

Article

Influence of Demographic Profile on school Absenteeism Among Kindergarten Learners

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Abstract: This study examines the influence of demographic factors on school absenteeism among kindergarten learners, focusing on its causes and impact on academic performance. Employing a descriptive-quantitative research design, the study collected data from kindergarten learners, parents, and teachers using structured surveys and academic performance records. Findings reveal that health-related reasons, such as illness or medical appointments, are the primary occasional cause of absenteeism, while social distractions, fear of exams, and bullying are minimal contributors. Additionally, the highest educational attainment of parents significantly influences absenteeism rates, as parents with higher education levels are more likely to ensure regular attendance. Other demographic factors, including age, gender, income, number of children, and proximity to school, showed no significant impact on absenteeism. These findings underscore the importance of addressing health-related barriers and enhancing parental education to reduce absenteeism and improve academic outcomes. The study highlights the need for targeted interventions to ensure equitable access to education and consistent attendance among young learners.

Keywords: absenteeism, demographic profiles, early childhood education, descriptive-quantitative research

Introduction

Early childhood education (ECE) is foundational for the cognitive, social, and emotional growth of children, equipping them with essential skills for lifelong success. High-quality ECE promotes problem-solving, language acquisition, and interpersonal communication, forming the bedrock of academic and social integration (Shavkatovna, 2023). It also fosters emotional regulation and resilience, enabling children to navigate challenges effectively (Blewitt et al., 2021). Research shows that ECE strengthens cognitive flexibility, executive functioning, and decision-making skills, which are critical in later academic endeavors (Siregar & Sit, 2024). Social-



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emotional learning during these years develops empathy, teamwork, and effective communication skills, fostering a sense of belonging (Ulutas et al., 2021). Additionally, ECE helps mitigate behavioral issues and lays a foundation for lifelong learning by nurturing curiosity and motivation (Fajriyah, 2023). The evidence underscores the necessity of structured and engaging learning environments to optimize children's developmental potential (Mukuru & Sikubwabo, 2024).

School absenteeism poses a significant challenge to achieving consistent learning outcomes in early education. Absenteeism disrupts the regular acquisition of skills and knowledge, leading to developmental gaps in cognitive and social domains (Ansari & Gottfried, 2021). Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten is associated with reduced academic performance in reading, writing, and numeracy skills (Wei, 2024). It also hinders the development of peer relationships and social-emotional competencies (Blewitt et al., 2020). Factors such as socioeconomic disadvantages and health issues further exacerbate absenteeism, creating disparities in educational outcomes (Hachem et al., 2022). Moreover, absenteeism correlates with lower motivation and engagement, setting a trajectory of academic underachievement (Chung et al., 2020). Addressing absenteeism is essential to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities and mitigate long-term educational disparities (Kirksey & Gottfried, 2021).

Demographic factors significantly influence school absenteeism in early education, shaping the frequency and reasons for student absences. Socioeconomic status is a critical determinant, with children from low-income families more likely to miss school due to financial and transportation barriers (Siregar & Sit, 2024). Parental education also plays a role, as more educated parents tend to prioritize regular school attendance and value early learning opportunities (Fajriyah, 2023). Cultural factors and household dynamics further affect attendance, with single-parent households often facing more challenges in ensuring regular attendance (Hachem et al., 2022). Geographical factors, such as distance to school and availability of transportation, also significantly impact absenteeism rates (Mukuru & Sikubwabo, 2024).

Understanding demographic influences is essential for addressing absenteeism and improving educational outcomes. By identifying the root causes tied to socioeconomic and cultural contexts, stakeholders can implement targeted interventions (Ansari & Gottfried, 2021). Tailored programs, such as subsidies for transportation and health support, can mitigate barriers faced by disadvantaged families (Wei, 2024). Schools can develop inclusive policies that foster engagement and reduce disparities (Blewitt et al., 2020). Analyzing demographic influences also helps educators better understand students' unique challenges, fostering equitable learning environments (Hachem et al., 2022).

This study aims to identify key demographic factors contributing to absenteeism, such as socioeconomic status, parental education, and distance from school (Siregar & Sit, 2024). It also explores the relationships between these variables and absenteeism rates to develop actionable solutions (Fajriyah, 2023). Understanding these links can inform resource allocation and policymaking, ensuring targeted efforts to reduce absenteeism (Kirksey & Gottfried, 2021). Moreover, the study provides valuable insights into the demographic factors affecting absenteeism, offering evidence-based solutions to improve attendance rates. It equips policymakers and educators with strategies to mitigate attendance barriers, fostering equitable access to education. Addressing absenteeism, the study helps enhance early learning outcomes, ensuring long-term success for kindergarten learners.

Methodology

This study employs a descriptive-quantitative research design to analyze the influence of demographic profiles on school absenteeism among kindergarten learners. This approach is appropriate for systematically examining numerical data and identifying patterns and relationships that provide insights into how demographic factors affect attendance. The population for the study includes kindergarten learners from selected schools, with input from parents/guardians and teachers to ensure a comprehensive perspective. A stratified random sampling method is utilized to achieve balanced representation across key demographic variables, such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, and distance from school. Data collection involves three main tools: a demographic questionnaire to profile respondents, attendance records to measure absenteeism rates, and structured surveys to explore the underlying demographic factors contributing to absenteeism. Microsoft Excel is used for data analysis, enabling the identification of significant correlations between demographic characteristics and absenteeism patterns.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Age of the Respondents

Age (in years)	Gender		Total	
	F	M	f	%
46-55	0	0	0	0.00
36-45	11	8	19	38.00
26-35	17	9	26	52.00
25 below	4	1	5	10.00
Total	32	18	50	100

The table shows the age distribution of respondents categorized by gender. The largest group of respondents, 52%, falls within the 26-35 years age range, with 17 females and 9 males. This is followed by the 36-45 years age group, which accounts for 38% of the total, consisting of 11 females and 8 males. The smallest group, 25 years and below, makes up 10% of the respondents, with 4 females and 1 male. There are no respondents in the 46-55 years age group. Overall, the data shows that the majority of respondents are in the younger age ranges, with a slight predominance of females across all age categories.

Table 2. Highest Educational Attainment of the Parents

Educational Attainment	f	%
Master Degree Holder	0	0.00
With Units in Master	0	0.00
Bachelor Graduate	31	62.00
High School Graduate	13	26.00
Elementary Level	6	12.00
Total	50	100.00

The table presents the highest educational attainment of the parent respondents. The majority, 62%, are Bachelor Graduates, indicating that most parents have completed a college degree. Another 26% are High School Graduates, while 12% have only completed the Elementary Level of education. Overall, the data shows that while most parents have attained a bachelor's degree, a significant portion still has lower educational qualifications, with over a third having completed only high school or elementary education.

Table 3. Combined Monthly Family Income of the Respondents

Monthly Income Bracket	Frequency	Percentage
Below P 10,000	14	28.00
P 10,000 - P 20,000	27	54.00
More than P 20,000	9	18.00

The table presents the combined monthly family income of the respondents. The majority, 54%, fall within the income bracket of P10,000 to P20,000, indicating that most families have a moderate-income level. A smaller proportion, 28%, have a family income of below P10,000, representing the lower-income group. Meanwhile, 18% of the respondents have a combined monthly family income of more than P20,000, placing them in the higher-income category. Overall, the data shows that most respondents fall within the middle-income range, with fewer families in the lower and higher income brackets.

Table 4. Number of Children

Number of Children	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	22	44.00
3-4	16	32.00
5-6	12	24.00
6 above	0	0.00

The table presents the distribution of respondents based on the number of children they have. The largest group, 44%, consists of parents with 1-2 children, indicating that nearly half of the respondents have smaller families. Another 32% have 3-4 children, while 24% have 5-6 children, reflecting larger family sizes. Overall, the data suggests that the majority of families have between 1 and 4 children, with a smaller portion having larger families of 5-6 children.

Table 5. Distance from School of the Respondents

Distance from School	Frequency	Percentage
Can be walked	50	100
Takes two rides of commute	0	0.00
Takes more than two rides to commute	0	0.00

The table shows the distance from school for the respondents. All respondents, 100%, live within walking distance of the school, as indicated by the 50 respondents who report that the school can be walked to. No respondents require commuting by taking two or more rides. This data highlights that the entire sample of respondents has convenient access to the school, which may reduce barriers to attendance such as transportation difficulties.

Table 5. Possible Causes of Children's Absenteeism

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Nasakit ko (eg. hilaan, sibo, ubo, appointment sa doctor)	2.28	Rarely
2. Mas interesado ko nga makig-uban sa akong mga higala	1.68	Never
3. Nahadlok ko sa mga tawo didto (e.g. kasal o lubong)	1.54	Never
4. Mas gipili nako nga magpabilin sa balay uban sa akong mga ginikanan.	1.78	Rarely
5. Dili ko komportable.	1.38	Never
6. Gikapoy kaayo ko ug natulog nalang.	1.40	Never
7. Gusto kong mogahin og panahon uban sa akong mga higala.	1.72	Never
8. Naa koy mga problema sa magtutudlo o mga klasmeyt.	1.26	Never
9. Sa akong hunahuna makalaay ang makalaay ang eskwelahan ug dili ko ganahan moadto.	1.18	Never
10. Gusto nakong buhaton ang ubang mga butang (panaglitan pagpamalit o pagdula.)	1.86	Rarely
11. Nahadlok ko sa exam	1.08	Never
12. Gi bully ko	1.42	Never
Aggregate Mean:	1.55	Never

