

Factors Associated with Absenteeism and Preferred Interventions among Junior High School Students

Charry P. Eco¹, Estrella S. Ferenal PhD²

¹ Teacher, Department of Education

² Professor, Cagayan de Oro College

Abstract

Student absenteeism remains a pressing issue in the Philippines affecting not only individual learning outcomes but also the overall classroom environment. This study examined the factors associated with absenteeism and the preferred interventions among Junior High School students in the select districts of Manolo Fortich, Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023–2024. Specifically, this aimed to find out the factors associated with absenteeism, examine their preferred interventions and determine the significant relationship between students' absenteeism and their preferred interventions. The study employed a descriptive-correlation research method and involved 160 junior high school students selected through a stratified random sampling technique to ensure equal representation from the participating schools. Data were collected using a modified, validated researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson (r) correlation coefficient.

Findings showed that students' absenteeism was generally low, with Environmental factors exerting the greatest influence and School-Related factors the least. Students expressed high overall preference for interventions, rating Facilitative strategies highest and Authoritative strategies slightly lower. Correlation analysis revealed a negative relationship between absenteeism and preferred interventions. School-Related absenteeism had the strongest negative correlation, while Subject-Related absenteeism had the weakest, indicating that the type of absenteeism affects students' responsiveness to interventions. It was concluded that Environmental factors can affect attendance, while Facilitative interventions can motivate students through support, recognition, and rewards. It was recommended that schools may address Environmental concerns, reinforce Facilitative practices, and address concerns related to the school, subjects and teachers to encourage consistent attendance and participation.

Keywords: student absenteeism, preferred interventions

1. Introduction

Absenteeism is a significant concern in the Philippine education system because frequent absences can limit students' participation in classroom activities, affect their understanding and retention of lessons, and cause them to fall behind in academic requirements. It may also increase the risk of poor academic

performance and school dropout. Studies indicate that absenteeism can be influenced by personal, family, environmental, subject related, teacher related, and school related factors.

The reasons for absenteeism vary among students, making it important for schools to understand their individual circumstances and needs. A learner centered and responsive approach emphasizes the development of interventions that are appropriate to students' situations and experiences. While previous studies have examined the causes and effects of absenteeism, limited attention has been given to students' own preferences regarding interventions.

Thus, the study focuses on identifying the factors associated with absenteeism among Junior High School students and determining the interventions they prefer, particularly authoritative and facilitative approaches. It also examines the relationship between factors associated with absenteeism and students' preferred interventions. The findings may help schools develop more responsive strategies to address absenteeism, improve attendance, and strengthen students' engagement in learning.

2. Research Questions

This study intended to determine the factors associated with absenteeism and preferred interventions in select districts of Manolo Fortich, Division of Bukidnon School Year 2023-2024. It specifically answered the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' level of assessment on the factors associated with absenteeism as to personal, family, environmental, subject-related, teacher-related, and school-related factors?
2. What is the respondents' level of preferred interventions as to authoritative in terms of structure of clear and consistent rules; and logical consequence, and facilitative in terms of structure of predictable routines and rewards for positive behavior?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' assessment on the factors associated with absenteeism and their preferred interventions?

Significance

The study may benefit school supervisors and administrators by increasing their awareness of the factors associated with student absenteeism and the interventions preferred by secondary learners. The findings may also guide policymakers in developing school programs and activities that promote regular attendance. Teachers may gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to students' absences and use appropriate teaching strategies and interventions that respond to learners' needs. Students may benefit by becoming more aware of the factors affecting their attendance and the interventions that can encourage positive attendance and learning outcomes. Parents may better understand the reasons behind their children's absences and provide appropriate support at home in cooperation with teachers. Future researchers may use the study as a reference for related research on student absenteeism and preferred interventions. Overall, the study may contribute to the development of responsive strategies that address students' needs, improve school attendance, and support academic achievement.

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on determining the factors associated with absenteeism and the preferred interventions among Junior High School students in select districts of Manolo Fortich, Division of Bukidnon, School Year 2023–2024. The study included a total population of 5,911 Junior High School students from the participating schools. Based on their attendance records, 378 students who had incurred at least five (5)

consecutive days of absence were identified as eligible for the study. From these eligible students, 160 were selected as respondents using stratified sampling and simple random sampling.

The independent variable is limited to the factors associated with absenteeism as to personal, family, environment, subject-related, teacher-related, and school-related. Furthermore, the dependent variables are limited to students' preferred interventions, particularly authoritative interventions in terms of clear and consistent rules and logical consequences, and facilitative interventions in terms of structure and predictable routines and rewards for positive behavior.

