



Teachers' Practices in Addressing Absenteeism of the Learner

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ABSTRACT

Learners' absenteeism is a serious issue in public education. These lead to poor performance, disciplinary problems, and long-term social difficulties. Thus, it is essential to identify potential causes of absenteeism and implement techniques for reducing it. The key purpose of this study is to determine the teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the hinterland schools in a district of a large-sized division in Central Philippines for the school year 2024-2025 as a basis for action. Descriptive research was conducted, and a 30-item survey questionnaire was used to gather data from thirty-two (32) elementary school teachers to determine the strategies they employed to address absenteeism. The results revealed that the teacher-respondents were equally distributed based on age; most have lower educational backgrounds, higher incomes, and fewer years in the teaching profession. Overall, the level of teachers' practices in addressing learners' absenteeism in behavioral intervention and academic engagement was very high. In contrast, it was high in the area of school, family, and community partnerships. When grouped according to four variables, the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism among learners in the areas of behavioral intervention and academic engagement was very high. On the other hand, only a high level of teachers' practices addressed the absenteeism of learners in the school, family, and community partnership areas. Further, a significant difference was found in the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism in the areas of school, family, and community partnership and academic engagement when compared according to the highest educational attainment. This study calls for school heads, teachers, parents, and stakeholders to work together to implement basic preventive measures and tailor interventions to address the specific needs of at-risk learners, ultimately fostering academic achievement and engagement.

Keywords: Absenteeism, learners, teacher's practices

How to Cite:

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INTRODUCTION

Education is the bedrock of national growth, and its success depends on student attendance (Akkus et al., 2022). On the other hand, frequent absences also significantly hinder educational institutions' societal goals. Regular school absences negatively impact learning, social functioning, graduation rates, health, and life expectancy (Rocabo & Abordo, 2023).

Recent statistics from the Department of Education publicized that the overall student absence rate in the Philippines is 4.5%. This means that one in ten school children is classified as persistently absent. According to DepEd Order No. 74, Series of 2010, a pupil who incurred frequent absences or absences of more than 20% of the prescribed number of classes is at risk of dropping out of school (Llamasares & Bausa, 2024). Since absenteeism is one of the biggest problems faced in almost all public schools, and absenteeism could lead to students dropping out, we must address this alarming situation. Teachers must have the abilities and approaches necessary to effectively support students at risk of dropping out at this time, since students are subject to higher academic demands and social pressures.

However, one of the most unsatisfying experiences for teachers is dealing with student absenteeism. It is not easy to achieve perfect attendance among students (Balala, 2019). Moreover, teachers also faced difficulties putting DepEd attendance policies into practice even when they understood their importance, as they needed to consider each student's particular needs and circumstances when addressing attendance concerns (Aquino et al., 2024).

In the present research locale, the researcher as teacher also faced learners who were always absent and could not complete their attendance for the whole school year. Most learners' reasons for being absent were family financial problems, lack of transportation, bad weather, sickness, and family responsibilities. Hence, many of the learners could not comply with the subject's academic requirements because of the number of absences they incurred. 100% percent of the learner's attendance is the most essential aspect so that they can acquire the pupils' learning progress. Unfortunately, it is very ambiguous to grasp perfect attendance.

With this, the researcher was motivated to conduct a study on the practice employed by teachers in addressing absenteeism. By identifying areas for improvement through recommended interventions, they were assessed to enhance student attendance, thereby creating a more conducive learning environment. This eventually results in better students, teachers, and school performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to determine the teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the hinterland schools in a district of a large division in Central Philippines for the School Year 2024-2025 as a basis for action. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions: 1) the profile of the respondents in terms of age, highest educational attainment, average family monthly income, and length of service; 2) the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in terms of behavioral intervention, school, family, and community partnership, and academic engagement; 3) the significant difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners when they are grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Addressing student absenteeism starts with creating a school environment where attendance is valued and supported. Schools that foster a culture of inclusion, safety, and engagement encourage students to come to class regularly. Teachers play a crucial role in this, not just by being punctual and well-prepared, but by making lessons interesting and interactive, using stories, graphics, and activities that spark curiosity (Akkus, 2022). Simple behavioral strategies, like pairing students with peers who have strong attendance or using incentive programs to reward consistent attendance, have shown significant improvements (Nairn, 2022; Johnson, 2020). By celebrating progress instead of punishing absences, schools can motivate students to be present without fear or stigma.

Family and community involvement is just as important as what happens inside the classroom. When schools maintain open communication with families through calls, texts, workshops, or home visitation, parents become active partners in supporting attendance (Gottfried, 2023; Fraser et al., 2024). Families influence students' behaviors, and understanding the challenges they face, whether economic hardships or caregiving responsibilities, allows schools to provide targeted support (Capretta et al., 2024; Dimaisip, 2019). Community-based resources such as school meals, health services, transportation, and after-school programs help remove barriers to attendance, turning the school into a hub of support rather than just a place for lessons (Covelli et al., 2022; Germain et al., 2024).



At the school level, effective strategies combine firm policies with flexibility. Attendance policies and referral systems involving teachers, counselors, parents, and administrators provide structure, while reward programs like "Regular Attendance" awards encourage positive behavior (Aquino et al., 2024; Amplayo, 2023). The key is balance: enforcing rules without adding stress, while recognizing each student's unique circumstances. Teachers' observations are invaluable in this process, helping schools understand why students miss classes and allowing interventions to be tailored to individual needs (Olumoya, 2021; Amplayo, 2023).

Parents are central in promoting regular attendance and keeping them informed is critical. Regular updates, workshops, and communication routines help parents understand how attendance affects learning, giving them the tools to support their children effectively (Nairn, 2022; Robinson et al., 2018). Programs that connect families to resources or provide support for transportation, meals, and basic needs further reduce absenteeism (Rocabo & Abordo, 2023; Porteza, 2022). These efforts highlight that absenteeism is not just a school problem, but it is a shared responsibility between families, schools, and communities.

Student engagement is another vital factor in reducing absenteeism. When students feel involved, challenged, and supported in their learning, they are more likely to attend and participate actively (Bond et al., 2020; Tanhuenco-Tumapon, 2024). Engagement isn't just about paying attention; it includes emotional, social, and cognitive involvement in learning activities. Teachers who create dynamic, meaningful learning experiences help students take ownership of their education, improving both attendance and academic performance (Amplayo, 2023; Enerio, 2021). Engaged students are not only more present, but they are also motivated, resilient, and eager to succeed.

Finally, research shows that addressing absenteeism works best when interventions are holistic. Programs that combine positive behavioral support, family-school collaboration, community engagement, and practical resources significantly improve attendance and learning outcomes (Johnson, 2020; Fraser et al., 2024; Singer, 2024). Schools that tackle the root causes of absenteeism like transportation challenges, economic hardship, or health needs rather than focusing solely on punishment, see lasting results (Aquino et al., 2024; Porteza, 2022; Musa & Mbeya, 2022). By working together teachers, parents, administrators, and communities, students are more likely to attend school regularly, engage deeply in learning, and thrive both academically and personally.

METHODOLOGY

This section presents the discussion of the research methodology used, the subjects and respondents of the study, the research instruments used, the validity and reliability of the instruments, the procedure for data gathering, and the statistical tools and procedure for data analysis.

Research Design

This study employs a descriptive research design to determine the teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of learners in the hinterland schools of a large division in Central Philippines for the school year 2024-2025 as the basis for an action plan. Descriptive research is valuable in providing facts on which scientific judgment may be based when assessing the present study. Furthermore, a descriptive design is appropriate for studies that aim to discover what prevails in the present conditions, practices, opinions and beliefs, processes and effects, and developing trends. This research design is a scientific method that involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way (Siedlecki, 2020).

The researcher believes that the descriptive research design is the most suitable for the present study as it aims to gather information about the characteristics within the present study, and it helps in making professional judgments and recommendations

Study Respondents

The respondents of the study were the 32 public elementary school teachers in the hinterland schools. Since the total number of respondents was manageable, purposive sampling was used. Ames et al. (2019) defines purposive sampling as a form of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on their judgment when choosing population members to participate in the study. Researchers use purposive sampling to access a particular subset of people, as all survey participants are selected because they fit a particular profile.

Instruments

The study employed a self-made questionnaire divided into two parts: Part I collected respondents' profiles, including age, highest educational attainment, average family income, and length of service, while Part II assessed teachers' practices in



addressing learner absenteeism across three areas—behavioral interventions, school-family-community partnerships, and academic engagement—using a total of 30 items on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = almost never to 5 = always). The instrument underwent face and content validation by three expert validators with advanced degrees in education and relevant experience, incorporating their recommendations into the final version. Validity was confirmed with an index of 5.00, interpreted as excellent (Kenny, 2019). Reliability was established through a pilot test with 30 teachers from another district, calculating Cronbach's alpha to assess internal consistency, resulting in a coefficient of 0.927, which indicates excellent reliability (Imasuen, 2022; Amirrudin et al., 2021). This process ensured that the instrument was both valid and reliable for measuring teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism.

Data Gathering Procedure

For the smoother conduct of the study, the researcher employed the following procedures. The researcher sent a letter of request for the conduct of the study to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent of Negros Occidental. Upon approval, a separate letter was also sent to the school heads of all component schools, attached to the approved letter from the superintendent. After securing the approval for the second request, the school heads of every school sent the research instrument to their teachers electronically. At the same time, a hard copy was provided to teachers with no internet connection in their area. The researcher also included her contact number and Messenger account in the research instrument in case some teachers may encounter difficulty answering the instrument. The data gathered from the respondents' responses was tallied and tabulated using the appropriate statistical tools. The raw data was transformed into numerical code guided by a coding manual. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to process the encoded data in the computer.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objective No. 1 used the descriptive analytical schemes and frequency count and percentage to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of age, highest educational attainment, average family monthly income, and length of service.

Objective No. 2 used the descriptive analytical scheme and mean to determine the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners.

Objective No. 3 used the comparative analytical scheme and Mann-Whitney U test to determine the significant difference in the descriptive analytical scheme and assess the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners when grouped and compared according to the variables.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher prioritized the respondents' voluntary participation, informed consent, risk of harm, confidentiality, and anonymity to prevent human rights violations during the research process. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the respondents could withdraw without consequences. We informed them about the study's academic purpose. Only the researcher had access to the research data, ensuring confidentiality. Moreover, during the study, the researcher strictly observed the governing guidelines and policies of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 to ensure security measures are in place to protect personal and sensitive information. This commitment to ethical standards fostered trust among participants and enhanced the integrity of the research findings. We aimed to uphold professionalism in our research process by adhering to these guidelines.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered to carry out the objectives of this study. All these were made possible by following certain appropriate procedures so as to give the exact data and solution to each specific problem.

Table 1

Profile of Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Younger (below 41 years old)	16	50.00
	Older (41 years old and above)	16	50.00
	Total	32	100
	Lower (Bachelor's Degree)	22	68.75



Highest Educational Attainment	Higher (Master's and Doctorate Degrees)	10	31.25
	Total	32	100
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower (less than P28 000)	15	46.88
	Higher (P28 000 and above)	17	53.13
	Total	32	100
Length of Service	Shorter (less than 10 years)	17	53.13
	Longer (10 years and more)	15	46.88
	Total	32	100

As presented in Table 1, 16, or 50.0%, of the teachers belonged to the younger category, or those aged below 41 years old; likewise, 16, or 50.0%, of the teachers belonged to the older category, or those aged 41 years old and above. For the highest educational attainment, 32, or 68.75%, of the teachers are bachelor's degree holders, while 10, or 31.25%, are master's and doctoral holders. Regarding average family monthly income, 15 or 46.88% of the teachers had a higher family income of less than Php28,000. In comparison, 17 or 53.13% of the teachers had a higher family income of more than Php28,000. Further, for variable length of service, 17, or 53.13%, of the teachers had served for less than 10 years; likewise, 15, or 46.88%, also served for more than 10 years.

This implies that the subject respondents were equally distributed based on their ages; however, most teacher respondents have lower educational backgrounds, higher incomes, and fewer years in the teaching profession. This indicates a diverse range of teaching experience among the respondents, highlighting that while they may come from higher-income families, many have not pursued extensive educational qualifications. Consequently, this combination of factors could influence their teaching practices and perspectives in addressing absenteeism among learners.

Table 2

Level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of Behavioral Intervention

Items	Mean	Interpretation
As a teacher, in addressing learners' absenteeism, I...		
1. Implement reliable attendance tracking system to monitor students' daily attendance especially those learners with absences history.	4.88	Very High Level
2. Strictly implement the school's absences and tardiness policy.	4.69	Very High Level
3. Engage in a one-on-one discussion with learners with cases of absenteeism in order to identify its probable cause.	4.72	Very High Level
4. Notify the parents or guardians of the learners with irregular attendance to involve them in addressing the issue.	4.91	Very High Level
5. Implement a punitive system using counselling techniques.	4.38	High Level
6. Reprimand parents to visit the school and talk together with the guidance counselor on the absences incurred by their children.	4.44	High Level
7. Conduct a reward-system approach to further encourage and motivate the learners to attend classes regularly.	4.72	Very High Level
8. Conduct home visits in monitoring my learners with issues of absenteeism.	4.41	High Level
9. Implement flexible attendance policies that accommodate exceptional circumstances and promote a balance between academic and personal responsibilities.	4.63	Very High Level
10. Manage learners' behavior effectively and discourage bullying in all forms that may influence absenteeism.	4.81	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.66	Very High Level

Table 2 presents the level of teachers' practices in addressing learners' absenteeism in behavioral intervention. The respondents obtained an overall mean score of 4.66, which was interpreted as very high. It shows that most teachers actively implement behavioral interventions to lessen learners' absenteeism and tardiness.

However, to deepen the analysis, the respondents obtained the highest mean of 4.91 on item No. 4, stating to notify the parents or guardians of the learners with irregular attendance to involve them in addressing the issue, and interpreted it as a very high level. On the other hand, the lowest mean score of 4.38 was on item No. 5, stating to implement a punitive system using counselling techniques, and interpreted it as a high level.



The result implies that most teachers do not directly punish learners who do not attend or skip classes; instead, they provide individual counseling to determine why the learner is absent or skips the class. This is because many learners encounter socio-economic difficulties; hence, some may not be able to attend classes. However, those learners who are absent or skip classes without valid reasons must be strictly monitored to address their negative behavior further. Thus, Schools need to establish clearer guidelines and consequences to address these behaviors effectively.

The result is supported by the study of Aquino et al. (2024) on the DepEd policy on absenteeism, its implementation, and obstacles. The study found that tight enforcement, family participation, and incentive programs effectively reduce absenteeism. The study emphasizes the importance of a balanced approach in policy creation, combining supportive measures with enforcement to address underlying socio-economic difficulties. Effective attendance tracking, positive reinforcement, and improved communication with parents are essential.

Table 3

Level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of School, Family, and Community Partnership

Items	Mean	Interpretation
As a teacher, in addressing learners' absenteeism, I...		
1. Arrange regular meetings with the parents to plan out strategies best suited for their child, most especially those with cases of absenteeism	4.69	Very High Level
2. Offering workshops for parents on the topic of school attendance and familiarizing parents with school and policies.	4.03	High Level
3. Conduct partnership of local officials in securing safety of the learners in going to school.	4.16	High Level
4. Conduct physical and mental health activities such as health services, dental care, deworming, vaccinations, and mental health counseling.	4.31	High Level
5. Involve stakeholders in combating absenteeism of the learners.	4.31	High Level
6. Conduct school-based feeding activities.	4.53	Very High Level
7. Conduct outreach programs for less fortunate learners.	3.97	High Level
8. Conduct collaborative partnerships between schools and public/private agencies in promoting childcare.	4.25	High Level
9. Conduct awareness campaign with the community on the importance of school attendance and the impact of absenteeism to learners and school.	4.38	High Level
10. Continuously analyze attendance and academic data to identify trends and patterns that may require additional attention.	4.53	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.32	High Level

Table 3 shows the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of school, family, and community partnership. The respondents obtained an overall mean score of 4.32, interpreted as a high level. The data entail the respondents actively encouraging parents and community members to lessen cases of learners' absenteeism.

Upon further analysis, the respondents achieved the highest mean score of 4.69 on item No. 1, which states that they should arrange regular meetings with parents to develop strategies best suited for their children, particularly for those experiencing absenteeism, and this was interpreted as a very high level. On the other hand, the lowest mean score of 3.97 was on item No. 7, stating that outreach programs for less fortunate learners should be conducted, and it was interpreted as a high level.

The data imply that conducting outreach activities to less fortunate learners was the least practiced by teachers because of the lack of resources, funds, and support coming from stakeholders. However, the school and teachers do other activities, such as feeding programs and non-academic and extracurricular activities that encourage learners to attend classes regularly. These initiatives demonstrate the importance of a more systemic approach to support at-risk students. By fostering partnerships with local organizations and securing additional funding, schools can enhance their outreach efforts and provide more comprehensive assistance to those in need.

The result is supported by Gottfried (2023), wherein collaborative partnerships between schools, public agencies, and community-based organizations have proven effective in addressing the complex challenges associated with chronic absenteeism. Community-focused partnerships and interventions can effectively tackle common barriers such as transportation, childcare, child safety, and housing (Nairn, 2022).



Table 4

Level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of Academic Engagement

Items	Mean	Interpretation
As a teacher, in addressing learners' absenteeism, I...		
1. Offer remedial and make-up classes to learners who are not able to attend school for them to still catch up with the missed lessons and activities.	4.47	High Level
2. Conduct peer tutoring activities to help learners who may be struggling academically.	4.72	Very High Level
3. Organize orientation programs to familiarize learners with school resources, facilities and school officials and teachers.	4.50	Very High Level
4. Encourage participation in clubs, sports, and extracurricular activities to foster a sense of belonging and camaraderie among learners.	4.47	High Level
5. Develop a good relationship with the learners by constantly encouraging them to attend classes regularly.	4.78	Very High Level
6. Choose interesting topics and supplementary materials to further motivate the learners to attend classes.	4.72	Very High Level
7. Somehow support the learners by providing extra allowance (for transportation purposes), supplies and food packs for them to be able to attend school.	4.09	High Level
8. Create a positive classroom environment in order to make children feel safe and comfortable at school.	4.88	Very High Level
9. Provide either online or hard copies of learning modules to learners who are not able to attend classes regularly due to health and family-related issues.	4.69	Very High Level
10. Extend the submission of individual performance tasks for learners who incurred absences with valid reasons.	4.69	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.60	Very High Level

Table 4 shows the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of academic engagement. The respondents obtained an overall mean score of 4.60, which was interpreted as high. The result entails that most teachers see that the learners are academically engaged in school activities.

Examining the table further, the respondents obtained the highest mean of 4.88 on item No. 8, stating to create a positive classroom environment in order to make children feel safe and comfortable at school, and interpreted it as a very high level. Conversely, the lowest mean score of 4.09 was recorded for item No. 7, which states that teachers should provide learners with extra allowance (for transportation purposes), supplies, and food packs to help them attend school, and this was interpreted as a high level.

The result implies that not all teachers have the capacity to provide their learners with supplies all the time. This is because many learners are in the class; hence, not all teachers can afford to provide the needed materials. Teachers can only encourage learners to attend class, regardless of whether they have supplies, and innovate their teaching methods to ensure all learners can participate. This approach fosters an inclusive atmosphere where every learner feels valued and motivated to engage, regardless of their resources. Educators can inspire learners to actively participate in their education and collaborate with their peers by focusing on creativity and adaptability in their teaching methods.

Amplayo (2023) highlighted the urgent need for schools and policymakers to take specific actions to effectively reduce absenteeism, such as identifying students at risk early, providing extra help for lessons they missed, and creating flexible learning options. Moreover, teachers' vital role in fostering a culture of regular attendance and creating engaging classroom environments that motivate students to attend regularly ultimately improves their access to valuable learning experiences and enhances academic performance.

Table 5

Difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of Behavioral Intervention when grouped and compared according to variables



Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	16	18.25	100.000	0.285	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	16	14.75				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	22	15.68	92.000	0.459	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	10	18.30				
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower	15	14.67	100.000	0.293	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	17	18.12				
Length of Service	Shorter	17	19.18	82.000	0.082	0.05	Not Significant
	Longer	15	13.47				

Table 5 summarizes a comparative analysis of the level of teachers' practices in addressing learners' absenteeism in behavioral intervention according to profile variables.

The computed *p*-values of variable age, highest educational attainment, average family monthly income, and length of service are 0.285, 0.459, 0.293, and 0.082, respectively, which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis stating there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing learners' absenteeism in behavioral intervention when grouped and compared according to age, highest educational attainment, average family monthly income, and length of service is accepted.

The finding implies that teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism regarding behavioral intervention do not vary according to age, highest educational attainment, average family monthly income, and length of service. This result indicates that most teachers implement the same behavioral intervention strategies to address learners' absenteeism. Most of the teachers do practice notifying the parents/guardians immediately of the absences incurred by the learners. The finding suggests a uniformity in approach among teachers, regardless of their personal backgrounds or experiences. Consequently, it highlights the potential need for diverse strategies tailored to different contexts to combat absenteeism effectively. The result is supported by Johnson (2020), who revealed that most teachers, regardless of demographic backgrounds, utilized the positive behavior intervention strategies that have tangentially decreased chronic absenteeism and reduced suspension rates at the elementary school level.

Table 6

Difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of School, Family, and Community Partnership, when grouped and compared according to variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	16	18.25	100.000	0.290	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	16	14.75				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	22	14.18	59.000	0.037	0.05	Significant
	Higher	10	21.60				
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower	15	15.07	106.000	0.415	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	17	17.76				
Length of Service	Shorter	17	18.32	96.500	0.240	0.05	Not Significant
	Longer	15	14.43				

Table 6 shows the comparative analysis of the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of school, family, and community partnership according to profile variables.

The computed *p*-values of variable age, average family monthly income, and length of service are 0.290, 0.415, and 0.240, respectively, which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis stating there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of school, family, and community partnership when grouped and compared according to age, average family monthly income, and length of service is accepted.



However, for the variable with the highest educational attainment, the computed *p*-value was 0.037, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as significant. Therefore, the hypothesis stating there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of school, family, and community partnership when grouped and compared according to the highest educational attainment is rejected.

The result implies that teachers' practices for addressing absenteeism, in relation to school, family, and community partnerships, vary based on their highest level of educational attainment. This is because highly educated teachers were more active in partnerships with parents and stakeholders to address absenteeism than their counterparts. The finding suggests that a teacher's education level may influence their engagement with families and the community in efforts to reduce absenteeism. Consequently, teachers with higher educational qualifications may be more equipped or motivated to foster these important partnerships.

The study by Olumoya (2021) on teachers' practice in working with parents to address chronic absences supports the result. Findings suggested that school leaders and highly educated teachers contribute to positive social change by leveraging teacher-parent communication to reduce school absenteeism at urban high schools, guiding parents on using effective, home-based PBIS strategies, implementing more effective attendance policies, and fostering more effective teacher-parent communication.

Table 7

Difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of Academic Engagement when grouped and compared according to variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	16	17.56	111.000	0.516	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	16	15.44				
Highest Educational Attainment	Lower	22	14.14	58.000	0.032	0.05	Significant
	Higher	10	21.70				
Average Family Monthly Income	Lower	15	14.33	95.000	0.213	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	17	18.41				
Length of Service	Shorter	17	17.94	103.000	0.348	0.05	Not Significant
	Longer	15	14.87				

Table 7 presents the comparative analysis of the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism of the learners in the area of academic engagement according to profile variables.

The computed *p*-values of variable age, average family monthly income, and length of service are 0.516, 0.213, and 0.348, respectively, which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis stating there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing learners' absenteeism in academic engagement when grouped and compared according to age, average family monthly income, and length of service is accepted.

However, for the variable with the highest educational attainment, the computed *p*-value was 0.032, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance and thus interpreted as significant. Therefore, the hypothesis stating there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' practices in addressing absenteeism among the learners in the area of academic engagement when grouped and compared according to the highest educational attainment is rejected.

The data entail that teachers' practices for addressing absenteeism in the area of academic engagement differ based on their highest level of educational attainment. This is because educated teachers employed more effective strategies to engage learners academically in classroom activities, thereby reducing absenteeism compared to other teacher groups. The evidence suggests that teachers with higher educational qualifications possess more effective strategies for keeping students engaged, which helps minimize absenteeism. Consequently, the level of education a teacher has may significantly influence their ability to foster a more engaging classroom environment.

The result is supported by Liu and Loeb (2021), who found that teachers with higher measured academic effectiveness (i.e., value-added scores) had students with fewer absences. Gershenson (2016) also found that teachers with a similar measure of academic effectiveness had students with fewer absences.

CONCLUSION



The study found that teacher-respondents were evenly distributed in age, mostly had lower educational backgrounds, higher incomes, and fewer years of teaching experience. Overall, teachers demonstrated very high practices in addressing learner absenteeism through behavioral interventions and academic engagement, while their practices in school, family, and community partnerships were high. Teachers with higher educational attainment showed stronger practices in promoting partnerships and academic engagement compared to their peers. These results suggest that teachers' dedication and creation of supportive, engaging learning environments contribute significantly to reducing absenteeism.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings, it is recommended that schools provide in-service training on guidance and counseling, implement flexible attendance policies, and monitor student attendance closely while rewarding consistent attendance. Teachers and school heads should foster partnerships with parents, community stakeholders, and local organizations through programs like "Adopt a Learner" to support learners facing socio-economic challenges. Additionally, initiatives such as tutoring, counseling, workshops on study skills, and academic assistance subsidies are encouraged to enhance student engagement, address barriers to attendance, and promote overall academic success.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest related to the conduct, authorship, and publication of this research. All procedures and interpretations were performed independently, and no financial, professional, or personal relationships influenced the results of this study.

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