' school attendance to improve teaching and learning for students' success.

It is also concluded that there were also some school related causes of students' absenteeism of which should be addressed by the school authorities to improve students' school attendance to promote students' academic performance and the success of the school.

The study finally concluded that the measures that could be used to mitigate the canker of students' absenteeism, if adopted and used consistently and rigidly, could help to reduce the issue of students' absenteeism in educational institutions.

6.4 Recommendations

1. The Municipal Education Office in collaboration with heads of schools should formulate a well-developed policy on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly to reduce the act of absenteeism, if not to eliminate it.
2. The Municipal Education Office should also organize regular training workshops for heads and teachers on the school related causes of students' absenteeism to promote change of attitude to reduce the school related factors to increase attendance.
3. Heads of schools in the Kwadaso Municipality should educate parents during Parent-Teacher Association meetings on how to minimize the home related factors that promote students' absenteeism for holistic education of their wards.

6.5 Suggestions for further Study

The study was conducted to investigate the causes of absenteeism and its handling strategies in Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality. Therefore, further study should be conducted to investigate the causes of absenteeism and its handling strategies in Junior High schools in the other districts, municipal and metropolis in the Ashanti Region.

Further study should also be conducted to investigate the causes of absenteeism and its handling strategies in private Junior High schools in the Kwadaso Municipality for comparative analysis.



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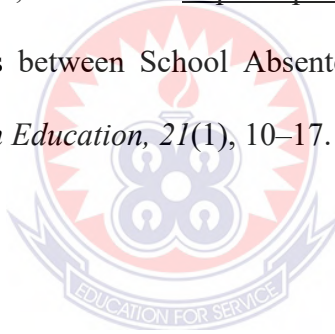
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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear Respondent,

I am a graduate student of the University of Education, Winneba- Kumasi Campus. I am conducting a study to investigate the causes of absenteeism in junior high schools in the Agric Circuit of the Kwadaso Municipality, in partial fulfillment for the award of Master of Arts in Educational Leadership.

I would be very grateful 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 utmost confidentiality.

I count on your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,



AKWASI OTENG DUMFEH

(POST GRADUATE STUDENT)

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE RESPONDENTS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Please tick your choice(s) in the spaces provided

1. Indicate your gender.

- (a) Male ()
- (b) Female ()

2. Indicate your age

- (a) 31 – 40 ()
- (b) 41 – 50 ()
- (c) 51 – 60 ()

3. What is your highest Academic qualification?

- (a) Diploma ()
- (b) Bachelor's Degree ()
- (c) Master's Degree ()



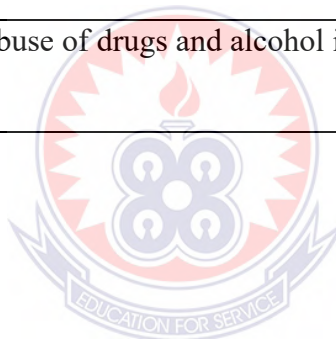
4. Teaching experience

- (a) 1-5years ()
- (b) 6-10years ()
- (c) 11-15 years ()
- (d) Above 16 years ()

SECTION B: HOME RELATED CAUSES OF STUDENTS' ABSENTEEISM

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.

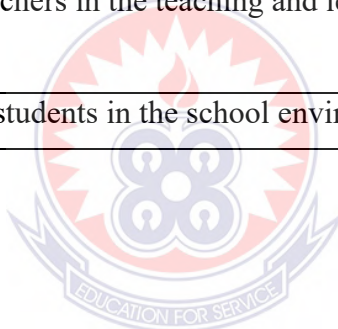
	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Parent-child poor relations in the home				
2	Parental neglect of child in the educational process				
3	Low socioeconomic status of parent of student				
4	Playing computer games in the home				
5	The existence of child labour in the vicinity of the student				
6	Parent of student abuse of drugs and alcohol in the home				



SECTION C: SCHOOL RELATED CAUSES OF ABSENTEEISM

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.

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Improper behavior of some teachers towards students in the school				
2	Lack of attendance policies to guide school attendance				
3	Lack of effective teaching methods to arouse students' interest in the teaching and learning process				
4	Lack of proper supervision on student's movement and attendance to school.				
5	Absenteeism of teachers in the teaching and learning environment				
6	Teachers abuse of students in the school environment				



SECTION D: MEASURES THAT CAN MITIGATE THE ACT ABSENTEEISM

Please, respond to the statements by ticking [] 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
1	Formulate a well-developed policies on students' school attendance for teachers, parents, and students to follow strictly				
2	Develop relationship with parents and students built on trust and respect to facilitate student's school attendance				
3	Institution of award systems for students' regularity and punctuality to school at the end of every term				
4	Community involvement on measures to facilitate students school attendance				
5	Provision of safe and serene school environment to motivate students to be regular and punctual to school				
6	Organize tutors to assist students in academic teaching and learning, and training by mentors to shape students				

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION