THE EFFECTS OF TRUANCY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN CHEMISTRY AMONG STUDENTS IN ANFOEGA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between truancy and academic performance among students, with a focus on perceptions of its impact and the role of socio-environmental factors. Using chi-square tests, data were analyzed to examine the effect of truancy on academic performance, gender differences in perceptions, and other influencing factors such as school environment, parental support, peer relationships, and teacher-student interactions.

Results from the chi-square analysis reveal a significant relationship between truancy and perceived academic performance (χ^2 = 5.762, p = 0.016), highlighting that students recognize truancy as a major barrier to academic success. Additional findings indicate significant associations between school environment (χ^2 = 10.714, p = 0.001), parental support (χ^2 = 10.714, p = 0.001), and peer relationships (χ^2 = 13.762, p = 0.000) with students' academic experiences. While teacher friendliness was less significant (χ^2 = 3.857, p = 0.050), it remains an essential factor for fostering a positive learning environment.

This study emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to address truancy, such as fostering supportive school environments, strengthening parental involvement, and creating inclusive programs to reduce absenteeism. These efforts could significantly enhance student engagement, particularly in practical and theoretical subjects like Chemistry, and improve overall academic outcomes.

KEYWORDS: Truancy, Academic Performance, School Environment, Parental Support, Peer Relationships, Teacher-Student Interactions, Chemistry Education, Absenteeism, Student Engagement, gender.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education offers new life and chances for people, decreases the problem of poverty and strengthens a voice of the people in the society. It is against this background that, attending school becomes most crucial to every country's development for which development in all subject areas including Chemistry cannot be downplayed. However, one of the problems associated with schooling is truancy which is a source of concern to the parents and the school authority. Truancy, often defined as unauthorized or habitual absence from school, has become a growing concern in many educational systems worldwide. The effects of truancy on students' academic performance, particularly in key subjects such as Chemistry, can be profound and last-longing. Chemistry, being one of the core science subjects, requires consistent attendance and engagement due to its abstract nature and need for practical understanding. Despite the introduction of the Free Senior High School policy in Ghana, truancy has been observed among students in some of the small community senior high school, particularly in the Volta Region, raising questions about its impact on their academic performance.

1.1 Truancy in the Ghana Education System

Truancy has been identified as one of the critical factors affecting students' academic performance in Ghana (Ministry of Education, 2019). The issue is more prevalent in small community school where supervision is limited, and students often have competing responsibility at home or in their communities. Studies conducted in various parts of Ghana indicate that truancy is influenced by several socio-economic factors, including poverty, parental neglect, peer pressure, and lack of motivation (Owusu et al., 2020). In the Volta region, the situation is exacerbated by inadequate school infrastructure, poor teacher-student ratios, and long commuting distances for students from rural areas (Adzovie et al., 2021).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The issue of truancy significantly hampers academic performance, especially in demanding subjects like Chemistry, which requires continuous engagement and practical learning. In the North Dayi district, students in small community senior high school are disproportionately affected by truancy due to socio-economic challenges, limited school resources, and low parental involvement. The complexity of Chemistry, which builds on cumulative knowledge, necessitates regular attendance for successful mastery. Truancy disrupts this learning process, leading to academic underperformance, knowledge gaps, and ultimately limiting students' future educational and career opportunities.

Observations made is that truant students had been engaging in sexual practice, drug use, alcohol drinking and cigarette smoking. In going through some of the student's records, it was noticed that truancy could result in to poor academic achievements, losing friends and partners and disruption in class. Truants affect the behaviour of other students, making it difficult in keeping accurate records, reduced ability to meet instructional target and damage in school reputation. While some teachers have often missed contact hours. In fact, the attitude of such teachers shown lack of interest in their career; hence their absence encourages truancy among students.

Truancy has been one of the major causes for the fallen standards of education in academic performance in WASSCE result in Chemistry at Anfoega Senior High School. Regardless of the effort made by the government to enroll students for free education at the senior high levels, students are rather used as labour force by their families in this community. Record from student's attendance register of SHS form 3 (final year) students, Anfoega Senior High School indicated the severity of truancy as a problem. Hence the researcher intended to find out the effects of truancy on academic performance in Chemistry at Anfoega Senior High School.

Therefore, truancy should be viewed not merely as a behavioral problem but as a systemic issue that undermines the educational objectives of both students and school. Addressing this requires targeted interventions such as improving school infrastructure, increasing teacher availability, fostering parental involvement, and implementing policies that provide support to at-risk students. Without these efforts, truancy will continue to negatively impact academic performance in key subjects like Chemistry, reinforcing cycles of educational inequality in rural areas like Anfoega in the North Dayi district.

1.3 Research Objective

1. To assess the relationship between truancy and academic performance in Chemistry among students in Anfoega Senior High School.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions were used to guide the study:
1. What are the causes of truancy among students in the school?
2. What is the truant behaviour that is displayed by the students in the classroom in the school?
3. How does truancy affect students' academic performance in Chemistry in the school?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Types of Truancy

The term truancy has been conceptualized by different authors in different ways. According to the International Dictionary of Education (2002), truancy is defined as a deliberate absence from school without parental knowledge. In the same manner, Fowowe (2011) said that truancy is when a student's stays away without permission, anyone who absent himself from work or duty without good reasons, the knowledge of the authority. The above definitions are in agreement that truancy occurs when a student absents himself from school without due permission either from parents or from the related authorities. On its popular meaning, Carter (2000) considers truancy as a: deliberate absence from school on the part of the student without the knowledge and consent of parents; absence of the student from the school for which no reasonable or acceptable excuse is given. This latter

concept broadens the definition considerably and makes it synonymous with unexcused absence. Herbert (2005) stressed that truants lack skills to maintain friendships hence they are isolated by peers. Truancy may refer to students who attend school but do not go to classes. To this effect truancy is practiced by some students who fail to attend school, rather prefer to be with their friends. Such behaviours lead as to the Types of Truancy. There are three types of truancy which are as follows:

Habitual Truancy
Habitual truancy is the type of truancy that occurs when a student truant constantly and continually absents from school without the due knowledge or consent of his parents and school authorities. Habitual truants are mainly those students who miss numerous full days of school academic activities. It is important to note that students who are habitual truants have high chances of falling behind in their school work, decline in their academic performance and even lose their attachment or positive attitudes towards schools.

Occasional Truancy
Occasional truancy occurs when a student does not constantly and continually absent himself from school. In this type of truancy, the student's level of absenteeism from school without the permission of parents or school authority is irregular.

Causal Truancy
Causal truancy occurs when the student's absence from school is by chance. This type of truancy or unexcused absence from school is not regular and constant but happens by chance.

2.2 Causes of Truancy
Many factors contribute to truancy in schools. Some of which are discussed here.

School and Student Personality as a Factor
School factors that may cause truant behavior include, the school climate, class size, attitudes, ability to meet student's diverse needs, and schools discipline policy on truancy. According to Wilkins (2008), students that attend large schools may feel isolated or alienated in their school setting, in other to escape these feelings they choose not to attend school. This student does not feel comfortable, wanted, valued, accepted, or secure; they are lacking a connection to a trustworthy somebody within the school.

In oversized classrooms, students' diverse needs, whether they are instructional, social, or others cannot consistently be met and student-teacher relationships cannot be developed. This leads to a school climate and attitude in which the learner (s) choose to skip school because they do not feel safe in their school environment. Moreover, if a student does not feel comfortable, secure, or safe, and logically decides to skip school for a safer place than the school, he is punished.

Society and Student Personality as a Factor
In every human society, there are norms and values which are socially and morally accepted ways of doing things within a societal set-up. But in a situation where a person's behaviour contradicts the accepted societal ways of doing things then such a person is regarded as a law breaker, a deviant or delinquent.

In Anfoega SHS, truancy as a wrong act is commonly indulged in by students especially in form three which is often attributed to inadequate discipline. This act of indiscipline sometimes brings the school authority into disrepute. Again, unofficial entry and exits of students at irregular days and times other than normal school day, naturally brings about indiscipline and interrupts normal school routine. The individual factors include lack of self-esteem; social skills and confidence also contribute to truancy. In this instance, the individual does not believe in himself that he can do the same as the good ones in the class. His confidence level is very low hence he or she decided to be absent to prevent embarrassment.

Home influence on Truancy
In a study, Tyerman (2000) found a definite correction between home circumstances and persistent truancy without knowledge of the parents. He identifies four factors associated with truancy that are related to home background. The factors include: Poor physical condition in the home, poor relationship between children and parents, lack of parental interest in the child's welfare and using corporal punishment in the home. Lovell (2004) says children who are sometimes over protected by parents feels unstable at school when they are not accorded such preferential treatment from their teachers and this leads to frustrations and retreat from school.

Again, Parker (2001) states that family and community condoned absence not valuing educational concern. Therefore, the moment they begin to do away with responsibilities, their wards also feel unwilling to attend school and therefore turn to be truant. When parents especially fathers have little or no love towards their children there is a rebellion and truancy among wards or pupils. The home is supposed to provide the basic needs such as food, water, shelter and clothing but the mother who is to prepare the meals lives for work and gives the children money to buy food and the money is rather used on gambling, hiring bicycle, toffee and biscuits.

2.3 Effects of Truancy on Students Academic Performance

The consequences are extensive resulting in negative implications for multiple levels of society. In effect, it can predict maladjustment, poor academic performance, school dropout, substance abuse, delinquency, and teen-age pregnancy. Finally, evidence reveals truancy as a predictor of poor adult outcomes, including violence, marital instability, job instability, adult criminality, and incarceration. Moreover, truancy exerts a negative effect on community because of its correlation with delinquency, crime, and other negative adult outcomes. Student dropout from school is the most obvious result of chronic absenteeism.

According to Rodriguez and Conchas (2009), truancy and dropout rates are concentrated and worsening in racially segregated central cities in primarily large high schools attended by mostly low-income youth of color. The most logical response: an increase in crime rates of the nation's population is as a result of truancy. These forms of delinquency include substance abuse, gang activity, and later involvement in adult criminal activity such as burglary, auto theft, and vandalism, thus leading to incarceration. Parrish (2015), stated that students who become socially isolated are at risk of harm during period of absence, be more likely to be included in socially unaccepted and illegal activities, have gabs in their knowledge and understanding of basic concepts, feel insecure in school environment, be more likely to leave school early and they become victim of bullying and harassment. This is no different from the obvious observed so far in the Anfoega community where the school is situated.

School or Teachers Influence on Truancy and Academic Performance of Students

Adodo (2007) argued that one key overriding factor for the success of students' academic achievement is the teacher. In the same vein, Ibrahim (2000) believed that teacher's qualifications and exposure can go a long way to bring about student's high academic achievement. Although, Anfoega SHS is blessed with qualified and quality teachers, several unannounced meetings and programs has been a canker resulting in severally wasting of instructional hours. Considering the assertions of Ibrahim (2000), Adodo (2007), and Ibukun (2009), it implies that teacher's role in the preparation of students to succeed in examination cannot be undermined.

Teachers inadvertently tend to interact more positively and favorably with students they perceive to be brighter neglecting the rest. Students, who receive less instructional periods and feedbacks is likely not to perform well. The reverse is also true. Teachers can develop positive expectations by creating a warm, inviting classroom climate and give all students more positive feedback and opportunities to respond to questions, while at the same time teaching more, by so doing, teachers are able to reduce truant behaviour among students, which is a principal factor in academic performance in students.

Further research conducted by Owusu and Anane (2019) in rural Ghana found that truancy was more prevalent in small community senior high school, where students face transportation challenges and competing household responsibilities. The study found a statistically significant negative correlation between truancy and academic performance in science subjects, particularly Chemistry. This aligns with the broader literature, which suggests that frequent absences lead to lower test scores and decreased engagement in subjects requiring hands-on, practical application (Aheto, 2018).

Practical lessons are critical in Chemistry education because they enable students to apply theoretical knowledge through experiments. Research by Anyanwu and Anyanwu (2020) suggests that truancy severely disrupts students' participation in practical sessions, which are key for understanding Chemistry concepts. In their study, students who frequently missed practical lessons were found to have a poor grasp of core scientific procedures, such as titration and compound identification, leading to lower overall academic achievement.

In rural schools such as Anfoega SHS, where the researcher is currently teaching, where practical lessons are often limited due to resource constraints, truancy worsens the situation. Students will often miss the few practical opportunities available, leaving them with an incomplete understanding of key concepts. This gap in learning makes it difficult for them to grasp the more advanced theoretical aspects of Chemistry that build on practical experience. As noted by Kabiru and Alhassan (2021), students who miss practical lessons are not only

disadvantaged academically but also tend to lose interest in the subject altogether, further affecting their academic performance.

Truancy in rural school, particularly in the Volta region of Ghana, is often influenced by a range of socio-economic and environmental factors. Studies conducted by Agyemang and Mensah (2020) identified poverty, long commuting distances, and lack of parental supervision as the primary contributors to truancy. In this community, children are often required to assist with farming or trading activities, leading to frequent absences from school. Some of the students (Day-students) of Anfoega SHS have to walk long distances to school or engage in household chores and farming activities, which can take precedence over their education.

The apparent lack of methodologically sound, empirical studies conducted to determine truancy program effectiveness continues to impede our understanding of how to best serve the growing numbers of truant youth in Anfoega SHS, the community and the nation at large. This implies few rigorously evaluated truancy intervention studies existed and many of the reviewed studies had very small samples. The reviewed studies were also limited by vague operationalization of concepts and few outcome measures besides counting days of students' absenteeism.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed case study research design to evaluate truancy and its effects on students' performance. Case Study has been defined in diverse ways. Gall (2007) observed that a case study is the in- depth study of one or more instances of a phenomenon in its real-life context that reflects the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon. Specifically, case study allows the understanding of the case in depth, and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context. It also has a holistic focus, aiming to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case students' truancy in relations to their learning.

Case study explores a phenomenon by interacting with the participants in their socio-cultural setting. Essentially in a case study the researcher neither aim at discovering generalized truth, or cause and effect relations as quantitative researcher do (Cohen & Geier, 2010). Instead, the design focuses on describing, explaining and evaluating a phenomenon. The use of this research design enables us to capture and explore the complexity of the phenomenon for a better understanding. Secondly, using the case study approach requires the use of multiple methods to collect data, enabling data to be validated. Giddens (1989) stated that case study approach is action oriented and therefore the findings are useful for improving practice. It is against this background that this study used case study research design.

3.1 Population

Population is the group of individuals, objects or items from which a sample is taken for measurement. Target population on the other hand, comprises of the population of the study that consists of all possible respondents the researcher is interested in studying. The target population for the study included all students in offering Chemistry in Anfoega Senior High School, and staff. The accessible population in the field of chemistry in the school is made up 2 teachers (1 male and 1 female) and 91 students, also made up of 35 girls and 56 boys (students and teachers attendance register, 2023/24 academic year).

3.2 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample size for this study is made up of twenty-three (23) respondents. This consisted of twenty-one (21) students drawn purposively from SHS 3 in the science program of the school, and two (2) teachers. They are made up of one (1) male teacher, one (1) female teacher. The 21 students comprised of fourteen (14) boys and seven (7) girls.

In selecting the teachers as respondents for this study, purposive sampling technique was used to handpick them due to the basis of their own judgment. Purposive sampling was used to select the teachers because the problem relates in their classroom therefore can give a fair judgment about the phenomenon under study. Purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling procedure in which researcher intentionally select individuals or sites to learn about or to understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Purposive sampling technique was also employed in selecting the sample of Anfoega SHS Form 3 student for the study. The students' population was selected using purposive sampling. This was done by using the class attendance register to locate the record of all the twenty-one (21) students who were truant to make the population for the study because the research work focused on truancy and its effects on students' learning and not all the students were truant.

3.3 Research Instrument

The study made use of both close-ended and open-ended questionnaire and interview as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire is widely used for confidential information about practices and conditions, and for enquiring into the opinions and attitudes of the subjects. Questionnaires are tools for data collection in educational research, because of its effectiveness of getting information from people as it is developed to answer research questions; it is very effective for securing factual information about practices, enquiring into opinions and attitude of the subject. It was designed to elicit free responses from the respondents and in the open and closed ended items. The response alternatives were simple "Yes" or "No". In some cases, answers were provided for respondents to choose from. The questionnaire for teachers had 21- items and it was designed as follows. Items one to four was about the respondent's information and the second section covered related question based on the research questions and both open and closed ended items were used.

An interview survey, however, is a form on which the researcher records answers supplied by the participant in the study. In this study, the researcher used structured interview guide consisting of mostly closed-ended questions to collect data from the teachers for the study as well as providing response options to interviewees, and records their responses.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher was given the consent by the headmaster after the intent and benefits of the study was discussed with the headmaster, students and the teachers in the school. A date was fixed for the data collection. The data collection took place on 11th June, 2024, the questionnaires were self-administered to the respondents after the selected students were prepared and allowed to seek clarification on the items in the questionnaire. The questionnaires were collected on the same day after the respondents respond to the items to encourage high return rate. Likewise, the interview was conducted to the respondents.

Ethical Consideration

The following ethical issues: access, and informed consent, confidentiality was considered in conducting this study.

Access

This was one of the ethical issues that were considered when setting on a topic for your research and the method for data collection. Smith (2006) stated that when planning research, there is little point in proceeding to details without confirming that access to the appropriate people, documents, meetings and other data will be possible. Therefore, permission was sought from the headteacher, teachers and the students before embarking on the study.

Informed consent

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), any participation in studies by individuals should be strictly voluntary. Informed consent demands that respondents be allowed to choose to participate or not to participate in a study after receiving full information about the possible risks or benefits of participating from the researcher (Burns & Grove, 2003). Therefore, participating students in school were informed about the rationale and nature of the study and were given the choice of either participating or not participating.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Data Analysis

The analysis and interpretation were carried out using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) software application. The analysis and interpretation of research questions 1, 2, and 3 were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The researcher sorted, edited, coded and classified the open-ended questions and structured interview guide questions according to the various categories of responses. Results were presented on percentage tables and were thoroughly discussed at the end of each section aimed at answering the research questions.

4.2 Part A. Analysis of Personal Information of Respondents

The characteristics of the respondents were discussed in reference to their age and sex. These variables were selected because they affect teachers' classroom behavior on teaching and learning of students. As explained in chapter three, 21 respondents were chosen from SHS 3 for this study.

Table 1: **Ages Distribution of Respondents**

Age	Number of Student	Percentages (%)
15 – 17 years	5	23.8
18 – 20 years	9	42.9
21 years and above	7	33.3
Total	**21**	**100**

Source: Field data, (2024)

From Table 2, seven representing 23.8% of the students were between 15 and 17 years old, 9 representing the majority of 42.9% of the students were between 18 and 20 years, and the remaining 7 representing 33.3% was twenty-one years and above.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	14	66.7
Female	7	33.3
Total	**21**	**100**

Source: Field data, (2024)

The sex composition of the respondents showed that out of 21 respondents, seven (7) representing 33.3% were females and the remaining fourteen (14) formed 66.7% were males. The male formed the majority due to the fact that their population was high with reference to the attendance register.

4.3 FACTORS THAT CAUSE OF TRUANCY AMONG STUDENTS IN WITH POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN CHEMISTRY

This theme finds out from students the causes of truancy exhibited; A chi-square test as well as frequency and percentages were used to analyse responses to various questions about the school environment, parental support, social dynamics, and teacher-student interactions. Their responses were represented in Table 3 and 4 respectively;

Table 3: Factors that cause of truancy among students in with poor academic performance in chemistry.

PREDICTORS	Model	χ^2
Do your parents provide all your school needs?	0.359 (0.001)	10.714
Do you like your school environment?	0.359 (0.001)	10.714
Do you stay with both parents?	0.359 (0.001)	10.714
Are all your friends students?	0.498 (0.275)	1.190
Do your friends tease you when you answer questions?	0.301 (0.000)	13.762

Are your teachers friendly?	0.463 (0.050)	3.857

N = 21, P<0.05   Source: Field data, (2024)

The data in the table 3 provided offers insights into factors influencing students' experiences in school and their potential relationship with academic performance.

School Environment
The chi-square statistic for "Do you like your school environment?" is 10.714, with a significant p-value (0.001). This indicates that students' perception of the school environment significantly impacts their academic experience. A positive environment likely fosters engagement and focus, while a negative one might lead to disengagement and truancy, negatively affecting performance, especially in subjects like Chemistry that require active participation.

Parental Support
A similar result (χ^2 = 10.714, p = 0.001) was found for "Do your parents provide all your school needs?" This underscores the critical role of parental support in academic success. Students who lack resources may face barriers to learning, such as insufficient materials for Chemistry potentially leading to lower performance.

Living Arrangements
The question "Do you stay with both parents?" shows a significant result (χ^2 = 10.714, p = 0.001). Stable living arrangements might provide a supportive atmosphere for learning. Students in less stable homes could experience stress, reducing their focus and participation in academic activities.

Peer Influence
For "Do your friends tease you when you answer questions?" a high chi-square value (χ^2 = 13.762, p = 0.000) indicates a significant issue. Teasing can discourage active participation in class, which is particularly detrimental in Chemistry, where classroom interaction is essential for understanding concepts and clarifying doubts.

Teacher-Student Relationships
The question "Are your teachers friendly?" has a less significant result (χ^2 = 3.857, p = 0.050). While this suggests some relationship between teacher friendliness and academic performance, it may not be as strong as other factors. However, friendly teachers often create a conducive learning environment, encouraging participation and reducing truancy.

Table 4: Views of the Respondents on the Causes of Truancy

Items	Yes		No	
	Fq	%	Fq	%
Do you stay with both parents?	4	19.0	17	81.0
Do your parents provide all your school needs?	3	14.3	18	85.7
Are all your friends students?	8	38.1	13	61.9
Do your friends tease you when you answer questions?	19	90.5	2	9.5
Do you like your school environment?	18	85.7	3	14.3

Are your teachers friendly?	6	28.6	15	71.4
Do you perform above average?	4	19.1	16	81.0

N=21   Source: Field data, (2024)

Responses from the Table 3 to, do your parents provide all your school needs? The majority of 18 truant students representing 85.7% responded 'No' which indicates the parents/guardian do not provide their needs on time. This confirmed an assertion by Parker (2001) that a youth who does not have his or her basic needs of personal recognition, friendly intercommunication and various pleasurable experiences realized within the family system will have to seek satisfaction of his peer group. Research work by Parker (2001) indicated that lack of parental affection brings about truancy. When parents especially fathers have little or no love towards their children there is a rebellion and truancy among wards or students.

Friends were also accounted for students' truancy. Out of 21 responses, 19 (90.5%) answered 'yes' to the question, 'Do your friends' tease you when you answer questions wrongly?' Klein (1998) states that a child who is not acceptable by his peers will make him or her loose interest in school. Also, such students tend to be interested in staying away from school in order to be in the company of those who accept them socially outside the school.

4.4 Teachers Response on the Causes of Students Truancy in the classroom
These were some of the responses given by the two teachers using the structured interview guide. This is represented in Table 5

Table 5: Teachers Response on the Causes of Students Truancy

Causes of Truancy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of parental care	2	100
Financial constraint	1	50.0
Peer pressure	2	100
Unfriendly school environment	1	50.0
Low academic ability	2	50.0

N=2   Source: Field data, (2024)

Table 4 indicates the causes of truancy identified by the teachers as lack of parental care, financial constraint, peer pressure and unfriendly school environment and low academic ability on the part of the students. A research work done by Klein and Fleming (1998) confirmed that peer group exert much influence on the child. Also, Wilkins, (2008) in their report state that family factors either parental attitude or family problems are also a major factor contributing to truancy in school.

Types of Truant Behaviour Exhibited by Truant Student in the school
The types of truant behaviour exhibited by students were stated by teachers. This was presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Types of Truant Behaviour Exhibited by truant Students in the school

Type of Truancy exhibited	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Drug abuse	2	100
Marijuana use	1	50.0
Hooliganism	2	100
Kleptomaniac	2	100
Fighting withdrawal	2	100
Indecent dressing	2	100

      N=2   Source: Field data, (2024)

Table 5 presents teachers responses with regards to the type of truant behaviour exhibited by students as; drug abuse, marijuana, hooliganism, Kleptomaniac, fighting and indecent dressing. This indicates that the teachers responded negatively on the conducts of the students in the class. According to the respondents, these students absented themselves from school and the days that they would report to school, they would come late and they would not stay till closing.

According to Baker & Jansen, (2000) absenteeism which result in truancy among students usually result to greatest consequences and such children indulge in drug abuse, steeling, marijuana use, hooliganism, bullying, fighting withdrawal, kleptomaniac, filtering, temper tantrums and all sort of socialized aggressions. This summarized what all teachers said about these students. In an open questionnaire to the respondents, they explained that, this behaviour among the students have more socially isolated, place them at risk of harm during period of absence, be more likely to be included in socially unaccepted and illegal activities, have gabs in their knowledge and understanding of basic concepts, feel insecure in school environment, leave school early, and they have become victim of bullying and harassment.

According to Baker & Jansen, (2000), truancy is a gateway to crime. They further explained that, absenting oneself is linked to high daytime burglary and hooliganism. For example, during a research sample in Miami more than 71% of 13-16years old prosecuted for criminal violation had been truant. According to Kearney & Bates (2005), no child left behind Act of the early 1990's requires school district to report absenteeism, so national members were expected to become available, boys and girls are equally likely to become truant.

4.5 Truant Students' Academic Performance in Chemistry
The responses on academic performance of truant students are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Academic Performance of the 21

Responses	Frequency		Total (%)
	Male	**Female**	
Above average	2	2	4 (19.0)
Average	3	0	3 (14.3)
Below average	9	5	14 (66.7)
Total	**14 (66.7)**	**7 (33.3)**	**21 (100)**

Source: Field data, (2024)

Table 7 shows that, three (3) respondents represented 14.3% was average. In addition, majority of fourteen (14) of the respondents also responded below average which represent 66.7%, and four (4) respondents represent 19.0% answered the question above average. This is the true reflection because truant students lack part of the curriculum in relevance and appropriate responses by the students leading to lack of respect; thus, some students do not respect their teachers hence they don't find it necessary to attend classes due to this. In this situation, the

children absent themselves from class without permission, since they think the content of the curriculum is not vital to them.

4.6 THE IMPACT OF TRUANCY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
The observed data were analyzed to determine whether truancy significantly affects academic performance as identified by students upon the response to Do you think truancy is affecting your academic performance as a student? The responses are shown in the table 8 below.

Table 8: Do you think truancy is affecting your academic performance as a student?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Residual	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig
Yes	16.0	76.2	5.5	5.762	0.016
No	5.0	23.8	-5.5		
Total	**21**	**100**			

P<0.05. Source: Field data, (2024)

The statement "Do you think truancy is affecting your academic performance as a student?" yielded a chi-square value of 5.762 with a degree of freedom (df) of 1 and a p-value of 0.016. These results suggest a statistically significant relationship between truancy and perceived academic performance, as the p-value is below the accepted threshold of 0.05.

Majority of students (16 out of 21) representing 76.2 % agreed that truancy negatively affects their academic performance. This finding highlights a widespread recognition of the issue among students. The residuals further indicate that students acknowledging the impact of truancy exceed the expected frequency, reinforcing its importance as a determinant of academic outcomes.

Truancy disrupts learning continuity and reduces participation in critical instructional activities. In subjects such as Chemistry, where theoretical understanding and practical application are closely intertwined, missing lessons can lead to knowledge gaps that are difficult to bridge. The relationship between attendance and performance underscores the importance of consistent engagement with school activities for academic success.

Beyond academic performance, truancy might also reflect underlying socio-economic or environmental issues, such as lack of parental support, negative peer influence, or an unsupportive school environment.

4.7 SUGGESTIONS MADE TO HELP IMPROVE UPON THE TRUANT BEHAVIOUR AMONG STUDENTS AT ANFOEGA SHS.
Addressing these root causes is vital for fostering better attendance and engagement. Hence, the students and the teacher selected (N=23) under this study responded to these suggestions which has been captured in the table 9 below.

Table 9: Pupils Suggestion to Improve Upon to Truancy among Students in Schools

Statements	Yes		No	
	Fq	**%**	**Fq**	**%**
Provision of Scholarship packages	23	100	0	0.00
Intensify parental care	22	96	1	4
Socialization	18	78.3	6	26.1
Provision of guidance and counselling	23	100	0	0.00

N=23   Source: Field data, (2024)

Data from Table 9 indicates that all the respondents of 23 (100%) responded in affirmative that provision of Scholarship packages and Guidance and Counselling will go a long way to help them hence, their responses to the suggestions. Whiles 22 (96%) and 18 (78.3%) of the respondents indicates intensify parental care and socialization respectively as some of the challenges encountered. Despite the free nature of education at the basic and SHS level in Ghana today, there are other school related expenses those are uniforms, stationery and money for food, transportation to school. The children should be educated and supported single handedly by either parents be it the father or mother. However, such parent should anticipate the cost of single parenting.

Wakefield & Wilkin (1999) has indicated that the nature of school activities, indiscriminate punishment on students especially on the weak students and the attitude of backward children towards school attendance are causes of truancy. A research work showed that teachers go to the extent to exclude truants rather than including them in school activities. The school authorities can deal with them but the problem here is lack of parental monitoring. Most parents do not have time for their children progress at school.

Kearney & Bates (2005) studied on how troublesome children in class can affect other students to avoid classes because they will be worried by their fellow colleagues and this is another factor contributing to students' truancy in the school. It is again asserted that a child who is dull in school feels hopeless in future, his life may become humiliating and rebuke, disgrace and punishment. He soon comes to dread the daily journey of schooling, he tempted to be truant.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Basically, the purpose of the study was to find out the causes and how truancy was affecting the students at. The school served as the population for the study. A case study research design was used. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the teachers and purposive sampling technique was also employed in selecting the sample of Senior High School students for the study. The main instrument used for this study was Closed and Open-Ended Questionnaire; this was used to gather data from the 21 respondents.

5.1 Key Findings
The key findings of this study are:
Most students did not stay with both parents at home and parents did not provide all their school needs, or were not paid/provided on time. However, most students have friends who are not schooling and therefore engaged them whilst at home.

Peers and some teachers were also not making the classroom comfortable for them to stay by teasing them when they got answers wrong. They saw the general school environment as intimidating, because teachers were not ready to welcome and support them.

A supportive school and home environment directly influence students' focus and motivation.
Negative peer interactions and lack of teacher-student rapport can demotivate students, particularly in practical subjects like Chemistry that require confidence and active involvement.
Generally, the behaviour of parents, peers and teachers negatively affected the students' performance.

5.2 Conclusions
Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:
It can be concluded that as a result of parents' inability to pay close attention to student's needs (such as provisions, stationeries and others) by providing them on time, the urge to come to school was very limited, because they were scared of being embarrassed among their peers.
Also, the hostile behaviour of their peers also denied them from having the enthusiasm to stay in school.
Again, it can be concluded that students perceived teachers as impatient, and unwilling to assist them, therefore they would not approach them in times of difficulties.
Finally, it can be concluded that the classroom behaviour of both peers and the teachers at Anfoega SHS cause the students to be truants and therefore have a negative effect on students' academic performance.

5.3 Recommendations
After a careful look at the finding of the study, the researchers recommend the following:
Teachers must be motivated to go extra miles by tracing truant students to find out what their problem is and how to help them out of the situation. Also, teachers and school authorities should create a good school and classroom

atmosphere. There must be a cordial relationship between teachers and students. Parents must provide their children with all the necessary school materials that they need for school.

Again, parents must visit their children at school from time to time to find out about their performance both in and out of the classroom.

Finally, both parents and teachers should find a suitable way to discipline students who exhibit truant behaviour to serve as a deterrent to other students. There is therefore the need to carefully document truancy and establish a continuum of intervention for truant youth involving collaboration with relevant community agencies

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