Factors other than those identified and other forms of interventions were not covered in the study.

3. Literature Review

Factors Associated with Absenteeism

Absenteeism refers to the repeated or persistent failure of learners to attend school as required, whether excused or unexcused. Gentle Genitty et al. (2020) described absenteeism as a learner's failure to attend school, while Lukman (2021) emphasized that habitual absences may negatively affect academic performance. Similarly, Conel (2021) characterized absenteeism as persistent school absence influenced by various personal, family, environmental, subject related, teacher related, and school related factors. Personal factors include health problems, mental health concerns, inadequate nutrition, lack of motivation, sleep difficulties, academic struggles, and peer influence, which may reduce learners' ability and willingness to attend classes regularly. AlSayyari and AlBuhairan (2020) emphasized the effects of health, nutrition, and sleep related concerns, while Krause et al. (2025) highlighted health and academic difficulties as important contributors to absenteeism. Family factors involve caregiving responsibilities, family illness, domestic conflict, financial difficulties, transportation problems, parental attitudes, and limited supervision. Özcan (2020) noted that family responsibilities can compete with students' academic commitments, while Kearney and González (2023) associated family conflict and lack of stability with school disengagement and absenteeism. Environmental factors include distance from school, difficult travel conditions, extreme weather, pollution, natural disasters, unreliable transportation, and unsafe surroundings. Schenck Fontaine and Panico (2019) emphasized transportation and accessibility challenges, while RAND Corporation (2025) identified transportation limitations and environmental barriers as continuing contributors to chronic absenteeism. Subject related factors include difficult lessons, heavy academic workloads, frequent requirements, memorization demands, and performance anxiety, which may cause learners to avoid classes when they feel overwhelmed. Korpershoek et al. (2020) highlighted the role of academic workload and student disengagement, while Kearney and González (2023) emphasized subject difficulty and academic stress as contributors to absenteeism. Teacher related factors include unclear instructions, ineffective communication, limited encouragement, anxiety provoking assessments, and negative teacher student interactions. Korpershoek et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of clear instruction, positive feedback, and supportive teaching practices, while Kearney and González (2023) noted that poor communication and negative classroom experiences may contribute to disengagement and absenteeism. Finally, school related factors involve school climate, safety, attendance practices, student engagement, sense of belonging, and the overall learning environment. Gottfried et al. (2023) emphasized the role of school-based conditions and practices in addressing absenteeism, while Kearney et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of school climate, engagement, and positive school relationships in supporting regular attendance.

Preferred Interventions

Kearney et al. (2023) emphasized that absenteeism is influenced by various personal, family, and school-related factors; therefore, interventions should be responsive to learners' individual needs and circumstances. Similarly, Freeman et al. (2020) highlighted those learners are more likely to participate in attendance interventions when they perceive them as supportive, meaningful, and relevant to their experiences. Middleton et al. (2025) further found that school-based interventions such as mentoring, counseling, family engagement, and incentive programs can improve attendance when they address learners' specific concerns and needs. Overall, the literature suggests that understanding learners' preferred interventions is essential in developing meaningful, responsive, and student-centered strategies that promote regular school attendance and engagement.

Authoritative Intervention

Gottfried et al. (2023) emphasized that clear expectations and consistent enforcement promote responsible attendance, while Kearney and González (2023) added that communicating expectations and consequences strengthens accountability. RAND Corporation (2025) further noted that structured attendance practices are associated with improved attendance. Similarly, CESE (2024) found that clear and consistently implemented attendance policies help learners develop positive attendance habits, while Li et al. (2026) reported that regular monitoring and consistent enforcement increase accountability and reduce absenteeism. Kearney et al. (2023) also found that accountability and timely feedback can reduce absenteeism, and Kearney and González (2023) noted that appropriate consequences and follow up activities help learners recognize the effects of absences and develop responsible attendance behaviors.

Facilitative Interventions

Santibañez and Guarino (2021) emphasized that encouragement, recognition, and support improve learners' motivation and attendance, while Freeman et al. (2020) added that supportive practices and positive teacher student relationships strengthen engagement. Bear (2020) noted that mentoring and positive reinforcement encourage responsible behavior without punishment. Freeman et al. (2020) also found that structured routines provide clear expectations and promote regular attendance, while Santibañez and Guarino (2021) noted that familiar routines reduce stress and create a sense of safety. Kearney and González (2023) further emphasized that predictable routines provide stability and encourage positive attendance. Moreover, Santibañez and Guarino (2021) found that praise and rewards encourage positive attendance, Bear (2020) noted that recognizing good behavior builds confidence and self discipline, and Freeman et al. (2020) added that positive reinforcement promotes engagement and a supportive school climate.

4. Methodology**Research Design**

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. A correlational design was appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to measure and analyze the relationship between factors associated with absenteeism and preferred interventions among Junior High School students. According to Salkind (2021), descriptive and correlational methods are nonexperimental approaches use to describe variables and examine the relationship between them without manipulating the variables.

This method was selected for its ability to provide a comprehensive understanding of the prevalent patterns and trends related to absenteeism and their preferred interventions. By administering structured surveys to a representative sample of participants, the study aimed to gather quantitative data on various personal, family, environment, subject-related, teacher-related and school-related factors that are associated with absenteeism. It included the discussion on data gathering, recording and descriptions of the data gathered. This method was useful for the study since it helped in attaining the aims of the researcher to determine the level of respondents' assessment to factors associated with absenteeism and their preferred interventions of the School Year 2023-2024. The results of the researcher's questionnaire were the basis of the data analysis.

Participants

The respondents of this study were the 160 JHS students in the select districts of Manolo Fortich, Division of Bukidnon, SY 2023-2024. These were the students enrolled in the said district and division who were identified through profiling conducted by the researcher. In the profiling, students who had incurred at least five (5) consecutive days of absence were identified as the target respondents of the study. The schools included were all found in Manolo Fortich Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4. The schools selected were classified as large (2), medium (2) and small (1). The respondents were using the stratified sampling method, which resulted with random target respondents from each grade level.

Data Collection

The instrument used in gathering the necessary data was a questionnaire composed of two parts.

Part I dealt on the students' absenteeism, namely: personal, family, environment, subject-related, teacher-related, and school-related. This is patterned and modified from Edwin Conel (2021) on his study titled, "Factors Affecting Absenteeism among Junior High School Students in a Public School." The said questionnaire was composed of seven (7) indicators and each variable with the options; 4=strongly agree, 3= agree, 2=disagree and 1=strongly disagree.

Part II elicited on the students preferred interventions namely; authoritative: clear and consistent rules and logical consequences, facilitative: predictable outcomes and rewards for positive behavior. These intervention categories were adapted from John Heron's Six Category Intervention Framework (1979). The framework was expanded in the later years and used as analytical tool in educational, counseling, coaching, and supervisory settings to understand behavioral change. (McMahon et al., 2022; Mind Tools, 2024).

Data Analysis

Having collected and recorded the data gathered in the study, the researcher used the following statistical tools: Descriptive Statistics such as percentage, mean, frequency distribution and standard deviation were used for Problem 1 and 2 to describe the level of students' absenteeism among the Junior High School students as to personal, family, environment, subject-teacher, teacher-related, and school-related and their preferred interventions as to authoritative: clear and consistent rules, logical consequences and facilitative: predictable outcomes and rewards for positive behavior.

The Pearson (r) correlation coefficient was used for Problem 3 in determining the significant relationship between the students' absenteeism and their preferred interventions.

1. Results and Discussions

Problem 1. What is the respondents' level of assessment on the factors associated with absenteeism as to personal, family, environmental, subject-related, teacher-related, and school-related factors?

Table 1
Summary of Respondents' Level of Assessment on Factors
Associated with Absenteeism

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Personal	2.42	1.01	Low
Family	2.20	1.05	Low
Environment	2.47	1.06	Low
Subject-Related	1.94	0.98	Low
Teacher-Related	1.75	0.89	Very Low
School-Related Factors	1.74	0.91	Very Low
Overall	2.09	0.98	Low

Table 1 shows that the overall level of factors associated with absenteeism among students was low, indicating that personal, family, environmental, subject related, teacher related, and school related factors generally had limited influence on their attendance. This suggests that most students regularly attend classes and receive adequate support from their families, teachers, and school environment. The findings also indicate stable school engagement and effective school policies and support mechanisms, although continued monitoring and preventive programs remain important.

Among the factors, environment obtained the highest mean, which was still interpreted as low. This indicates that environmental conditions such as unfavorable weather, transportation difficulties, safety concerns, and other external barriers had the greatest influence on students' absences. Despite these challenges, most students continued attending school, possibly because of support from their families, schools, communities, and local authorities. Strengthening transportation, disaster preparedness, safety measures, and other environmental support programs may further reduce absenteeism.

