

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

THE PERCEIVED IMPACT OF LATENESS AND ABSENTEEISM ON STUDENTS
PERFORMANCE. THE CASE OF HUNI VALLEY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

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

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: PROF. FRANCIS OWUSU-MENSAH

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....



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DEDICATION

To my family, Godsman, Delali, and Junior.



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ABSTRACT

Students' absenteeism and lateness has been one of the major factors of poor academic success especially at the second cycle level. In an effort to contribute to addressing this menace, the study sought to examine the causes and effects of absenteeism and lateness on the academic performance of students in the Huni Valley Senior High School. In particular, the study aimed at identifying the major causes of absenteeism and lateness among the students of Huni Valley Senior High School, examining the effects of absenteeism and lateness on the academic performance of the students and developing measures to mitigate the incidence of students' absenteeism and lateness. The study adopted a case study design with a sample size of 100 respondents. Quota and convenient sampling were employed in selecting respondents. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection and the field data were analyzed using SPSS and MS Excel. Among the major findings were that sickness, accompanying parents to farm, nursing younger siblings in the absence of the mothers and the fear of punishment were the prime causes of absenteeism in the school. Based on the findings, it is recommended among others that, students should learn to wake up early to avoid lateness; teacher should explore innovative way of dealing with students offences such as counseling rather than the conventional corporal punishment which scare students from school.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter One provides a general introduction to the conduct of the research work. It discusses the background to the study, problem statement, research objectives and questions, scope of the study as well as the relevance and organization of the study among others.

1.1 Background to the study

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). Guidance during this period was voluntary and it was administered in the school system especially in the boarding schools by heads of institutions, housemasters/mistresses, teachers, chaplains and even school prefects (Dankwa, as cited in Taylor & Buku, 2006).

According to Smith (1998), students regularity in school determines the success of the school in carrying out its primary charge of educating and socializing students. Major stakeholders including educators, parents and politicians are continuously searching for that magic solution that will reform our public education system and establish a flawless system of education for the youth, by

providing them with quality education (Edwards , 2002). The students must be present in school in order to gain from the academic program in its entirety (Dekalb, 1999). The officials of schools and law enforcement agencies are getting tough by enforcing laws that mandate school attendance and by holding parents responsible for their students attendance. Tardiness and absenteeism are serious problems that extend beyond the school. It totally affects the student, their family and the community at large. An investigation into the causes, effects and possible interventions remains eminent. It is found that teacher absence has a large and detrimental effect on student performance (Woods & Montagno, 1997). Not only has absenteeism of teachers and students has negative consequences on students performance, according to Barrick and strause (1994), absenteeism of workers has dire economic implications on the organizations and businesses. Most especially, the problem of absenteeism is more pronounced in public schools since the effect fetches beyond financial losses to defeating the very purpose for the establishment of those institutions (Taub, 1997). Smith (1984) suggested that loss of school that diminishes the pupils achievements and academic performance.

Absenteeism among students results into 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 (Gulag et al ,2011) . According to the independent Advocacy Project (2010) , absenteeism occurs among teachers and students alike and that , there is evidence of a correlation between high teacher absenteeism and high student absenteeism leading to low

student achievement . It is against this background that this study was aimed at examining the causes and effects of absenteeism and lateness among the students of Huni Valley Senior High School.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

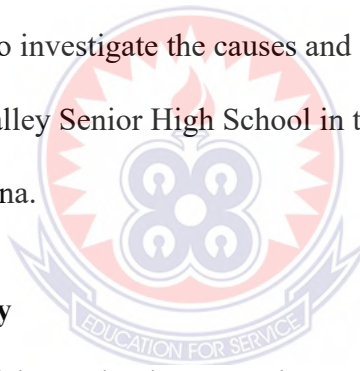
When children attend school on a regular basis , they take an important step towards reaching their full potentials , and are given the greatest opportunity to learn new things and develop their skills . Children who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams .The more time a child spends around other children, 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. 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 and Lateness. A study by Wadesango and Machingambi (2011), found that absenteeism is rampant among the students in three South African Universities due to reasons like: lack of subject interest, poor teaching strategies by lecturers, unfavorable learning environment, too much socialization, part-time jobs to augment meager bursaries granted by various sponsors and poor relations with the lecturers. Dhaliwal (2003), also found among 101 medical students in Delhi, that illness, family commitment, teacher /topic, or lecture period spent in an extended clinical posting were causes of absenteeism and higher attendance was associated with better marks. In a similar study of medical students attendance at lectures

in the UK, Mattick, Crocker and Bligh (2007), reported that attendance dwindle as they progress in their academic career. They reported that more students (87%) attended non-compulsory plenary lectures to understand factors affecting the value placed by students on the first two years of a contemporary medical curriculum at the beginning of the first academic year, with numbers decreasing to (78%), the year progressed. School administrators have over the years taken various steps to arrest the problem of absenteeism and lateness. Schools which made changes in their delivery of academic instruction may find improvement in school deviant behavior. Cordogan (2001), reported that a suburban Chicago, Illinois high school administrator initiated an interdisciplinary curriculum. A four-year study which tracked 161 discipline-based and 247 interdisciplinary students found that students in the interdisciplinary program demonstrated more positive behavior such as decreased absences and lower suspension rates. Other schools have made smaller academic changes and have seen positive results. Tardiness decreased when a rural secondary school went to block scheduling (McCoy,1998).An urban Illinois school reduced tardiness and disruptive behavior in physical education classes by introducing, "... a series of co-operative learning activities to address interpersonal skill development , and creation of physical education portfolios to increase student goal setting and decision making skills" (Anderson & Windeatt, 1995,:88). In spite of the efforts, lateness and absenteeism to school by both teachers and students remains a crucial determining factor to the academic success of students at all levels of learning. Just as an apprentice or any worker will not excel on their duties, whiles consistently reporting late at work or frequently been absent from work, so it is for students in the various educational institutions. In spite of this fact, students of Huni

Valley Senior High School have consistently displayed the habit of chronic lateness and recurrent absenteeism over the past years. This incident is largely responsible for the abysmal performance recorded in the West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), results in recent past. As a result majority of graduates fail to gain admission into the tertiary institutions and end up learning trades, engaging in petty trading or joining their parents in the farms. If this trend is not halted, the purpose of second cycle education will be defeated. For this reason, examining the causes, effects and possible interventions is critical and this is what the present study attempted to do.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Purpose of the study was to investigate the causes and effects of lateness and absenteeism on the students of Huni Valley Senior High School in the Prestea Huni Valley District of the Western region of Ghana.



1.4 Objective of the Study

To achieve the purpose of the study, the research synergized the specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Identify the major causes of lateness and absenteeism among the student of Huni Valley S.H.S.
2. Examine the effects of lateness and absenteeism on the academic performance of students.
3. Develop measures to mitigate the act of lateness and absenteeism of students to school.

1.5 Research Questions

The research work seeks to find answers to the following questions:

2. What are the causes of lateness and absenteeism among students of Huni Valley S.H.S?
3. What are the impact of lateness and absenteeism on the academic performance of students of Huni Valley S.H.S ?
4. What measures have the authorities of Huni Valley S.H.S adopted to halt lateness and absenteeism among students of Huni Valley S.H.S in the Prestea Huni Valley District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research study cannot be overestimated. Findings of the study may be useful to policy makers especially the Ghana Education Service[GES].The GES through the district education office would be informed about the main causes of lateness and absenteeism in the school under study and other schools with similar characteristics. The results will enable officials to explore avenues as supervisors to reduce this incidence and avert the negative repercussions on student's performance. Also, the findings may assist both parents and teachers in dealing with the problems of lateness and absenteeism of students in the school. If the findings of the study should be discussed at the Parent-Teacher Association meetings, it would serve as a premise for the adoption of informed resolution to address the issues and promote effective teaching and learning in the school. Moreover, the research findings provide an important insight into the root causes of the poor academic performance of students especially those perpetually absenting themselves or reporting late to school daily. On the basis of the findings,

teachers and parents may dialogue and take steps to implement some recommendations to reduce this menace. NGOs and other supporting individuals and groups interested in promoting quality education in Huni Valley and its environs, the findings presented some of the setbacks and suggested avenues to offset and put students on pedestal for effective teaching and learning.

In the academia, the research has added to existing knowledge and closed the gap on the limited knowledge on the causes and effects of lateness and absenteeism of students on their academic performance. It remained a reference material for future researchers and could also be used as the basis for further research into the educational development in Ghana. Most importantly, the success of this study fulfilled the partial requirement for the award of MA in Educational Leadership from the University of Education, Winneba.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

Delimitation has to do with the scope, or boundaries of the research. This study is delimited to the Huni valley SHS in the Prestea Huni Valley district of the Western Region. The study focuses on the cases and effects of lateness and absenteeism on students' performance.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This research was hindered in one or the other. The study was limited to 100 students, therefore the results of the study are limited within the experiences of the sampled group. Also, time and financial resource constraints did not allow the researcher

to involve a lot of schools and people in the student and may affect the sample used for the study.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The project report is organized into five chapters. Chapter one covers the background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and organization of the work. Chapter Two reviews previous literature. Relevant theoretical and empirical literature on the subject was reviewed on the causes and effects of lateness and absenteeism and employee among the students of Huni Valley S.H.S. The chapter provides guidelines to the conduct of the study and forms the basis for discussion of the research findings. Chapter Three highlights the research methodology used for this study. It covers in details, the research design, population of the study data collection instruments, sources of data and data analysis. Chapter four presents and discusses the findings or results after the analysis of the research field data. Chapter five presents the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations of the study as well as recommendations for future research direction.

1.10 Chapter Summary

As an introductory chapter, it has provided readers an insight into the subject matter as well as the purpose of the research, its scope and organization. It has served as a general introduction to the entire research work and outlined the main research objectives and questions which served as the focus and terms of reference for the subsequent chapters. It has provided the premise on which literature in the next chapter were reviewed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This research explores the perceived impact of lateness and absenteeism on students performance on one hand and lateness and absenteeism on the other hand, in Senior High Schools. Globally, the causes and consequences of absenteeism are diverse and multifaceted. School personnel, school boards, parents, and employers who examine this data will have a better understanding of school tardiness, related school deviant behaviors, and punctuality of students and their effects. An enrolment in the tertiary institutions which includes polytechnics, college of educations, and universities relies chiefly on the supplies of products from the Senior High Schools. Despite the undeniable improvements in the second cycle education in the country over the years, assessment of the major challenges and the search for lasting and practical solutions are still going on. Improvements in education at the second cycle level is not limited to establishment of infrastructure, provision of teaching and learning materials, training and posting of more qualified teachers, but it extends more importantly to attendance of teachers and students in the classroom. Attendance in schools classrooms also has a direct impact on student's performance.

Absenteeism is major and continuous administrative problem among secondary school students in developing countries. This section examines number of scholarly published and unpublished researches on the area of school performance especially in the second cycle schools.

As part of the methodology, these materials are used as general guide to examine the relationship between lateness and absenteeism of student's performance on the other hand. An idea is also obtained of the extent of effects of punctuality if there is, on student performance.

2.1 Empirical Review

There has been much known evidence that put forward a strong relationship between lateness and absenteeism among both teachers and students and the corresponding consequences on the student's performance in schools. According to the 6th Edition of Oxford Advanced Learners dictionary, absenteeism means "the fact of being frequently away from work or school without good reason" (p. 34). In a research publication "Determining the negative effect of teacher attendance on student achievement "it is suggested that teacher absence has a large and detrimental effect on student performance (Woods & Montagno, 1997). However, the research does not adequately address the problem owing to lack of full impact assessment of teacher absenteeism.

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; Captain, Costanza & Klucher , 1980; Jacobson et al, 1993 and Taub, 1997). Loss of school days that diminish the students achievements cause damage to the school's reputation and induce student absenteeism, (Smith, 1984).

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 AND IBIS, 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 Senior High Schools.

According to WNED and IBIS (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 et al.(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 (Saez, 2012). 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 and Lateness

It is commonly known and empirically established that, absenteeism occurs among teachers and students alike (IAP, 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 & IBIS 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 (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 and late attendance, it is established by experts and

participants in the field of education that absenteeism among teachers equally has negative repercussions on pupils' performance (Woods & Montagno 1997).

Existing literature has evaluated to 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 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 , maternity leave; for personal reasons – mourning, marriage and so on; as well as absenteeism that is unconnected to the teacher 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, 1989). Unexcused absence – meaning absenteeism without an official or recognized (excused) reason , occurs when a teacher 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. 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%) is 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) 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 findings does not however agree with that of Miller (2008) and Clotflter 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. More so, though psychologically well prepared, the non-professionals are generally not well equipped for the job. According to a study by Action Aid Ghana, [2009], about 10% of the non-professionals practice absenteeism. 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.

However, the correlation between non- professional teachers and absenteeism might not have empirically caused the regular absenteeism as it is portrayed. Studies have shown that gender constitutes a causal agent of absenteeism in schools to the effect that women are absent more frequently than men because of family obligations and because they experience a great inter-job load (Steers & Rhodes, 1984).

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 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 (Ferris et al, 1988; Thomson, Griffiths & Davison, 2000). Nonetheless, the findings are not consistent in relation to Zammuto et al. (1997) who reached different conclusions. Perhaps age itself has no clear direct influence on absenteeism but has an effect via the personal- school organizational positioning which is expressed in term of appointment percentage and salary that normally rise with age. 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.

This is unfair, grossly unfair, Independent Advocacy Project (IAP 2010) Poor salaries and poor conditions of service (e.g. promotion is almost non- existent) compared to their counterparts in the civil service; Lack of residential accommodation in some locations or areas. 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.

A comprehensive review is drawn down on teacher absenteeism largely because it is related both to student absenteeism and achievement (Ehrenberg, 1991; Woods and Montagno, 1997; Bowers, 2001; Whitaker, 2001). According to Independent Advocacy Project (IAP 2010, Davidson et al 2003 and Ubogun 2004), for school community positive relationship to commune in the administration of secondary schools, there is the need to identify causes of absenteeism and lateness among secondary school students. The family economy has being 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 (Davidson 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,(Davidson 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. 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 notice 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. Some of these included the following. Among the causes of absenteeism according to (www.wikianswers.com) 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 of 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 (www.wikianwsers.com). 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. This proposed research is valuable in this regard (www.wikianwsers.com)

2.2.2 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. It also indicates the respect for other people. "If I have made an appointment with you, I owe you punctuality, I have no right to throw away your time, if I do my own" (Richard CeCil, American Poet). 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 (Emore, 2005). 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 Impact of Absenteeism and Lateness on Students' Performance

Several conclusions are reached with evidence on negative impact of lateness and absenteeism on students' performance. The society suffers as the children of school age hang around in the streets. Since they have nothing to do, they resort to petty crimes like stealing other people's belongings and properties. Others may resort to drug addiction and other behavior that is detrimental to society. Thus, if the student keeps on being away from school for too long, he may grow up to be a liability of his community and of his country as a whole.

Another important finding in a study by Clotfelter et al (2007) is that higher teacher absenteeism is associated with more student absenteeism, which will also lead to poor student performance as the student is not present in class to participate and learn. It seems reasonable to conclude that a student may not view school attendance as important if their classroom teacher is absent from class regularly.

On another breath, teacher absenteeism has been shown to be more prevalent in lower income schools. In studies conducted at Duke University in 2007, Charles Clotfelter et al (2007) found that schools having low socio-economic and minority students also had higher teacher and students absence rates and lower student test scores. They found that the teachers in the poorest schools in North Carolina took an average of one extra sick day per year when compared to wealthier schools and also found that teacher absences are also a problem in developing countries, where absence rates were

found to range from 20 to 44 percent in Kenya and India (Clotfelter et al., 2007). This is an indication that low incomes influence absenteeism which eventually leads to poor academic performance.

The findings of WNED and IBIS (2009) in Western Ghana showed that, more than 70% of the respondents (teachers, pupils and Directors of education) said that teacher absenteeism has a significant effect on pupils' performance. When teachers do not come to school pupils will not get the required number of classes and the quality of class work as well as home work and class tests. Results of sampled schools show that teacher absenteeism also manifests itself in the form of less enthusiasm to do home work and lack of self initiative to learn among pupils. Further, the study found that the present falling standards in many districts, particularly in Wassa Amenfi district is partly due to the prevalence of teacher absenteeism and reduced time-on-task. Indeed, the effect is much felt on pupils' inability to pass their Mathematics and English tests. A parent in Bogoso community in the Prestea Huni valley District summarized the effects of teacher absenteeism on pupils' performance by lamenting as follows: "Most of our children cannot read and write though the children are regularly in school. It is normal to see students failing. This is due to the poor foundation given to them at the primary level where most of their teachers are associated with absenteeism, lateness and early departure from school. We are not happy about that because it has made most of our children to become undisciplined. The teachers are not mostly available to mentor pupils on the values of society. This is unfortunate" (WNED, 2009).

Elsewhere, studies have shown that students with teachers who had fewer or no absences had significantly larger improvements in grade. Woods and Montagno (1997)

have cautioned that teachers with the highest number of absences will produce students with lower standardized test scores. Also, Research conducted in Indonesia to study the performance of students in developing countries found that “higher teacher absence significantly correlates with lower student scores in the mathematics test which is a cardinal test for all standard education“(Suryadarma et al. 2006:423). Another study found that there is a negative correlation between student performance and high teacher absenteeism, stating that the more days a teacher was absent, the more the level of student performance decreased (Uehara, 1999).

Hotchkiss and Dorsten (1985) conducted an extensive longitudinal study which began in 1980 to provide for the data. The researchers did subsequent follow-up surveys in 1982 and 1984. After extensive analysis they found that, “Poor grades stimulate misbehavior and dropping out of school. Legally binding treaties; including the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC) State that every child has the right to education regardless of the context in which he or she lives.

The development of any country depends on its human resources which can be attained through increased education. However, teacher absenteeism in the area has made it relatively impossible to attain this because of the associated effects of poor performance, poor attendance and retention as well as drop outs. Factors Influencing Students’ School Attendance.

A study by Suhid, Aroff and Kamal (2012) 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.

Brauer (1994) mentioned that “absenteeism creates a ‘dead’ tiresome and unpleasant classroom environment that makes students who come to classes feel uncomfortable and the professor irritable” (p.206). White (1992) 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. Klem and Connell (2004) 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, Davedoss and Foltz (1996) suggested motivation as a strong positive effect

on student attendance. The finding of Davedoss and Foltz 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 (Davedoss and Foltz, 1996).

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. 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.

Owusu (1987) 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. Anderman and Midgley (1998) 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 as 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 (1995) 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 benefit 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 in attending school. In the words of Johnson (1996), 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 more time on this act than schooling.

This situation terribly affects students' class attendance. Reid and Kendall (1982) 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 and Kendall 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 (Crede et al, 2010).

In an earlier, quite revealing study, published in the American Economic Review, Schmidt (1983) 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. 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 (Romer, 1993; Park & Kerr, 1990) found a positive and significant relation between attendance and academic performance, with the effect being larger in high absenteeism contexts. Recently, Schmulian and Coetzee (2011) contended that 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. For instance, Farrant (1980), 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. According to Schagen, Benton and Rutt (2004), factors such as school location and size have a large influence on the extent of absence within schools. 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. According to Epstein and Sheldon (2002), school characteristics and culture can influence student absenteeism which later affects teaching and learning. Agarwal (2001), 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. Economic influence: Mining is the main economic activity at Huni Valley upon which the livelihoods of the student depend. The low returns gained from their mining activities affects children on pupils since most parents are unable to provide the basic needs of their children. Parents are financially burdened for having their children to stay longer in school, having to re-enroll them in subjects where they fail due to excessive absences. It has been observed that students in socioeconomically-disadvantaged areas get lower marks. A report from most circuit supervisors in the Ghana Education Service in the Wassa East District indicates that the socio-economic background of students negatively affects their academic work. According to the report most of students abandon school and engage in galamsey to raise funds to support themselves and sometimes their families. The situation in the district is attributed to the poor socio-economic background of parents (Annual Report). Economic influences also include single parent homes, parents with multiple jobs, lack of affordable transportation and child care.

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 (1996) claims that peer groups are more powerful than parents in changing the values of an individual. Also, Hartnett (2008) observes that the choice of peer groups could have an effect upon the academic outcome of a student leading to absenteeism. The various practices pertaining to students' admission requirement: It is observed that certain educational institution admit pupils indiscriminately and Huni Valley Senior High School is no exception; whereas others select students based on the basis of previous academic achievement.

The number of students whose mother-tongue is not the language of instruction: At Huni Valley, although the community populace consists of numerous ethnic groups such as Fantes, Nzemas, Ewes, Asantes, the dialect predominately spoken is the vernacular or Twi. Therefore, during classroom instruction where English Language is used as the medium of instruction, students find it difficult to understand lessons taught, since English as a second language is not learned in the same condition throughout the world. The difficulty of students to understand lessons in instructions whose mother-

tongue is not the language for instruction usually results in lower marks in class exercise, quizzes, mid-term examinations, end-of-term examinations and finally lead to students desire to absent themselves from school during instructional hours.

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 (Yinusa & Basil, 2008). Park and Kerr (1990) suggested 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.

A research article on "The impact of Class Attendance on Students' Performance in a Course" by Romer (1993) 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 (Klem & Connell, 2004). The relationship between student

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 (Knesting & Waldron, 2006).

Park and Kerr (1990) 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.

On the contrary, Marburger (2001) 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, Marburger (2001) 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. He 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.

Again, Durden and Ellis (1995) survey students about their class absences at the end of three principles of economics classes in the early 1990s and study the effect of absences on student course scores. They control for student differences in background, ability, and motivation. Durden and Ellis (1995) find that attendance does not matter in student performance, although absenteeism beyond a threshold is even more important. As the number of absences rises above four classes the negative impact on achievement increases.

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. Chung (2004) 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.

Drop Outs and Non Attendance

Two main factors in the success of any educational system are the rates at which young people drop out of or complete high school each year (USDOE, 2003), Student

effort and devotion to their studies and the choices they make as a progression through their schooling years contribute to their academic success or lack thereof.

Students' attendance, interest, and attention to their studies affect how well they perform at each level and could be a determinant factor in their school completion. Levels of student effort can be illustrated by how often students are absent from school, how interested they are in their schoolwork, whether they try to do their best, whether they complete their assignments, and how much time they spend on homework and other activities such as work or watching television (Wirt, 2002).

A sense of belonging to school can be directly related to dropping out of school. Additionally, it has been reported that students, who are identified as at-risk, whose teachers emphasize a sense of belonging in their classrooms and schools tended to accept those values and remain in school (Ma, 2003). Reference to a report issued in "Psychology in the schools", in 2002 various factors can influence a student's decision to not complete school. Items that were viewed as particularly important issues with an influence on whether children drop out of school were parental support/supervision at home, school attendance, role models, gang involvement, and self-esteem. In the same report, prevention activities which were successful for dropouts were reported as increasing motivation, notifying parents of a late or absent students, providing emotional support, and a lower student/teacher ratio. For the 2000-01 academic year, the US department of Education (USDOE, 2003) released a report indicating that the 9th- through 12th-grade non attendant rate across the nation ranged from 2.2 percent in North Dakota to 10.9 percent in Arizona. Twenty- six of the forty-five reporting states in the study had non- attendant rates ranging from four to seven percent.

Across all reporting states the median dropout rate was approximately four percent (USDOE, 2003). Also, across ethnicities, “dropout rates were generally lowest for white, non-Hispanic and Asian/pacific Islander students and highest for American Indian / Alaska Native; Black, non- Hispanic; and Hispanic students in reporting states “(USDOE, 2003, P.6).

The Hispanic population has the highest dropout rate, followed closely by other ethnically diverse student populations. Students who earn low grades, who do not participate in school activities, who have poor attendance, and who receive little support and encouragement to stay in school are at a greater risk of dropping out. Additionally, being bored with school also was a major reason for the decision to leave school before graduation (Brooks, 2001).

Frequent truancy is also an indicator of potential schooling problems. Truants show little connection with school, exhibit low academic motivation, and consequently show poor school performance (Nyame, 2010). Again, it has been suggested that the problems of dropout, absenteeism and truancy, disruptive classroom behaviour, and delinquency can all be seen as outcomes of an early pattern of withdrawal from school (Finn & Rock, 1997).

Research indicates that some schools have disproportionately high levels of truancy and other forms of absenteeism. In some cases, these problems have persisted despite the programmes implemented by local school administrations (Reid, 2003). Reid suggested that in order to combat truancy and absenteeism within some schools, it may be necessary to change pupils, parents and teachers’ attitudes towards these schools and the process of schooling. Higher truancy rates are also associated with lower self-

concepts, single parent homes, and lower grade expectations, which both parents and school officials agreed upon. Problematic absenteeism refers to children who are absent for more than 50% of the time in a 2-week period (Kearney, 2007). Secondly, Kearney suggests that the use of common terminology between researchers and other professionals can further build consensus. In his view when consensus is attained, readers will be less likely to misinterpret studies and their findings. In Ghana more than 20% of all children of school-going age (6-15 year-olds) have either dropped-out or never enrolled in school (MOESS, 2007).

In the Davidson and Kanyuka (1992) study, over 90 percent of teachers noted that boys performed better in class and had few reputation and dropout rates compared to girls. The explanations for these differences were given as early pregnancies, girls' desire for early marriage, or that girls were just plain lazy. But the society does recognize that it is exactly these negative attitudes which reinforce the trend in the educational differentials between girls and boys. There is great need for a positive atmosphere for girls both at home and in the school setting.

Gender Differences on Class Attendance and Academic Performance

Literature on academic achievement is extensive and some findings have shown that females usually score higher on average than males on test of verbal abilities, and that males score higher on average than females on tests of mathematics ability (Halpern, 2000), abilities (Hedges & Nowell, 1995); and on tests of stereotypically male vocational information and aptitude (Hedges & Nowell, 1995). These studies were carried out in America among twelve grade students. On the other hand, girls have been found by several studies to be more motivated and higher achievers than boys (Al-Emadi, 2003).

The literature on gender differences on academic achievement is extensive (Nowell, 1998). It has been assumed that both at the school level and at the college level, girls have registered higher achievement scores than boys have done (Al-Emadi, 2003). He further argues that several explanations have been given to this phenomenon and that in the Arab cultures, the socialization of boys and girls and the way of living partially explains the differential gender effects on achievement and achievement related variables. Girls are more restricted and confined to home, especially during adolescence than boys are. To this author, this seems to give girls more time to work on school work than boys who have more freedom to be outside of homes. He concluded that, the focus of boys on schoolwork is much less than the focus of girls. Research has suggested that on an empirical level, girls perform on reading and writing subjects while boys perform better on the more analytical subject of math and science (U.S Dept. of Education, USDOE 2006). Many authors have expounded on this idea, yet the data on the male-female achievement gap are often inconsistent (Nyame, 2010). In 1998 for example, in a research carried out in America, it was found that young men scored higher on both the verbal and quantitative sections of scholastic achievement test (SAT) than young women (Kirk, 2000).

In the same vein, some writers have noted that this may be because of a bias against female in our educational system. In support of the above finding, Kirk (2000) gave a further explanation that the tests results reflect a selection bias in which more at risk females opt to take the scholastic achievement test related to males. Rood (1989) in a study carried out in Victoria High School, Australia, among Year 7 and 8 co-education students found no gender differences in achievement based on the type of mathematics by

girls in about their mathematics ability 'which in turn significantly increased the likelihood of their subsequent participation in senior mainstream mathematics education.

Females earn higher grades than males, and some possible explanations have been proposed by searchers. The reasons proposed are both biological and environmental. In carefully controlled studies of learning disabilities, males have been found to have more learning disabilities than females by a ratio of two to one (Henning-Stout & Close-Conoley, 1992). Males are classified as disturbed at four times the rate of females (Henning-Stout & Close-Conoley, 1992). Some researchers have estimated that males are 10 times more likely to exhibit stuttering, a language problem. There are four to five times more males who are dyslexic than females (Stein, 1994). Of course, one is taking a leap of faith to assume that learning disability testing is not biased by sex stereotypes as well. Males also display a greater amount of negative social behavior than females in the classroom and this is thought to play a role in their academic performance (Downey & Vogt-Yuan, 2005).

Socially, boys do not fare as well as girls, at least in part because they are encouraged to challenge social norms as an expression of masculinity. This researcher asserts that boys are more willing to take risks and are less compliant than girls, who have also been taught, and rewarded, for complaint behavior. Many males' associate good grades at school with being girl-like, and, therefore, they do not want to make good grades (Halpern, 2000).

2.4 Measures to Address Absenteeism and Lateness

Literature has also established measures undertaken by focused and case institutions to address lateness and absenteeism among both students and teachers. In the

publication of Gulag Shahzada et al (2011), absenteeism and lateness could be reduced by providing; free education, counseling, discipline relevant curriculum and social welfare seminal to students'. The use of electronic registration systems, truancy sweeps by disciplinary committees, contact with parents, and support for pupils with poor attendance and effective school administration by principals are identified (Davidson et al 2003; and Ubogun, 2004).

Like businesses, schools collect data on student tardiness and absences to learn about their populations. These behaviors are a barometer indicating the likelihood of student success. Many school interventions to improve student performance use absences as indicators of success or failure of the intervention. Some schools try to tackle the problem of absences head-on. Chronically absent students might get “administrative detention” (Tomczyk, 2000). Schools create policies intended to reduce absences (Malbon & Nuttall, 1982) or create more accurate tracking systems (Hernan, 1991). After learning that one employer found a direct correlation between school classes in which being absent directly affected their results.

Findings indicate that, schools which make changes in their delivery of academic instruction may find improvement in school misbehavior including absenteeism and lateness (Barbara, 2004). Cordogan (2001) reported that a suburban Chicago, Illinois high school administrator initiated an interdisciplinary curriculum. A four-year study which tracked 161 discipline-based and 247 interdisciplinary students found that students in the interdisciplinary program demonstrated more positive behavior such as decreased absences and lower suspension rates. The interdisciplinary students also had higher grade point averages as compared to their counterparts.

With regard to teacher absenteeism in Ghana, the findings of WNED and IBIS (2009) showed that the placement of salary embargo is the commonest measure to ensure discipline among teachers. This is understandable because when people lose income it has a direct effect on their lives. Salary embargo also elicits quick response from the teachers. Deferred promotion and disciplinary committees are the next measures that are also given prominence in application. The results also show that there are no non-mandatory regulatory practices at the district level meant to check teacher behavior.

Other schools have made smaller academic changes and have seen positive results. Absenteeism decreased when a rural secondary school went to block scheduling (McCoy, 1998). An urban Illinois school reduced tardiness and disruptive behavior in physical education classes by introducing, “.....a series of co-operative learning activities to address interpersonal skill development, and creation of physical education portfolios to increase student goal setting and decision making skills” (Anderson & Windeatt, 1995, p:88). Lazerson et al.(1988) reported a decrease in truancy by junior high learning-disabled(LD) students when they tutored younger LD students. A self-contained dropout prevention class for middle school students with a behavior modification program to teach time management skills resulted in decrease from an average of fifteen lateness per week to zero lateness for the last three weeks of the program (Johnson, 1995). A pilot project aimed at improving vocational education programs divided sixty 10th grade students with high dropout potential into experimental and control groups. The control group received the traditional vocational programming while the experimental group received intensive, competency-based skills utilizing a new instructional delivery system. The experimental group had academic performance gains and, “...a reduction in

truancy, suspensions, tardiness, class cutting, absenteeism and students dropping out of school” (Wilson, 1977, p.100). It is the aim of every school to lessen, if not eradicate absenteeism among its students. One way of addressing this problem is to identify the causes why students become truant from school. Once they are singled out, understood and analyzed, specific actions and measures can be undertaken. This will eventually redound to better performance of the students, teachers and the school in general.

2.5 Chapter Summary

Findings of various studies have established a relationship between lateness and absenteeism of students and teachers on one hand and students performance on the other hand. It is also generally agreed that the effect is extensively negative in the form of poor academic performance, school drop-out, truancy, stealing and other forms of social vices. However, the geographical section of the various case studies in and outside Ghana rendered the findings not entirely applicable to every second cycle school in the country in each district and region. This calls for extensive investigations in to the subject taking recognizance of parameters such as population density, socio-cultural backgrounds, religious inclination, and dominant occupation in each community of school, which can all influence perennial absence. Therefore the present study has found support in the publication (Finlayson 2009) precisely stating that “more research is needed in this area”.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology adopted by the researcher in the conduct of the research work. It basically contains the research design, target population, sample size and sampling technique, sources of data, methods of data collection, data analysis and validity and reliability.

3.1 Research Design

The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible. Obtaining relevant evidence entails specifying the type of evidence needed to answer the research question, to test a theory, to evaluate a programme or to accurately describe some phenomenon. In other words, when designing research we need to ask: given the research question (or theory), what type of evidence is needed to answer the question (or test the theory) in a convincing way? Research design according to (Yin, 1989), deals with a logical problem of a research and not a logistical problem.

There are several types of research designs namely; Exploratory, Descriptive, Causal, Explanatory, Experimental, Sequential, Case Study etc. This research was conducted using the case study approach. Johnson (1994) defines a case study as an enquiry which uses multiple sources of evidence. It investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

The case study approach was adopted in this research work because it has a distinctive advantage over other research strategies when “how” or “why” questions are being posed to discover a current phenomenon and when the researcher has little or no control over the events (Yin, 2003). It offers the opportunity to “explain why certain outcomes may happen- more than just find out what those outcomes are” (Denscombe, 1998). This is actually very important in assessing the causes of lateness and absenteeism of students and its impacts on students’ academic performance. Moreover, it enables the researchers to use multiple sources of data and a variety of research methods to explore the research questions which in turn, foster the validation of data through triangulation (Denscombe, 1998).

3.2 Target Population

The target population for the survey is the entire set of units for which the survey data are to be used to make inferences. Thus, the target population defines those units for which the findings of the survey are meant to generalize (Brenda, 2012). In line with the definition above, the target population of the study comprised all the students enrolled for the 2013/2014 academic year at the Huni Valley Senior High School. Currently the population of the students of the Huni Valley Senior High School stood at 1,721 and this fairly skewed towards the lower classes as form one recorded the highest numbers, followed by form two and three with the least.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 100 students was employed in the conduct of the study. Quota and convenience sampling were used in the selection of respondents. This of all, a quota allocation of 40, 35, and 25 was made for the form 1, form 2, and form 3 respectively. The variation in numbers for the three forms was done to reflect the varying class sizes and make the quotas more representatives of the forms. With each quota however, convenience sampling method was used to ensure that only students who have absented themselves for at least twice within the eight weeks of the first term of the 2013/2014 academic year were selected. The register provided information on the students' attendance to enable the researcher identifies those who absented themselves at least twice in the current term. The sample distributions of the study were indicated in table 3.1

Table 3.1: Sample Distribution of Respondents

Respondents	Form	Number	Percentage
Students	Form 1	40	40
	Form 2	35	35
	Form3	25	25
Total		100	100

Source: Author's research data, 2013.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Basically, questionnaire was employed in the collection of data for the study. Bancroft et al (2000) explains its benefits as that, it is much less expensive to operate especially where resources are limited or population is widely scattered. It also allows information to be gathered reasonably quickly. There is no interviewer to affect the respondent's answers. The drawbacks with this are that, there is a difficulty in receiving high response rate, tendency of no-response to questionnaire and others. In the data collection process, a structured questionnaire was used to collect information from the both students and teachers. The set of questionnaire were designed with a combination of closed- ended and open-ended questions to ensure that informants give the required information while giving them the opportunity to air their individual views on other research variables. The respondents answered the questions on their own after a careful orientation was given especially to the students on the purpose and requirements of the questionnaire. To ensure accuracy, the researcher personally administered the questionnaire one class after another to ensure that students needing clarifications were provided with to enable them provide the desired responses.

3.5 Source of Data

Two basic sources of data were gathered for the conduct of the study. They were primary sources and secondary sources which were considered as the key sources of data for this research work within which all data used were categorized.

3.5.1 Primary Sources of Data

According To Bancroft et al (2000). “Primary data is the name given to data used for specific purpose for which it was collected”. Therefore primary data are freshly collected data also known as raw data that are either used to test the working hypothesis or as evidence to support a claim or for both. This type of data was collected through the researcher’s independent efforts. The researcher used questionnaire as the main instrument in collecting the primary data for this research work. Primary data formed the bedrock of the study out of which the objectives of the study were assessed and findings outlined. These data were principally obtained from the students and teachers of the study area using a set of structured questionnaire designed based on the research objectives.

3.5.2 Secondary Data Sources

Bancroft et al (2000) explained secondary data as “the name given to data used for purposes other than those for which it was collected”. In the conduct of this study, the researcher relied on secondary sources of data to gather information necessary for this research work. These sources included text books, lecture notes, journals publications, published research papers, articles and other information from the internet. The benefits of this method are that, it is tailored exactly for its purpose, and it is much cheaper to access. The drawbacks are that, the sources do not provide specific information as required for the study.

5.5.3 Validity and Reliability

The researcher did a pilot test of the tool at the Prestea Senior High School at Prestea. After the pre test it was found out that, some of the questions were interrelated and also not applicable and therefore deleted. Other corrections were made in order to ensure the responses needed were elicited from respondents. The reliability of the questionnaires was tested using IBM SPSS (version 21) and variables that impeded the validity were eliminated. Again researcher supervised the respondents during the filling of questionnaire, providing respondents with clarifications where necessary. This improved respondents understanding of the questionnaire and ensured the appropriate filling of questionnaire thus guaranteeing the reliability responses.

3.6 Data Analysis

Various data analysis techniques were employed depending on the typed of data. Descriptive statistics of count, frequencies, tables, charts were used to analysed the data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was the dominant statistical software used to analysed the collected data.

3.7 Chapter Summary

Chapter Three of the research work discussed the method adopted to complete the research study. A case study design was adopted. A sample size of 100 students was selected using comprising of quota and convenience sampling method. Questionnaires were the main tool for data collection and the primary data was analysed using IBM SPSS and MS Excel. The results were presented in figures and tables in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

Data analysis and interpretation allows the researcher to draw meaningful inferences from raw data gathered on the field based on the research findings could be established, conclusions drawn and recommendations made. The fourth chapter of the research work contains results of data analysis and discussion. For ease of comprehension, the results were presented on simple frequency tables, statistical distribution tables and graphs with their interpretation following suit.

4.1 Personal Data

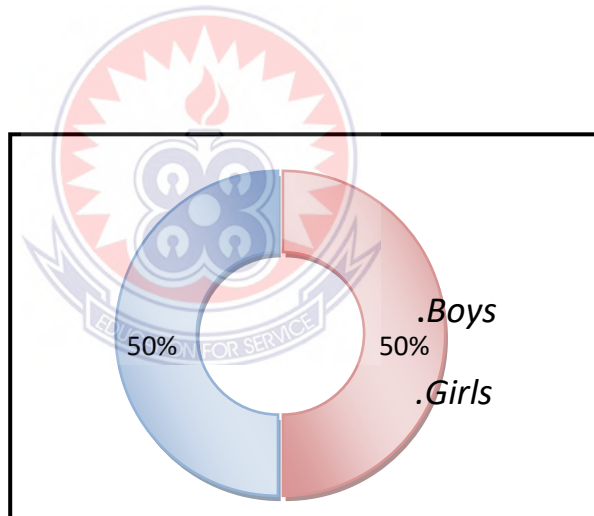
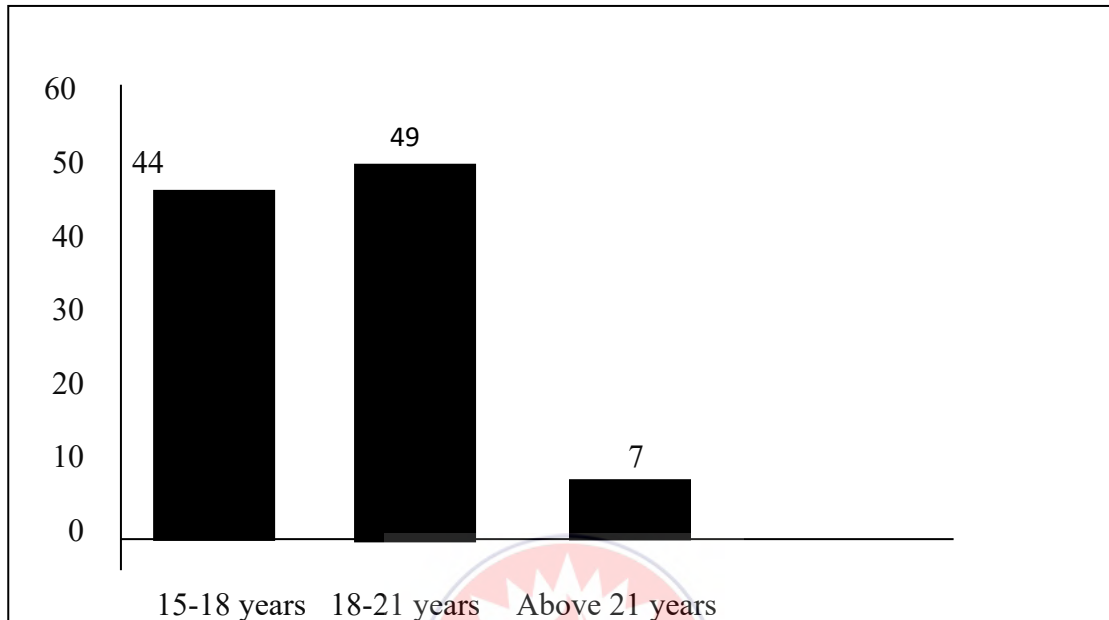


Figure 4.1 Gender of Students

Source: Author's field data, 2014

As shown on Figure 4.1, the gender composition of students recorded an equal balance between boys and girls. 50% of the students informants were boys and 50% were girls. According to the students' attendance records (registers), there was no traceable difference between the level of absence for boys and girls. Having a balanced gender

