

Truancy as Predictor of Poor Academic Performance among Junior High School Students in Ashanti Mampong Municipality of Ghana

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ABSTRACT

One of the most serious disciplinary issues is student truancy. Researchers in this study want to know how truancy affects academic achievement among Junior High School pupils in Ghana's Ashanti Mampong Municipality. The data was collected using descriptive and correlational research methodologies, as well as a questionnaire. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to determine the sample size of 331, which included 206 pupils and 25 teachers. Teachers' attitudes, corporal punishment/bullying, lack of parental supervision, broken households, peer influence, and poverty are the primary predictors of truancy among Junior High School pupils, according to the study's findings. There is also a positive association between school environment and truancy in this study. The outcomes of this study, once again, show a favorable link between parental socioeconomic position and truancy. In terms of the study's hypotheses, the researchers were unable to accept or deny the first and second hypotheses, respectively, based on the findings. Based on these findings, pupils should be taught about the dangers of being a truant. Parents should be encouraged to address their children's physical and emotional requirements. Parents should also keep an eye on their children to ensure that they complete their homework and attend school on a regular basis. Again, education groups and the government should work together to ensure that every child of school age attend school.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Gender, Truancy

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I. INTRODUCTION

Ghana as a country requires all of its children to attend school and achieve the maximum degree of education possible in order to strengthen the country's human resource base. According to Woodland and Mazur (2019), the primary goal of education, whether formal or informal, is to generate individuals who will be productive members of society. According to Faggian *et al.* (2019), country's range of economic growth is proportional to its level of educational development. Commenting on the relationship between education and national development, Lee *et al.* (2020) claim that the higher the degree of education of the labor force, the larger their production. Indeed, in these days of globalization and technological transformation, education is seen as the foundation for all human endeavors. It is linked to an individual's well-being and possibilities for improved living and plays an important part in the development of human capital (Kuzminov *et al.*, 2019). Academic performance of kids has long piqued the curiosity of educators. Every educational institution has always been interested in student academic success. Indeed, education is viewed as the transmission of a society's valuable ideals and the acquisition

of knowledge. It is intended to assist pupils in understanding a culture, shaping adult behavior, and orienting them toward a future role in society. Education does, in fact, assist people in becoming productive members of society, developing a respect for their cultural heritage, and leading more fulfilling lives.

Truancy has been identified as one of the most serious issues threatening the youth's future. Truancy and poor academic achievement have long been grouped together as part of a larger deviance or problem-behavior syndrome (Gerth, 2020). Truancy is, in reality, one of Ghana's most serious antisocial discipline issues among primary school kids. Various behavioural disorders such as stealing, violence, drug abuse, examination malpractice, sexual abuse, and truancy, according to Madaraka (2020), have so undermined effective teaching-learning processes that some teachers have become helpless and disorganized in their task of imparting knowledge to learners. Absenteeism is harmful to students' achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and employment potential, according to Zheng *et al.* (2020). Students that miss school are unquestionably behind their counterparts in the classroom. As a result, low self-esteem develops, increasing the possibility of students dropping out of school. The students' notoriousness is not only confined to

smoking cigarettes, fighting with each other or behaving obscenely but also involve running away from home, free sex and mingling. According to Javier *et al.* (2020), students are now willing to join terrible syndicates and become gangsters, murderers, burglars with or without firearms. They also engage in rape, prostitution, gambling, vandalism, drug abuse, alcoholism, and pornography. Numerous studies have showed that, students' attendance has a good correlation with their academic success. Kauffman *et al.* (2018) highlights four primary home elements that contribute to truancy: bad child-parent relationships, poor physical and social conditions at home and at school, the use of corporal punishment in the home and at school, and a lack of parental concern in the child's well-being. The school has also been cited as a significant contributing factor to truancy. According to Fareo (2019), absenteeism is significantly linked to a breakdown of communication, student overcrowding, teacher shortages, constant strikes and work-to-rule, excessive corporal punishment, and peer influence at school. According to Marfo (2018), absenteeism is caused by illness, financial difficulties, age, social status, geographic location, and institutional problems such as instructor attitudes, bad management, and excessive educational costs. Truancy among school pupils is caused by a variety of factors including distance to school, school punishment, family background, and school location (Kachana *et al.*, 2019).

A. Concept Truancy

Different people and agencies have defined truancy in various ways. Truancy, according to Bassey (2020), is a student's willful departure from school without his or her parents' knowledge or approval, for which no fair or acceptable cause is presented. This meaning significantly broadens the notion, making it synonymous with unexcused absence. Antrobus *et al.* (2019) define truancy as students who have been registered with a school but have been discovered as failing to attend when the law requires them to. This includes missing classes. Truancy, according to Keppens *et al.* (2019), is defined as a circumstance in which a pupil is absent from school for no reason. He went on to remark that many students skip a single class or even an entire day of school at some point during their academic careers. This is because they may wish to attend a particular event, prepare for a promotion night, or simply take a "mental wellness day," as it is known in the workplace. This one-time occurrence (truancy) is fairly common and is likely to cause issues, which can result in a variety of bad and even dangerous effects. Similarly, Onyele (2018) describes truancy as a delinquent act in which a youngster frequently misses school for no apparent cause. According to Heyne *et al.* (2019), students who are absent from school spend their time away from home and conceal their absences from their parents.

B. Truancy and Academic Performance

Educational success is usually linked to three primary factors: ability, aspiration, and opportunity, all of which are intertwined Green *et al.* (2018). Academic performance, according to Kulgemeyer and Riese (2018), is what a student can achieve when assessed on what he or she has learned. It refers to how well a student meets the requirements set forth by an educational institution. It suggests that a student's academic achievement is determined after he or she has

completed specific academic subjects or curriculum. Poor academic performance is defined by Cao *et al.* (2018) as any performance that falls below a desired standard. An applicant who does not meet the minimum requirement is considered to have poor academic achievement in school. According to him, some people blame students, while others blame the government, and still others blame professors. Several studies have found that students' attendance has a positive correlation with their academic success. Lateness was more common among female students than male students, according to Warne *et al.* (2020). This happened as a result of their parents' involvement in household chores. High truancy rates have an impact on overall school accomplishment by decreasing the rate of instruction, which is detrimental to all students, since it can also be an early warning sign of educational failure (Hoff, 2019). In fact, students with higher truancy rates have low academic achievement and are more likely to drop out, indicating that there is a link between student attendance and academic achievement (Gottfried, 2019).

Feniger *et al.* (2019) discovered in their study that, truants repeat classes as a result of their absence from school, and that even when they do not repeat, they do not feel better because they believe they are under qualified or accomplished for such a class. Their degree of achievement, according to him, is often low due to their lack of interest in studying. The majority of truants see schooling as a kind of punishment, while some go to school to satisfy their parents and guardians. Students who do not attend school will most likely be unable to complete the school's program. As a result, these pupils' total scores and performance are typically low. Students in southwestern Nigeria, according to Ayinde and Olasehinde-Williams (2020), have a favorable association between truancy and academic performance. According to Robinson *et al.* (2018), truancy has a negative impact on kids' educational attainment. Similarly, Vercellotti (2018) claims that the link between attendance and achievement may be understood simply by using common sense, as kids who do not attend school struggle to understand what is taught. Students who miss school risk learning challenges, according to Nightingale *et al.* (2019).

C. Truancy and Gender

Males have consistently greater truancy rates than girls in empirical studies, although females are twice as likely as males to be absent with parental consent. Female truants are claimed to engage in less anti-social behavior than male truants, whereas male truants have a more unfavorable perception of school than female truants, a characteristic that is assumed to contribute to the greater rates of male truancy observed in practically every study available for evaluation (Baskerville, 2019). When McIntosh (2020) says that girls are more likely than guys to be late, he agrees. This could be due to the fact that women take more time for body and face maintenance as well as make-up application. In addition, Pengpid and Peltzer (2019a) discovered that gender had an impact on truant behavior among secondary school adolescents in their own study. They assert that males are more likely to play truant during adolescence than their female counterparts.

Contrary, Keppens and Spruyt (2018), in their study, opine that female are more truant unlike their male colleagues. There has been some inconsistency in research on truancy rates by gender. For example, in Finning *et al.* (2019)'s study of different types of school attendance problems, truancy was defined as failure to reach school or stay at school for at least half a day in the previous three months in the absence of school permission, a valid excuse, or anxiety, but no gender differences were found for youth reporting moderate or high truancy. In addition, Teuscher and Makarova (2018) found no gender differences in truancy rates in their study.

D. Causes of Truancy

Truancy, or the habit of missing school without permission, is a big issue that has a negative impact on a student's overall academic performance. Truancy is defined by Ricking and Schulze (2019) as the intentional absence from school without permission. A truant is a student who skips school on his or her own initiative and without seeking censure from the right authorities. According to Tash (2018), hundreds of thousands of American students miss school without valid justifications every day, and this is one of the top ten issues confronting schools across the country. According to him, attendance is the single most important determinant in determining children's accomplishment levels, and it is crucial that chronic absenteeism be addressed immediately. Possible explanations for truant conduct must be recognized, according to Tash (2018), to eradicate or at least reduce truant behavior.

Truancy is usually multi-faceted in nature, with a variety of probable contributing elements at play (Baskerville & Loveridge, 2020). There are several and varied truancy correlates that have been identified. The impacts of a single element are thought to be rare when it comes to truancy. Truancy occurs in the context of inter-action effects, which include interactions between the student's characteristics, the experienced school setting, the home support system, and the larger community setting, with each relationship influencing the others. Gonzalez-Rodriguez *et al.* (2019) state categorically that the causes of truancy fall into four categories. Family issues, school factors, economic impacts, and student characteristics are among them. Family characteristics that may influence truant behavior, according to Gubbels *et al.* (2019), include, but are not limited to, parents' education, occupation, supervision, and household income. For instance, Farrall *et al.* (2020) found a link between family characteristics and truant behavior in their study. According to the findings of Farrall *et al.* (2020), the lower the father's degree and wealth, the more likely the child is to commit truancy. If the mother was a high school dropout, the child's chances of truancy were even higher. Furthermore, according to Bassey (2020), the longer a youngster is left unsupervised after school, the more probable the child would become a truant. On the other hand, Manaze (2019) connects truancy to household income. They find that kids who are first referred to the juvenile court system are more financially impoverished than their regularly attending classmates, with a higher percentage of households earning less than \$15,000 per year. That is, students who reside in families earning less than \$15,000 per year are more likely to be truant. Truancy is predicted by family characteristics such as a lack of direction

or parental supervision, domestic violence, poverty, drug or alcohol usage in the home, ignorance about attendance laws, and different attitudes toward education (Tash, 2018).

Class size, attitudes, ability to satisfy each student's different requirements, and the school's truancy discipline policy are all elements that may contribute to truant behaviour. Students who attend large schools may feel lonely or alienated in their school setting, according to Cross *et al.* (2018), therefore they prefer not to attend school to avoid these feelings. In truth, these pupils do not feel at ease, wanted, appreciated, accepted, or safe; they do not have a relationship to a reliable person at school. Students' multiple needs, whether instructional, social, or a variety of other, cannot be consistently satisfied in big classrooms, and student-teacher connections cannot be created. This eventually leads to a school climate in which each student is on his or her own. According to Manaze (2019), truants skip school because they do not feel safe in their educational environment. Furthermore, a student is penalized if he or she does not feel comfortable, secure, or safe and reasonably decides to skip school since another area is safer than the school. Morgan (2018) claims that placing harsher penalties on truants has exacerbated the problem, indicating that punishment is unhelpful in the fight against chronic absenteeism.

Family influences that may cause truant behavior, according to Donkor and Alhassan (2018), include housing condition and student employment. The majority of high school truants did not reside with their mother and father, according to Afia *et al.* (2019). As a result, they claim that a student's likelihood of truancy rises when he or she lives with only one parent, and even more so if the youngster lives with neither his mother nor father. Furthermore, Afia *et al.* (2019) states that students who work more than 20 hours per week have a much higher risk of truancy than students who work fewer hours. According to Omoniyi *et al.* (2019), kids whose parents are unable to supply them with basic necessities such as food, clothing, and school supplies are more likely to skip school in order to support themselves.

Physical and mental health issues, substance abuse, drug usage, self-perception, and separation from school are all student factors that can lead to truancy. Physical and mental health difficulties, according to Supraja *et al.* (2020), play a role in school absence. They claim that truancy is associated with student and family mental health issues, and that it might be a sign of an existing or developing mental health problem such as post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, and/or substance misuse. In a similar line, Pengpid and Peltzer (2019b) claim that students who use alcoholic beverages one or more times per month are more likely to miss school than their counterparts who do not consume alcohol. Students who have been truant smoke cigarettes and marijuana at least once a month, according to D'Amico *et al.* (2020). In addition, kids who had negative self-perceptions were more likely to miss school than students who had positive self-perceptions (Legette, 2018). According to Wang *et al.* (2018), the number of students absent on a given school day is indicative of school disengagement and/or detachment. According to Manaze (2019), pupils who are disengaged from school, lack dedication to the school, are low performers, and have low goals for their futures.

E. Effects of Truancy

According to Keppens and Spruyt (2020), the effects of truancy are extensive, with negative ramifications at numerous levels of society. Truancy has been linked to maladaptive behavior, poor academic performance, school dropout, substance misuse, criminality, and teenage pregnancy. Evidence shows that truancy is a predictor of bad adult outcomes such as aggression, marital instability, employment instability, adult criminality, and incarceration in the long run. Furthermore, due of its link to delinquency, criminality, and other bad adult outcomes, truancy has a detrimental impact on the community. The most evident consequence of persistent absenteeism is student dropout Bauer *et al.* (2018). Truancy and dropout rates are concentrated and deteriorating in racially segregated center cities, according to Balfanz *et al.* (2018), in mostly major high schools attended by mostly low-income children of color. These areas have dropout rates that are twice as high as the national average. The most consistent finding about truancy and dropout rates is the link between the behavior and high delinquency rates (Gerth, 2020). Substance addiction, gang membership, and later involvement in adult criminal conduct such as burglary, auto theft, and vandalism, according to him, are examples of delinquency that lead to jail. In the United States, one out of every ten male dropouts, or one out of every four black male dropouts, is incarcerated or institutionalized on any given day (Peguero *et al.*, 2019).

Childhood truancy has been linked to negative social and health outcomes later in life.

Adults who were truant as teenagers were more likely than their counterparts who were not truant as adolescents to experience marital or employment instability, as well as psychological maladjustment, according to Seidu *et al.* (2018). Absenteeism, for example, has been shown to have a negative impact on a student's achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and employment prospects. Students who miss school are obviously behind their classmates in the classroom. As a result, low self-esteem develops, increasing the possibility of at-risk students dropping out of school (Gao *et al.*, 2019). Jeffries (2020) found that the majority of pupils who are frequently truant in high school and primary fail to graduate in a longitudinal study of African-American boys. Failure to graduate is unquestionably linked to lower earning potential in adulthood and other negative outcomes. School absenteeism, according to Khan *et al.* (2019), leads to poor academic performance or underachievement. According to him, achievement is harmed because truanting students disrupt the learning process and miss key classwork. Poor attendance causes students to lose confidence since they are unable to comprehend the work assigned. As a result, disruptive behaviors become a means of gaining attention. Because most adults today engage in the act of truancy throughout their school days, this has contributed to inactivity, joblessness, unemployment, and underemployment. Robinson (2020) discovers that truancy has a direct impact on pupils' academic achievement. He claims that when parents have too many children in the household and the father's financial situation is dire, he makes the decision not to send his children to school on a regular basis.

F. Statement of the Problem

Educational achievement is a critical determinant of a better life in all endeavors. If one lacks education, he or she will be unable to think beyond what he or she sees. People with no education, on the whole, have few chances or prospects to find work, especially given the unsettling fact that unemployment continues to rise year after year. A person without an education also lives in isolation since she or he is unable to keep up with today's society, which is characterized by technical explosions and breakthroughs. For example, technological advancements in communication, such as e-mail, twitter, Whatsapp, Skype, and other similar platforms, all necessitate some level of knowledge. Attendance at school is a crucial indicator of improved success in class and on exams. In most schools, however, absenteeism is a severe threat to learning. Indeed, one disturbing trend appears to be the high number of school pupils involved in social vices such as theft, smoking, rioting, bullying, and so on. This is because most parents have abandoned their traditional job of nurturing and raising their children in a moral manner. In fact, parents nowadays are so consumed with responsibilities outside of their homes that they have little or no time to monitor their children's activities and inactions.

Truancy has been proven to be harmful over the world, and it is frequently one of the first and greatest indications of academic failure, suspension, expulsion, delinquency, and later adult crime (Novak, 2019). Absence from school has an impact on students, teachers, and pupils. The ability of a teacher to arrange and present class material in a chronological and structured manner might be hampered by a high prevalence of truancy and school absenteeism in a class. This has an impact on all of the pupils in the class.

G. Purpose of the Study

The study's goal is to look at the impact of absenteeism on junior high school pupils' poor academic performance in Ghana's Asante Mampong Municipality.

H. Significance of the Study

The study's findings have revealed the causes of truancy and their impact on pupils' poor academic performance. This has piqued the interest of policymakers and educational stakeholders, notably the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the Ministry of Education (MoE), in determining the best strategy to address the problem. Indeed, the studies have highlighted the importance of paying close attention to children at a young age so that scarce resources are not lost as a result of students' low attendance and performance, which leads to school dropout. The findings have also aided parents and instructors in determining how they contribute to children's and students' truancy, both directly and indirectly. Again, the information gathered in this study has been added to the existing literature, which will be of great assistance to student researchers working on similar projects.

I. Research Questions

1. What are the causes of truant behaviours of students?
2. What is the relationship between truant students and their environment?
3. What is the relationship between parents' socio-economic status and truancy among students?

J. Hypotheses

1. There is no relationship between truancy and poor academic performance of students
2. There is no significant difference between gender and truancy among students.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Research Design

The approach and strategy of investigation devised by a researcher in order to obtain relevant data that meets the research objectives is known as research design (Kothari, 2004). The study therefore used a descriptive survey design. Survey studies, according to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), are focused with analyzing attitudes, opinions, preferences, demographic practices, and procedures. According to Orodho (2005) this design collects data at a specific point in time with the goal of describing the nature of current conditions, identifying standards against which current conditions can be compared, and determining the relationships between specific events. The design is more appropriate because it allowed the researchers to explore as much of the study area as possible in order to gather the necessary data from relevant people.

B. Population, Sample and Sampling Procedures

TABLE I: SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION OF CIRCUITS WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE SCHOOLS AND POPULATION (TEACHERS AND STUDENTS) IN THE ASHANTI MAMPONG MUNICIPALITY

Circuits	Schools (JHS)	Population		Respondents Sampled	
		Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers
Kofiasse	Kofiasse				
	Damascus M/A	69	6	21	2
	Aframano M/A	77	6	23	2
Benin	Kofiasse				
	Abubakar Islamic	107	8	32	3
	Benin M/A	85	7	26	2
	Nyinapong M/A	65	6	20	2
Mampong south B	Asaam M/A	95	7	29	2
	Apaah M/A	125	9	38	3
	Kyekyewere M/A	72	6	22	2
Abountem	Abountem M/A	99	7	28	2
	Bosomkyekye M/A	106	7	32	2
Adidwan	Atonsugya M/A	115	9	35	3
Total		1015	78	306	25

The target population included Junior High School teachers and students from five (5) of Asante Mampong Municipality's nine (9) circuits. Mampong South 'B', Kofiasse, Benin, Abountem, and Adidwan were the five circuits. These circuits were chosen with care since they are representative of the problem under investigation. Mampong South 'B' and Abountem each had five (5) Junior High Schools, Benin had eight (8), Kofiasse had seven (7), and Adidwan had three (3) in each of the selected circuits (3). A simple random sampling approach was utilized to choose forty percent (40%) of

schools in the designated circuits, as well as thirty percent (30%) of teachers and pupils. As a result, the study's sample size was three hundred and thirty-one (331) respondents, with thirty-six (306) pupils and twenty-five (25) teachers. The breakdowns are shown in the table above.

C. Research Instrument

The instrument employed to get information from the respondent was a questionnaire.

It was available in two versions, one for teachers and one for students. The questionnaire was then split into two parts. The first part of the study looked into the elements that influence truant behavior. The second segment focused on the impact of truancy on pupils' academic achievement.

Primary data was collected using both closed and open-ended items.

The questionnaires were physically administered by the researchers, who complemented the primary data with secondary data (cumulative record cards, terminal reports, and students' attendance register) acquired from official sources.

D. Data Analysis

The Pearson's zero-order correlation matrix was utilized to answer research questions two and three, whereas the multiple regression process was used to answer research question one.

The first hypothesis was tested using Pearson's zero-order correlation, whereas the second hypothesis was tested using chi-square.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Research Question 1: What Are the Causes of Truant Behaviours among Students?

This research question sought to establish the causes of truant behaviour among Junior High School students. Multiple regression procedures were used to unravel which of the factors identified determine programme choices of students. The results of the multiple regression analysis are presented in Table II.