School related factors obtained the lowest mean and were interpreted as very low, indicating that school conditions rarely contributed to students' absences. This may be attributed to clear attendance policies, proper communication, supportive teachers, safe learning environments, and adequate facilities. The findings suggest that effective school management and a welcoming school climate help encourage regular attendance and minimize absenteeism.

Problem 2. What is the respondents' level of preferred interventions as to authoritative in terms of structure of clear and consistent rules; and logical consequence, and facilitative in terms of structure of predictable routines and rewards for positive behavior?

Table 2
Summary of Respondents' Level of Preferred Interventions as to Authoritative

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Clear and Consistent Rules	2.96	1.00	High
Logical Consequence	2.89	0.95	High
Overall	2.93	0.97	High

Table 2 presents the respondents' level of preferred interventions under the authoritative approach, which obtained an overall mean of 2.93 (SD = 0.97), interpreted as High. This indicates that students highly prefer structured interventions that provide clear expectations, consistent rules, and appropriate consequences to improve their school attendance. The findings suggest that students value guidance and accountability when addressing absenteeism. The highest rated indicator was Clear and Consistent Rules, with a mean of 2.96 (SD = 1.00), interpreted as High. This shows that students strongly prefer attendance rules that are clear, understandable, fair, and consistently implemented. Such rules may strengthen discipline, build trust, and encourage students to attend classes regularly. The lowest rated indicator was Logical Consequence, with a mean of 2.89 (SD = 0.95), also interpreted as High. This indicates that students recognize the importance of consequences for absenteeism but prefer these to be accompanied by guidance and support rather than strict punishment. Counseling, make up activities, and academic support may help students develop accountability while addressing the reasons behind their absences. Overall, Table 2 indicates that students favor an authoritative approach that balances clear rules and consistent implementation with appropriate consequences, guidance, and support. This approach may help schools promote regular attendance, responsible behavior, and continued student engagement.

Table 3
Summary of Respondents' Level of Preferred Interventions
as to Facilitative

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Structure of Predictable Routine	2.92	0.87	High
Reward for Positive Behavior	3.21	0.88	High
Overall	3.06	0.87	High

Table 3 presents the respondents' level of preferred interventions under the facilitative approach, with an overall mean of 3.06 (SD = 0.87), interpreted as High. This indicates that students highly prefer supportive interventions that encourage participation, recognize positive behavior, and provide a predictable learning environment. The findings suggest that students are more motivated to attend school when they feel supported, valued, and guided. The highest rated indicator was Reward for Positive Behavior, with a mean of 3.21 (SD = 0.88), interpreted as High. This shows that students are strongly motivated by recognition

and rewards for good attendance and behavior. Providing certificates, privileges, praise, or other forms of recognition may encourage students to maintain regular attendance and participate actively in school activities. The lowest rated indicator was Structure of Predictable Routine, with a mean of 2.92 (SD = 0.87), interpreted as High. Although rated lowest, the result indicates that students still value clear schedules, consistent routines, and well-organized school activities. Predictable routines help students manage their time, understand expectations, and reduce uncertainty, although they may be more effective when combined with other motivational strategies. Overall, the findings indicate that students highly prefer facilitative interventions that emphasize encouragement, recognition, support, and structure. Rewarding positive behavior and maintaining predictable routines may help strengthen students' motivation, improve school participation, and sustain regular attendance.

Table 4
Summary of Respondents' Level of Preferred Interventions

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Authoritative	2.93	0.97	High
Facilitative	3.06	0.87	High
Overall	2.99	0.92	High

Table 4 presents the respondents' overall level of preferred interventions, with an overall mean of 2.99 (SD = 0.92), interpreted as High. This indicates that students generally prefer interventions that motivate, guide, and encourage them to participate consistently in school. The findings suggest that students value interventions that provide clear expectations, predictable routines, recognition, and supportive guidance. The highest rated intervention was Facilitative, with a mean of 3.06 (SD = 0.87), interpreted as High. This indicates that students prefer supportive interventions that encourage participation, recognize positive behavior, and provide predictable routines. The findings suggest that positive reinforcement, encouragement, and recognition can strengthen students' motivation, engagement, and regular attendance. The lowest rated intervention was Authoritative, with a mean of 2.93 (SD = 0.07), interpreted as High. Although it received a lower rating than the facilitative approach, students still showed a high preference for clear rules, consistent expectations, and logical consequences. This indicates that structure and discipline remain important in promoting responsible attendance behavior.

Overall, the findings show that students prefer a balanced approach that combines supportive and structured interventions. Facilitative strategies may provide stronger motivation, while authoritative strategies can establish accountability and clear expectations. Combining encouragement, recognition, predictable routines, clear rules, and appropriate consequences may therefore provide a more effective approach to improving attendance and student engagement.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between factors associated with absenteeism and preferred interventions?

Table 5

Results of the Test on Relationship Between Factors Associated with Absenteeism and Preferred Intervention

Correlation	Preferred Interventions				
	Authoritative		Facilitative		Overall
Absenteeism	Clear and Consistent Rules	Logical Consequence	Structure of Predictable Outcomes	Reward for Positive Behavior	
	Pearson r	Pearson r	Pearson r	Pearson r	Pearson r
	p-value	p-value	p-value	p-value	p-value
Personal	-0.037 0.646 ns	-0.065 0.411 ns	0.028 0.727 ns	-0.076 0.338 ns	-0.046 0.562 ns
Family-Related	-0.121 0.128 ns	-0.234 0.003 s	-0.013 0.869 ns	-0.162 0.040 s	-0.148 0.062 ns
Environmental	-0.145 0.067 ns	-0.067 0.398 ns	-0.083 0.299 ns	-0.154 0.053 ns	-0.128 0.107 ns
Subject-Related	-0.260 <0.001 s	-0.477 <0.001 s	-0.430 <0.001 s	-0.241 <0.001 s	-0.378 <0.001 s
Teacher-Related	-0.470 <0.001 s	-0.422 <0.001 s	-0.321 <0.001 s	-0.313 <0.001 s	-0.423 <0.001 s
School-Related Factors	-0.628 <0.001 s	0.646 <0.001 s	-0.634 <0.001 s	-0.611 <0.001 s	-0.689 <0.001 s

Table 5 presents the relationship between factors associated with absenteeism and students' preferred interventions. The results reveal significant negative relationships between school related, teacher related, and subject related factors and students' preferred interventions. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected for these factors. This indicates that as these absenteeism factors increase, students tend to show lower preferences for authoritative and facilitative interventions. However, these results indicate relationships and do not establish cause and effect.

School related factors showed the strongest negative relationship with preferred interventions ($r = -0.689$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that students experiencing more school related concerns may be less receptive to intervention programs. Teacher related factors also showed a moderate negative relationship ($r = -0.423$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the importance of positive teacher student relationships, effective communication, and supportive classroom practices. Subject related factors likewise showed significant negative relationships, indicating that academic difficulties may be addressed alongside attendance concerns through appropriate academic support.

Family related factors showed a weak significant negative relationship with authoritative interventions but no significant relationship with facilitative interventions. Meanwhile, environmental and personal factors showed no significant relationships with either intervention type. Overall, the findings suggest that

effective interventions should consider students' school experiences, relationships with teachers, academic needs, and personal circumstances to provide more responsive support for improving attendance.

2. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The factors associated with absenteeism among the Junior High School students were identified, with Environmental factors, particularly bad weather conditions, obtaining the highest level among the identified factors. The respondents preferred the Facilitative interventions, especially rewards for positive behavior. Moreover, school-related, subject-related, and teacher-related factors showed significant negative relationships with the respondents' preferred interventions, with higher levels of these absenteeism factors associated with lower preference for interventions.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers and school administrators may strengthen the school's contextualized Learning Continuity Plan by preparing learning kits, make-up classes, and alternative learning activities for absences caused by heavy rain and extreme heat. Regular communication with parents and periodic review of the plan may also help minimize weather-related absenteeism and learning gaps.
2. Teachers and staff may strengthen Facilitative interventions, particularly rewards for positive behavior, by providing praise, encouragement, positive feedback, and appropriate recognition for regular or improved attendance. Learning materials and practical support, such as umbrellas or raincoats, along with brief mentoring or attendance check-ins, may further encourage students to maintain regular attendance.
3. School administrators and teachers may strengthen existing practices addressing school-related, subject-related, and teacher-related factors associated with absenteeism, particularly among students with higher levels of absence, as these were associated with lower preference for interventions. For school-related concerns, schools may implement consistent attendance procedures, clearly communicate attendance expectations, and follow up with students and parents after repeated absences. For subject-related concerns, teachers may provide clear guidance, realistic assignment and project deadlines, and opportunities for additional academic support. For teacher-related concerns, schools may provide teacher-student team-building, mentoring, psychosocial activities, and accessible opportunities for students to ask questions and seek assistance. These efforts may help address students' school, academic, and communication concerns, improve their receptiveness to interventions, and encourage more regular attendance.

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