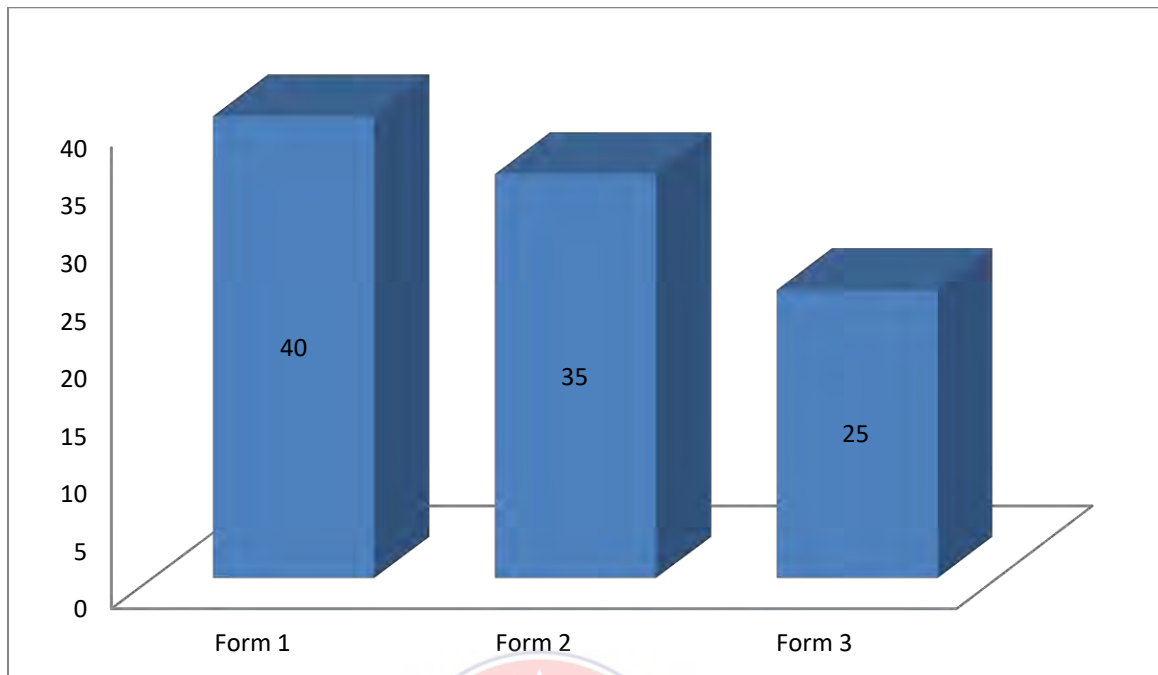
composition was therefore a good way of making the sample more representatives of the student absentees.



Source: Author's field data, 2014.

Figure 4.2 Age of students

Similarly, the age categories of the student informants were indicated in figure 4.2. From the figure, 44 of 100 students were within the age range of 15-18 years, 49 were within the age category of 18-21 years while only 7 were above the age of 21 years. This implies that a majority of the students were teenagers and this is consistent with the normal GES structure that, by the age of 15 years student should be at SHS 1 and complete by the age of 18.



Source: Author's field data, 2014.

Figure 4.3 Class of the Respondents

Regarding the grade level of informants, 40% were in SHS 1, 35% were in form 2 and the remaining 25% in form 3. The variations reflected the differences in the class sizes of the three classes and also the fact that students in lower forms were more frequent in absenteeism and lateness and therefore, allocating more students to the lower forms was not appropriate. This ensures that majority of the students found to have absented themselves or report to late responded to the questionnaire and supplied the desired information. This information is indicated on Figure 4.3.

4.2 Research Questions 1: Causes of Absenteeism

The causes of student's frequent absence from school were categorized into two; home and personal causes and school based causes. In order to understand the specific and predominant causes of absenteeism of students in the Huni-valley SHS, respondents were asked to rank a list of possible home and personal causes on a Likert type scale of 1-5, according to the extent to which they agree that those factors accounted for their frequent absence from school. A scale of 1-represented strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-agree and 5-strongly agree. Descriptive statistical analysis comprising of the mean, standard deviation and mean-of-means were employed in the analyzing the field data. The mean represents the average rankings of all the respondents of a particular factor. That is, the weighted sum of the individual rankings divided by the sample size. The standard deviation measures the level of dispersion or deviation of the individual rankings from the mean. As a result, lower standard deviations values are preferred since it confirms that majority of respondents share similar views about that particular factor or variable. For a set of variables, the mean-of-means is the average of the individual means or the sum of the individual means divided by the number of variables.

Consequently, a particular factor or possible cause of absenteeism was considered to be a major cause if its mean value is greater than 3.0. In other words, there is enough evidence that the factor was a cause of absenteeism and lateness among the students. On the contrary, if the mean value of a particular factor was less than 3.0, then it meant that it was not a principal cause of absenteeism among the students.

Based on the decision criteria explained above, the home and personal causes of absenteeism among Huni Valley SHS students are indicated in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Home and Personal Causes of Absenteeism

	Sample Size	Mean	Std. Dev
I was sick	100	4.39	0.74
I did not feel like coming to school	100	2.89	1.68
My parents did not give me pocket money	100	1.76	1.42
I had to accompany my parents to the farm	100	2.37	1.73
I went to the market	100	1.81	1.29
I was beaten or insulted by my parents	100	1.75	1.33
I took care of a little child while my mother traveled	100	2.51	1.65
I attended wake keeping	100	1.19	0.39
No one encourages me to come to school	100	1.70	1.29
I went to sleep in my boy/girl friend's house	100	1.25	0.70
Mean-of-means	100	2.16	

Source: Author's field data, 2014.

As seen from the table, sickness or ill health recorded a mean of 4.39 and standard deviation of 0.74. The findings from this study contradict Maina and Dolphine (2012), who found out that the main cause of student absenteeism was lack of school fees which was essentially economic motivation. Health grounds were the most common reason of students for being absent. According to Maina and Dolphine (2012), the most commonly found illnesses 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 least common reason for them for being absent is stomach ache with 1.39 averages. Lack of enthusiasm to go to school recorded a mean of 2.89 and standard deviation of

1.68, accompanying parents to farm recorded mean of 2.37 and standard deviation of 1.73 and nursing younger siblings in the absence of the mother recorded mean of 2.51 with standard deviation of 1.65. Since the above causes recorded mean values less than 3.0, they were not considered prime causes of the absenteeism among students of Huni Valley SHS but accounted for some students' absence. This was consistent with Davdson et al (2003) that Home-related controls constitute an appreciable cause of students' absenteeism and that "My parents ask me to be absent from school" reason resulted to the highest mean of 1.52. In the present study the parent factor of absenteeism were asking children to accompany them to farms or to nurse younger siblings while the mother was away.

However, lack of pocket money with mean of 1.76 and standard deviation of 1.42, visiting the market with mean = 1.81 and std.dev = 1.29, been beaten or insulted by parents recorded mean = 1.75 and std.dev = 1.33, attending wake keeping with mean of 1.19 and std.dev = 0.39, lack of encouragement with mean = 1.70 and std.dev = 1.29 and sleeping at a girl/boy friend's house with mean = 1.25 and std.dev of 0.70 were considered very minor causes of absenteeism since they all recorded mean values far lower than 3.0. The findings of this study contradicts Maina and Dolphine (2012), who found out that the main cause of student absenteeism was lack of school fees which was essentially economic motivation.

Table 4.2: School Based Causes of Absenteeism

	Sample Size	Mean	Std. Dev
I did not do my home work	100	1.36	0.69
I feared being caned by the teachers	100	1.98	1.29
I failed to do a punishment	100	2.54	1.08
I did not like the subjects on the time table that day	100	1.31	0.46
I did not understand the teachers who will teacher us that day	100	1.23	0.42
I did not understand anything when they teach	100	1.72	1.29
There will be class test	100	1.09	0.29
I did not have money to pay for PTA dues and other levies	100	1.12	1.65
I did not have exercise books/pen	100	2.29	1.68
Mean-of-means	100	1.63	

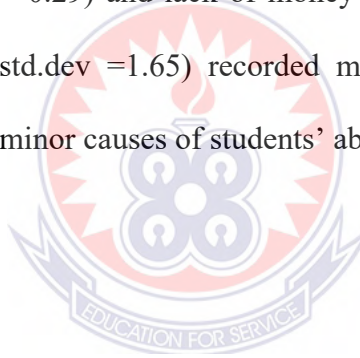
Source: Author's field data, 2014

The importance or otherwise of a particular variable depends on the size of its mean relative to the midpoint of 3.0 as seen on Table 4.1 Variable that recorded mean values greater than 3.0 were considered main causes of absenteeism of students while those with lower mean values were not.