TABLE II: FACTORS THAT CAUSES TRUANCY AMONG STUDENTS

Predictors	MODEL
Teachers' attitude	0.395 (0.027) *
Corporal punishment/bullying	0.435 (0.031) *
Lack of parental supervision	0.465 (0.016) *
Broken homes	0.335 (0.021) *
Peer influence	0.261 (0.011) *
Illness	0.57 (0.026)
Poverty	0.322 (0.022) *
Absence of PTA and SMC	0.065 (0.032)
Constant	1.406
R	0.886
R ²	0.679
AR ²	0.661

*P<0.05.

Result from Table II shows the results of the multiple regression analysis. The Model summary gives the coefficients of the predictor variables, the standard error, the level of significance, the correlation (R), the R² and the adjusted R². According to the findings, Teachers' attitudes,

corporal punishment/bullying, lack of parental supervision, broken households, peer influence, and poverty are the top predictors of truancy among Junior High School pupils in this study.

Without a doubt, the findings of this study are similar to those of a number of earlier investigations (Gonzalez-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2019; Farrall *et al.*, 2020; Morgan, 2018; Omoniyi *et al.*, 2019). For example, according to Omoniyi *et al.* (2019), kids whose parents are unable to supply them with basic necessities such as food, clothing, and school materials are more likely to skip school in order to support themselves. Morgan (2018) also believes that imposing harsher punishments on truants has exacerbated the problem, indicating that punishment is ineffective in the fight against chronic absenteeism. Again, the majority of high school truants did not reside with their mother and father, according to Afia *et al.* (2019). He therefore suggests that the likelihood that a student would commit truancy increases when the student lives with only one parent and increases if the child lives with neither his mother nor father.

B. Research Question 2: What is the relationship between truant students and their environment?

The intention behind this research question was to ascertain the relationship between truant students and their home environment. Table III presents the summary of the Zero-order correlation analysis.

The result in Table III shows a positive correlation between students' environment and truancy. The coefficient obtained is $r = 0.575^{**}$. It is positive with significance or p -value = 0.001 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. This means that where students reside in relation to their educational environments has a substantial impact on their personal effort. The findings show that children who live with truants are more likely to skip school for no apparent reason, and that these children eventually become truants themselves.

TABLE III: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUANCY AND SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

		Truancy
Students' Environment	Pearson Correlation	575**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	001
	N	331

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings of this study resemble those of a number of other investigations. Indeed, the majority of the research found an unrestricted positive association between truancy and the school environment (Fareo, 2019; Manaze, 2019; Cross *et al.*, 2018). For example, Manaze (2019) claims that truants miss school because they do not feel comfortable in their school environment.

He underlines that if a student does not feel safe, secure, or comfortable in the school setting, he or she may reasonably opt to skip school since another area is safer. According to Cross *et al.* (2018), students who attend large schools may feel lonely or alienated in their school setting, thus they opt not to attend school to avoid these feelings. In fact, these pupils lack a link to a trustworthy person within the school environment, and they do not feel comfortable, wanted, appreciated, accepted, or secure.

C. Research Question 3: What Is the Relationship between Parents' Socio-economic Status and Truancy among Students?

The purpose of this research question was to find out whether establish the socio-economic status of parents was related in any way to truancy. Tables IV, V and VI present the summary of the Zero-order correlation analysis.

TABLE IV: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS' EDUCATION AND TRUANCY AMONG STUDENTS

		Truancy
Students' Environment	Pearson Correlation	-835**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	001
	N	331

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result in Table IV shows the Zero-order correlation coefficient obtained between parents' education and truancy is $r = -0.853^{**}$. It is negative with significance or p -value = 0.001 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$ and implies that parent's education is significantly related to truancy. The finding depicts that child whose parents are not academically good tend to play truant and vice versa.

The result in Table V displays the Zero-order correlation coefficient obtained between parents' occupation and truancy is $r = -0.523^{**}$. It is positive with significance or p -value = 0.001 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$ and implies that personal academic ambition is significantly related to the personal effort. The finding gives a clear signal that children whose parents have a stable and well-paid jobs stay in school while those whose parent are not gainfully employed play truant.

TABLE V: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS' OCCUPATION AND TRUANCY AMONG STUDENTS

		Truancy
Students' Environment	Pearson Correlation	-523**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	001
	N	331

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

TABLE VI: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS INCOME AND TRUANCY AMONG STUDENTS

		Truancy
Students' Environment	Pearson Correlation	-743**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	001
	N	331

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result in Table VI illustrates the Zero-order correlation coefficient obtained between parents' income and truancy is $r = -0.743^{**}$. It is positive with significance or p -value = 0.001 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. This implies that there is a significant negative relationship between parents' income and truancy. The finding therefore connotes that child whose parents are financially less endowed often stay out of school.

