

# Factors Contributing to Truancy of Students of Tampilisan National High School

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*Abstract* — This study aimed to determine the factors contributing to truancy of students of Tampilisan National High School. It specifically sought to identify the type of truants, the prevalent factors and the significant relationship between the contributing factor of truancy and the type of truants.

It was hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between the contributing factor of truancy and the type of truants.

The respondents of the study were the 115 identified truants of Tampilisan National High School. The truants were identified based on the attendance sheet (SF1) of the respective class and supported by the attendance sheet from the class beadle which bore the attendance of a student during every subject. If a student commits at least forty times of unexcused absence a year or ten times a quarter, he is considered a truant. The pre-identified factors are the family, individual, community and school factors.

Twenty-nine percent of the truants belong to Category A who are being in school but absent in class; 26 % belong to Category B who are neither in classroom nor in the school but at home. Moreover, 30% belong to Category C who are neither in the school nor at home. Lastly, 15 % of the truants belong to Category D who absent themselves from classes as a result of the difficulty in the school subjects or dislike for the subject or teacher. Family Factor has a weighted mean of 1.52; Individual factor has a weighted mean of 1.66; Community factor has a weighted mean of 1.63; and School Factor has a weighted mean of 1.56. It is observed that individual factor ranked first among the four factors. There is a significant relationship between the contributing factors of truancy and the type of truants.

Eight percent of the truants are in Grade 7, 29 % are in Grade 8, 21% are in Grade 9 and 42 % are in Grade 10. It implies that the higher the Grade level the students are in, the higher the tendency of truancy.

The type of truants in Tampilisan National High School is scattered from Category A to Category D. The most prevalent factor affecting truancy is the individual factor. The contributing factor of truancy highly affects the type of truancy. The male students are more at risks of playing truant than female students.

To address the factors affecting truancy, a program under DORP (Drop-out Reduction Program) is recommended to be launched and implemented. This program is called #KEEPS (Keeping Eagerness in Education among Parents and Students). It is also recommended that this study be replicated to find some other factors and solutions to this prevailing problem in Tampilisan National High School.

*Keywords* — *Drop Out, Truancy, Factors*

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## I. Introduction

A major problem facing schools is how to effectively deal with student absenteeism and truancy (DeSocio et al., 2007). When a student has not attended school for a long period of time or frequently misses school, they are classified as truant. These students forgo opportunities to learn. When a student does not come to school for a lengthy period of time, one may assume these students are learning elsewhere, but unfortunately in most circumstances this is not the case (RI Kids Count, 2007). Students start truanting in primary school, and often continue through secondary school and so on (Reid, 2005). Truancy is an unexcused absence from school or classes about which parents typically do not know. Truancy in students has been found to stem from an influence of peers, relations with teachers, the way curriculum is delivered to the student, family aspects, bullying and others (Reid, 2005). The main difference between truancy and absenteeism is that truancy is unexcused and unlawful absence from school without parental knowledge or consent (Teasley, 2004)

Students who do not attend school will generally fall behind their classmates in their academic success (Ford & Sutphen, 1996). They have fewer opportunities to learn the materials that will help them to succeed (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). The focus of truancy ranges from early schooling until adolescent years (Ford & Sutphen, 1996). Reasons students do not attend school can be influenced by a number of factors ranging from a lack of community support and an unsupportive school environment or family to bad weather, transportation problems and poor health (Teasley, 2004).

Despite early interventions initiated by the Department of Education in partnership with other government agencies, truancy is still highly present in schools and is affecting performance indicators.

Students who play truant are one of the major problems of the class advisers, guidance officer and the school itself. According to Rohrman (1993), truants increase their risk for dropping out of school and high school dropouts are more likely to be unemployed or end up in prison than students from high school or college. These students contribute to the continued decrease of achievement rate and increase of dropout rate of Tampilisan National High School.

Owen (2001) says that truancy and absenteeism may lead a child into drug addiction, and in most cases student that absent from school, his or her IQ would be going retarded. Truants increase their risk of dropping out of school and high school dropouts are more likely to be unemployed or end up in prison than students from high school or college.

Determining the factors contributing to truancy among students of Tampilisan National High School urged the researcher to conduct this study. The result of this study may be used as a tool to implement effective interventions to reduce truancy among students.

## Literature Review

Education is the process of learning to live as useful and acceptable member of the community and a good citizen (Ferranti, 1993). The school has been established as the agent of the society to mould the habits, interest attitude and feelings of children and transmit the societal norms, culture, values and traditions from one generation to another.

The school as an institution is a place of learning morality and inculcate discipline to the students. Despite this, some students still do not attend classes. Students' absence from school for unexcused reasons is referred to as truancy.

Absenteeism and truancy are presently major problems facing our schools, and the damaging effects to students' academic performance have largely been overlooked.

Fugleman & Richardson (2001) differentiates absenteeism as regular persistent absence from school or work while truancy as an act of or practice of deliberately staying away from school without any acceptable reason, whether or not the parents or guardians know and approve of it.