As observed on the table, the fear of been caned by teacher recorded a mean value of 1.98 with standard deviation of 1.29, attempts to dodge punishment recorded mean of 2.54 with standard deviation of 1.08, not understanding lessons being taught recorded mean of 1.72 with standard deviation of 1.29 and lack of exercise books or pens recorded

mean of 2.29 with standard deviation of 1.68 were all considered as minor school based causes of absenteeism among students at Huni Valley SHS. This was because they all recorded mean values less than 3.0. The findings above disagree with (www.wikianwsers.com), which suggested that lack of subject interest, lack of personal interest in studies and poor teaching skills of a teacher also keep away student from the school.

On the contrary, not doing home work (mean =1.36 and std.dev =0.69), not liking the subjects on the timetable for that day (mean =1.31 and std.dev =0.46), not liking teachers handling lessons that day (mean =1.23 and std.dev =0.42), fear of class test (mean =1.09 and std.dev = 0.29) and lack of money to pay for printing fees and other levies (mean =1.12 and std.dev =1.65) recorded mean values far less than the 3.0. Therefore, they were very minor causes of students' absenteeism.



4.3 Research Question 2: Causes of Lateness to School

Table 4.2: Causes of Lateness to School

	Sample Size	Mean	Std. Dev
I wake up late	100	2.64	1.71
I had to sweep before coming to school	100	3.01	1.76
I had to wash bowls before coming to school	100	2.59	1.72
I had to fetch water before coming to school	100	3.41	1.58
I did my homework in the morning	100	1.97	1.36
I went to the farm before coming to school	100	2.88	1.69
My house is far from the school	100	3.28	1.75
I cooked or waited to eat before coming to school	100	3.12	1.73
Because I did not want to sweep the school compound	100	1.36	0.73
I did not feel like coming to school early	100	1.48	0.90
Mean – of means		2.57	

Source: Author's field data, 2014

Moreover, the causes of lateness to school according to the rankings of students are indicated in table 4.3. Evidence from the table shows that, sweeping compound (mean=3.01, std.dev =1.76), fetching water before going to school (mean =3.41, std.dev =1.58), covering long distances to school (mean =3.28, std.dev =1.75) and cooking or waiting to eat before coming to school (mean =3.12, std.dev =1.73) all recorded mean values greater than 3.0. These were therefore adjudged the major causes of lateness among students of Huni Valley SHS.

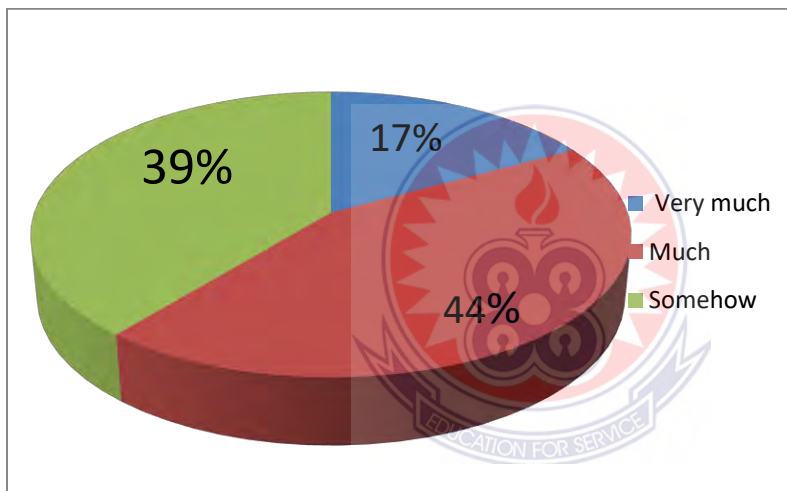
The findings supports Emore (2005) that; children involvement in domestic activities by their parent , distance to school; school discipline, family background and school location are among causes of lateness among Senior high students and Ubogu (2004) & Heather et.al (2003) that; going late to bed because of watching films and home movies, resulting into waking up late in the morning, distance to school and keeping friends who are not students are causes of lateness among senior high students. Late to rise was the major underpinning factor to lateness primarily due to the irresistible interest students have for local Akan movies which hold them up till late in the night. Once they are unable to wake early, they become late with every other things including school and would readily blame it in the other activities but not the late rising.

On the other hand, waking up late (mean=2.64, std.dev=1.71), washing bowls (mean=2.59, std.dev=1.72), going to farm before going to school (mean=2.88, std.dev=1.69), doing assignments in the morning (mean=1.97, std.dev=1.36), dodging work at school (mean=1.36, std.dev=0.73) and lack of interest of enthusiasm to go school (mean=1.48, std.dev=0.9) recorded lower mean values relative to the 3.0 and were consequently deemed minor causes of lateness among the students.

4.4 Research Question 3: Effects of Absenteeism and Lateness on students' performance

Assuming all other things were held constant, students who absented themselves from school frequently or are perpetual late comers will be expected to perform poorly compared to those who are always in school on time. To ascertain this from the students, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they believe absenteeism and

lateness affected their academic performance. As displayed in Figure 4.4, 44% of the students indicated their performance was negatively affected very much, 39% of the respondents indicated it was affected much and the remaining 17% indicated it was affected somehow. Clearly, absenteeism and lateness negatively affect students' performance. This supports Clotfelter, C.T., Ladd, H. F., & Vigdor, J. L. (2007) student absenteeism and lateness leads to poor student performance as the student is not present in class to participate and learn and that schools having low socio-economic and minority students also had higher teacher and students absence rates and lower student test scores



Source: Author's field data, 2014.

Figure 4.4 Effects of Absenteeism and Lateness on Students' Performance

In a follow up on the extent to which their performance was affected by lateness and absenteeism, students were asked to describe their academic performance as contained on Table 4.4. From the table 11% of the students attested their performance were not good at all and that they wish they could do better, 24% attested their performance was below average and wish they could improve and 26% indicated their

performance was average and wished to improve. In addition, 34% assessed themselves to be good and desired to do better while only 5% assessed their performance to be very good and that they only need to maintain it.

Table 4.4: Description of Academic Performance

	Frequency	Percent
Not good at all, I wish I could do better	11	11
Below average, I wish I could do better	24	24
Average but need to improve	26	26
Good, I need to improve	34	34
Very Good, I only need to maintain it	5	5
Total	100	100

Source: Author's field data, 2014



4.5 Research Question 4: Ways to Minimize Absenteeism

Quite interesting were views of students on how absenteeism can be minimized as indicated in Table 4.5. From the table, 12% of the students were of the view that absenteeism could be minimized if teachers should stop canning students, 23% were of the view parents should only send children to the farm on Saturday, 48% were of the opinion that parents should provide for the health needs and provide them with mosquito nets while the remaining 17% were of the view if mothers could stop making students take care of little babies while they traveled. This was consistent with Shahzada et al (2011), who indicated that absenteeism and lateness could be reduced by providing; free

education, counseling, discipline relevant curriculum and social welfare seminal to students' and Weade (2004) that, schools which make changes in their delivery of academic instruction may find improvement in school misbehavior including absenteeism and lateness.

Table 4.5: Ways to Stop Absenteeism

	Frequency	Percent
Teacher should stop caning students	12	12
Parents should allow us to go to school and visit the farm on Saturdays only	23	23
Parents should send us to the hospital when we are sick and provide us with Mosquito nets	48	48
My mother should stop making me take care of little siblings	17	17
Total	100	100

Source: Author's field data, 2014.

Regarding the ways in which lateness of students can be stopped, 18% of the respondents suggested students should learn to wake up early, 35% suggested parents should assist students with household chores, 38% suggested parents should stop sending students to farm in the morning before going to school where as the remaining 9% of student suggested the use of a bicycle could enable them get to school on time since their houses were far away. The above information is shown in Table 4.6. Obviously, to address the issue of students' lateness, collaboration between parents and teachers is required. Parents need to assist and monitor their wards on the time they sleep or wake-up

and assist with demanding household chores before in the mornings. However, teachers need to educate parents to be aware their wards attend school late and that their lateness affects their performance negatively.

Table 4.6: Ways to Stop Lateness

	Frequency	Percent
Students should wake up early	18	18
Parents should assist students with household chores especially in the morning	35	35
Parents should stop sending us to the farm before going to school	38	38
If I could get a bicycle to enable me commute faster	9	9
Total	100	100

Source: Authors' field data, 2014.