D. Hypotheses Testing

Efforts were made to test the hypotheses that guided the study. In this regard, Pearson's zero-order correlation and chi square were used to test the first and second hypotheses

respectively.

H₀₁: There is no relationship between truancy and poor academic performance of students.

The results of the Pearson's zero-order correlation analysis are presented in the Table VII.

TABLE VII: TRUANCY AND POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS

Truancy	Poor Academic Performance of Students	
	Pearson Correlation	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-743**
	N	001
		331

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The relationship between truancy and poor academic performance of students as presented in Table VII shows that the Zero-order correlation coefficient obtained is $r = 0.897^{**}$. It is positive with significance or p-value = 0.001 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. This implies that truancy is significantly related to the poor academic performance of students. The finding therefore depicts those students who often stay out of school performance poorly academically.

Indeed, the conclusions of this study are in line with those of a number of other studies. For example, Zheng *et al.* (2020) argue that absenteeism has been shown to have a negative impact on students' achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and employment prospects. He clearly emphasizes that pupils who miss school fall behind in the classroom. Jeffries (2020) found that the majority of pupils who are frequently truants in high school and primary fail to graduate in a longitudinal study of African-American boys. Truancy among schoolchildren, according to Khan *et al.* (2019), leads to poor academic performance or underachievement. Academic achievement is harmed, according to him, because truanting students disrupt the learning process and miss key classwork. Robinson (2020) discovers that truancy has a direct impact on pupils' academic achievement. The researchers failed to accept the null hypothesis, which claims that "there is no association between absenteeism and low academic performance of kids," based on the findings of the current study and their supporting literature.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between gender and truancy among students.

TABLE VIII: GENDER AND TRUANCY AMONG STUDENTS

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi Square	0.769 ^a	1	0.369		
Continuity Correction ^b	0.590	1	0.001**		
Likelihood Ratio	0.819	1	0.365		
Fisher's Exact Test				0.432	0.022
Linear by Linear Association	0.737	1			
N of Valid Cases	331				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 28.43.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

According to the result in Table VIII, the Chi square index shows there is significant difference between gender and truancy among students $\chi^2(5) = 0.769$. In this study, the sig. value of 0.001 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. This implies that the proportion of males that play truant is significantly different from the proportion of females who are truant.

The findings originating from this investigation are in support of a number of earlier studies (Finning *et al.*, 2019; Teuscher & Makarova, 2018). For example, truancy was defined by Finning *et al.* (2019) in their study of different types of school attendance problems as failure to reach school or stay at school for at least half a day in the previous three months in the absence of school permission, a valid excuse, or anxiety, but no gender differences were found for youth reporting moderate or high truancy. In addition, Teuscher and Makarova (2018) found no difference in truancy rates between genders in earlier large-scale research of a nationally representative sample.

The researchers therefore failed to reject the null hypothesis, which asserts that "There is no significant difference between gender and truancy among students," based on the findings of the current study and their supporting literature.

IV. CONCLUSION

Given the major scholastic and societal consequences of truancy, significant attempts to prevent truancy are obviously commendable. Truancy is still a persistent issue that has yet to be addressed on a national level. When historical patterns in truancy are stratified by predictor variables, a more nuanced tale emerges, as shown in this study. The findings of this study lead the researchers to the conclusion that gender has no bearing on truancy. We also found that truancy is linked to family/home characteristics, such as parents' financial level, and school ones, such as the school environment.

V. RECOMMENDATION

The researcher recommends that all education stakeholders, particularly head teachers, teachers, and counsellors, plan intervention programmes to help truant students to fully appreciate the dire consequences of their behavior after identifying the causes of truancy and their effects on pupils' academic performance in Junior High School in Mampong Municipality of Ghana. Students should be taught about the negative consequences of absenteeism in school.

Parents should be encouraged to address their children's physical and emotional requirements. They should have a loving and affectionate relationship with their children. Parents should always monitor their children to ensure that they complete their homework and attend school on a regular basis.

Furthermore, education stakeholders and the government should work together to ensure that every school-aged child attend school. Law enforcement should take any student found outside during school hours into custody.

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