Adeyemo (1998) sees a truant as a child who often stays away from school without any good reason. Sayeller (1997) adds that a truant is a child that does not go to school thereby diverting to somewhere else wandering around. According to Gabb (1997), a truant leaves home but does not reach school, he escapes from school or class to engage in any other activities that catch up his imaginations. Indeed, it is a type of deviant behavior exhibited by some students in schools without formal permission from the school administration or authority governing the institution.

The study of Tiberius, et. al (2014) has revealed that poor academic performance is a problem and it has been growing. 51.7% of the respondents has agreed that truancy is a latent base for poor academic performance among secondary school students in Kigamboni ward. This number is alarming and therefore there should be a wake-up call for government and society to redefine the effectiveness of the current education curriculum and education policies. In contrary poor performance in Tanzania secondary schools is not only caused by attendance characteristics alone but there are other factors which also cause poor performance like poverty, earl child pregnancy, drug abuse, peer groups and lack of seriousness in classroom.

## II. Methodology

### Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-survey design. This study was designed to depict participants in an accurate way through brief interview about a specific topic. It sought to determine the factors that contribute to truancy of students of Tampilisan National High School.

## Research Locale

This study was conducted at Tampilisan National High School, Tampilisan, Zamboanga del Norte. The school is the main high school among the five (5) independent high schools of Tampilisan District. There are forty three faculty members and enrolls more or less one thousand students every school year.

The school offers two (2) special programs namely Engineering Science Education Program (ESEP) and Strengthened Technical Vocational Education Program (STVEP) and the regular K-12 program. The ESEP caters academically inclined students in which they pass through a qualifying exam. The STVEP develops the technical-vocational skills of the students.

The school has an area of 9820 square meters. It has one school guard on duty everyday but only fifty percent of the school's perimeter has a concrete fence giving opportunity to students to freely jump over the barbed wire.

## Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the 115 identified truants of Tampilisan National High School. The truants were identified based on the attendance sheet (SF1) of the respective class and supported by the attendance sheet from the class beadle which bore the attendance of a student every subject. If a student commits at least forty times of absence a year or ten times a quarter, he is considered a truant. Table 3.1 presents the respondents as classified according to gender.

**Table 3.1**  
**Respondents of The Study**

GRADE LEVEL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
7	7	3	12
8	24	9	33
9	23	0	23
10	34	13	47
TOTAL	88	25	115

## Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling technique of respondents was utilized in this study. The truants were identified through the respective classroom advisers. Total enumeration was employed since all identified truants were involved in this study.

## Research Instruments

A researcher-made scale was utilized in this study. It is composed of forty items, ten questions for each category – family, individual, community and school.

### **Validity and Reliability of Instrument**

For validity, the researcher-made scale was submitted to a panel of experts which was composed of registered guidance counsellor and school administrators. It was also pilot-tested to at JRMSU-Tampilisan Campus Laboratory High School to determine its reliability. Cronbach's alpha is 0.805 which indicated a high level of reliability.

### **Research Procedure**

After the selection of the respondents and validation of the instruments, permission to conduct the study was secured from the school principal. The respondents was gathered by grade level and were made to answer the questionnaire. After answering, the respondents were interviewed at random by the researcher regarding the dominant personal reasons of their being truants to support the findings.

The data gathered were then tallied, tabulated and treated with an appropriate statistical tool.

### **Statistical Treatment**

Simple percentage, weighted mean and Chi-square were used to answer the questions posed.

## **III. Results and Discussion**

### **Summary**

This study aimed to determine the factors contributing to truancy of students of Tampilisan National High School. It specifically sought to identify the type of truants, the prevalent factors and the significant relationship between the contributing factor of truancy and the type of truants.

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## Findings

The analysis and interpretation of data, revealed the following findings:

1. Twenty-nine percent of the truants are those who are being in school but absent in class; 26 % are those who are neither in classroom nor in the school but at home. Moreover, 30% are those who are neither in the school nor at home. Lastly, 15 % of the truants are those who absent themselves from classes as a result of the difficulty in the school subjects or dislike for the subject or teacher.
2. Family Factor has a weighted mean of 1.52; Individual factor has a weighted mean of 1.66; Community factor has a weighted mean of 1.63; and School Factor has a weighted mean of 1.56. It is observed that individual factor ranked first among the four factors.
3. There is a significant relationship between the contributing factors of truancy and the type of truants.

## IV. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are presented:

1. The type of truants in Tampilisan National High School are those who are in school but absent in class; who are neither in classroom nor in the school but at home; who are neither in the school nor at home; and those who absent themselves from classes as a result of the difficulty in the school subjects or dislike for the subject or teacher.
2. The most prevalent factor affecting truancy is the individual factor. Most of the truants in Tampilisan National High School were affected by their personal interests and decisions.
3. The contributing factor of truancy highly affects the type of truancy. Category A truants are influenced by individual factors; Category B truants are mostly influenced by family factors; Category C truant are influenced by community factors; and Category D truants are influenced by school factors.

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