4.7 Chapter Summary

The fourth chapter of the work entailed the results and findings from the data analysis. The findings have been presented under the broad headings of the various research questions. This chapter provides readers with understanding of what the causes of absenteeism and lateness, the impact on students' performance and ways to remedy the phenomenon among students of Huni Valley SHS.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the key findings from the preceding chapter, the research conclusions and the recommendation. The conclusions are based on the findings which again served as the basis for the recommendations.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The research study was designed to examine the causes and effects of absenteeism and lateness among the students of Huni Valley SHS in the Prestea Huni Valley District of the Western Region. The study employed a descriptive research design and a multi-stage sampling technique to gather primary data. IBM SPSS (version 21) and MS Excel 2007 were statistical tools used in the analysis of the field data. Having analyzed and interpreted the research field data, the following major findings were worth noting;

1. The major home and personal causes of absenteeism among Huni valley SHS students include; sickness or ill health, lack of enthusiasm to go to school, accompanying parents to farm and nursing younger siblings in the absence of the mother.
2. However, lack of pocket money, visiting the market, being beaten or insulted by parents, attending wake keeping and sleeping at a girl/boy friend's house were considered minor causes of absenteeism among the students.

3. Similarly, the major school based causes of absenteeism were found to include; the fear of been caned by teacher, attempts to dodge punishment, not understanding lessons been taught and lack of exercise books or pens.
4. Other school based causes which were considered minor were; not doing home work, not liking the subjects on the timetable for that day, not liking teachers handling lessons that day, fear of class test and lack of money to pay for printing fees and other levies.
5. Moreover, the major causes of lateness among the students were; waking up late, sweeping compound and washing dishes before preparing for school, fetching water before going to school, going to farm before going to school, covering long distances to school and cooking or waiting to eat before coming to school.
6. Other causes of lateness which were important were; doing assignments in the morning, dodging work at school and lack of interest of enthusiasm to go school.
7. On the extent to which absenteeism and lateness affected students performance, it was established that 44% of the students' performance was very much affected negatively, 39% of students' performance was much affected negatively and the remaining 17% were somehow affected.
8. In a self assessment enquiry, 11% attested their performance were not good at all and that they wish they could do better, 24% attested their performance were below average and wish they could improve and 26% indicated their performance were average and wished to improve, 34% assessed themselves to be good and desired to do better whiles only 5% assessed their performance to be very good and that they only needed to maintain it.

9. Regarding ways to avert the prevalence of absenteeism, students suggested that; teachers stop canning students, parents should only sent children to the farm on Saturday, parents should provide for the health needs and provide them with mosquito nets and that mothers should stop making students take care of little babies whiles they traveled.
10. On forestalling lateness, students suggested; they ought to nurture the habit of waking up early each day, parents should assist students with household chores especially in the mornings, parents should stop sending students to farm in the morning before going to school and finally that parents should procure bicycles to enable distant students report to school on time.

5.2 Conclusions

Having examined the research findings carefully, the following conclusions were drawn; students' absenteeism and lateness in the Huni Valley SHS is caused partly by home and personal based factors and partly by school based factors. Personal causes were sickness and lack of enthusiasm to go to school whiles home factors consisted on demands from parents such as taking students to farm and making girls baby sitters in the absence of mothers. School based causes included the fear of punishment and lack of learning materials. Lateness among the students was a result of their inability to wake early and household chores or farming they do before attending school. Long distance covered by those in the cottages was another reason for lateness. It was concluded also that absenteeism and lateness affected the academic performance of students and as a result, majority of the students were performing far below their own expectations.

5.3 Recommendations

For the consideration of stakeholders and for purpose of mitigating the practice absenteeism and lateness among the students of Huni Valley SHS, the following suggestions were made;

1. Students through the support of their parents should cultivate the habit of sleeping early at night and rising early in the morning to enable them report at school on time.
2. In farming cottages, parents should be sensitized to appreciate the importance of education and stop sending their wards to farms during school days or sending them to farm early in the morning to work before attending to school.
3. Since students of SHS are young adults, teachers are urged to explore innovative ways of dealing with student offenses such as counseling rather than focused on the conventional corporal punishment which tends to scare students from school. The circuit supervisors and head teachers should regularly remind and encourage teachers to consider reformative punishment that tailored towards the academic welfare of the student.
4. The headmaster and staff should be creative in initiating measures to reward students who report early and attend school with full at the end of the term. This could take the form of rewarding students with exercise books or pens or simply mentioning their names and verbally praising them at the closing assembly.
5. The PTA as a matter of urgency should adopt strategies to encourage and motivate both parents and students on the need to consider education as a profitable investment. They could take the form of inviting resource persons to

talk to parents during PTA meetings, organizes similar talks for the students or invite past students in tertiary institutions to interact with students on regular basis.

6. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) seeking to promote education should also consider implementing their policies and programs in the Prestea Huni Valley District and Huni Valley SHS for that matter. NGOs could also consider some interventions to address the challenges leading to the frequent absenteeism and lateness.
7. The local government in collaboration with the District Education Offices should also consider policies that will address the challenges confronting students to enable them be present at all times and on time to improve the poor academic performance of students in the district.

Recommended area for Further Research

For further studies in the area of absenteeism and lateness of students, researchers should consider examining the contributory roles of teachers and parents to the absenteeism and lateness of students.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA-KUMASI CAMPUS

MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

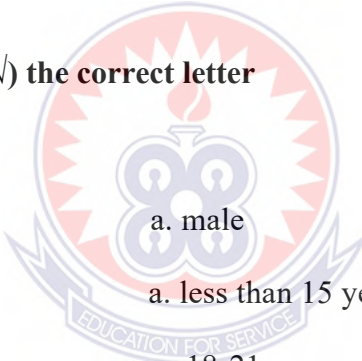
RESEARCH TOPIC: THE PERCEIVE IMPACT OF LATENESS AND

ABSENTEEISM: CAUSES AND EFFECTS ON STUDENTS PERFORMANCE.

Ethical Assurance: Any information provided will be used solely for the purpose of the research and no aspect of it will be used for any other purpose or leaked to a third party. You are at liberty not to participate, but your views on these questions will be highly appreciated.

Instruction: Please tick (✓) the correct letter

Personal data

- 
1. Gender of student a. male b. female
2. Age of student a. less than 15 years b. 15-18 years
 c. 18-21 years d. above 21 years
3. Which class are you? a. form 1 b. form 2 c. form 3
4. Who do you stay with? a. My parents (both father and mother)
- b. Only my mother c. only my father d. my grandmother

CAUSES OF ABSENTEEISM

5. Rank the following home and personal causes of absenteeism according to the extent to which you

Home and personal causes	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
I am sick	1	2	3	4	5
I did not feel like coming to school	1	2	3	4	5
My parents did not give me pocket money	1	2	3	4	5
I had to accompany my parents to the farm	1	2	3	4	5
I went to the market	1	2	3	4	5
I was beaten or insulted by my parents	1	2	3	4	5
I took care of a little child while my mother traveled	1	2	3	4	5
I attended wake keeping	1	2	3	4	5
I was late then stopped	1	2	3	4	5
No one encourages me to come to school	1	2	3	4	5
I went to sleep in my boyfriend's house	1	2	3	4	5

6. Agree or disagree that they explain why you sometimes absent yourself from school.

7. Rank the following school causes of absenteeism according to the extent to which you agree or disagree that they explain your frequent absence from school.

School causes	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
I did not do my home work	1	2	3	4	5
I feared been caned by the teachers	1	2	3	4	5
I failed to do a punishment	1	2	3	4	5
I did not like the subjects on the time table that day	1	2	3	4	5
I do not like the teachers who will teach us that day	1	2	3	4	5
I did not understand any thing when they teach	1	2	3	4	5
There will be class test	1	2	3	4	5
I did not have money to pay for PTA dues and other levies	1	2	3	4	5
I did not have exercise books/pen	1	2	3	4	5

CAUSES OF LATENESS

8. Rank the following causes on a scale of 1-4, according to the extent to which they explain the reasons for your frequent lateness to school.

CAUSES OF LATENESS	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
I woke up late	1	2	3	4	5
I had to sweep before coming to school	1	2	3	4	5
I had to watch bowls before coming to school	1	2	3	4	5
I had to fetch water before coming to school	1	2	3	4	5
I did my homework in the morning	1	2	3	4	5
I went to the farm before coming to school	1	2	3	4	5
My house is far from the school	1	2	3	4	5
I cooked or waited to eat before coming to school	1	2	3	4	5
Because I did not want to sweep the school compound	1	2	3	4	5
I did not feel like coming to school early	1	2	3	4	5

How do you think your absence or effect lateness and absenteeism on students' performance?

8. Lateness to school affect your academic performance in school?

- a. Very much
- b. Much
- c. Somehow
- d. Not at all

9. How will you describe your performance in school?

- a. Not good at all, I wish I could do better
- b. Below average, I wish I could do better
- c. Average but I need to improve
- d. Good but I need to improve
- e. Very good, I only need to maintain it

10. In your opinion, how can absenteeism be stopped?

11. How do you think lateness to school can be stopped?