The table presents the possible causes of children's absenteeism based on the respondents' perceptions. The aggregate mean of 1.55 falls under the "Never" category, suggesting that most of the listed causes are rarely responsible for absenteeism. The highest mean score is 2.28 for health-related reasons, such as illness or doctor's appointments, which is interpreted as "Rarely." This indicates that sickness is an occasional reason for absenteeism. Other causes, like preferring to stay home with parents (mean = 1.78) and wanting to do other activities (mean = 1.86), are also rated as "Rarely" contributing to absenteeism. Most other

indicators, including fear of exams (mean = 1.08), bullying (mean = 1.42), discomfort (mean = 1.38), and social distractions (mean = 1.68), fall under the "Never" category. This suggests that these factors are not significant drivers of absenteeism. Notably, boredom with school (mean = 1.18) and problems with teachers or classmates (mean = 1.26) are among the least common causes of absenteeism. Overall, the data implies that health-related issues are the primary occasional cause of absenteeism, while other factors such as social influences, school-related challenges, and emotional discomfort are rarely significant contributors. Moreover, data implies that absenteeism among learners is primarily influenced by occasional health-related issues, while other potential causes, such as social distractions, school-related challenges, and emotional discomfort, are not significant factors. This suggests that schools may focus on promoting better health practices and providing access to medical support to reduce absences. Since factors like bullying, fear of exams, and problems with teachers are not major contributors, the school environment appears to be generally supportive. However, continuous monitoring of these less frequent causes remains important to ensure that absenteeism does not increase due to overlooked issues.

Table 6. Relationship Between Profile of the Parent Respondents and the Possible Causes of Absenteeism (alpha = 0.05)

Variables	Chi-Square	df	P-Value	Significance	Result
Age	4.711	3	0.147	NS	Ho accepted
Gender	0.870	3	0.647	NS	Ho accepted
Highest Educational Attainment	11.416	2	0.022	S	Ho rejected
Combine Monthly Income	5.179	2	0.521	NS	Ho accepted
Number of Children	8.393	3	0.782	NS	Ho accepted
Distance from the School	5.652	3	0.714	NS	Ho accepted

Table 6 examines the relationship between the profile of parent respondents and potential causes of absenteeism, with a significance level set at 0.05. The Chi-Square tests reveal that none of the variables, except for "Highest Educational Attainment," show a statistically significant association with absenteeism. Specifically, age, gender, combined monthly income, number of children, and distance from the school all have p-values greater than 0.05, indicating that their relationships with absenteeism are not significant. The "Highest Educational Attainment" variable, however, exhibits a p-value of 0.022, which is below the significance threshold, suggesting a significant relationship with absenteeism. This indicates that the educational background of parents may influence absenteeism rates, while other factors such as age, gender, income, number of children, and distance from school do not have a notable impact.

Discussion

The findings reveal that health-related reasons are the primary occasional cause of absenteeism among kindergarten learners, as indicated by the highest mean score (2.28) under this category. This aligns with previous research that emphasizes the significant role of health in determining school attendance among young children, as illnesses often disrupt regular attendance patterns (Ansari & Gottfried, 2021). Other factors, such as social distractions, discomfort, and bullying, were rated as "Never" contributing to absenteeism, suggesting that these issues are less relevant within this school environment. These results point to a generally supportive and inclusive school culture that minimizes barriers like emotional discomfort and fear of exams (Blewitt et al., 2020). However, the occasional influence of health-related absenteeism indicates the importance of improving access to medical resources and promoting health education to minimize its impact.

Interestingly, the analysis of the relationship between demographic variables and absenteeism revealed that "Highest Educational Attainment" of parents significantly influenced absenteeism rates ($p = 0.022$). This finding is consistent with studies that highlight how higher parental education correlates with better attendance, as educated parents are more likely to prioritize school attendance and provide necessary support (Siregar & Sit, 2024). Other factors, such as age, gender, combined monthly income, number of children, and distance from school, showed no statistically significant relationship with absenteeism. These results suggest that addressing absenteeism in this context may require targeted interventions that focus on parental education and awareness while maintaining current strategies that support emotional well-being and reduce social or environmental barriers (Wei, 2024). Overall, the findings highlight the importance of focusing on both health-related issues and parental involvement to ensure consistent attendance and improved learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The study concludes that health-related issues are the primary occasional cause of absenteeism among kindergarten learners, indicating a need for schools to prioritize health education and provide accessible medical support to reduce preventable absences. Other potential causes, such as social distractions, fear of exams, and bullying, were found to have minimal influence, reflecting a generally positive and supportive school environment. Additionally, parental educational attainment emerged as a significant factor influencing absenteeism, suggesting that parents with higher education levels may be better equipped to support consistent school attendance. Conversely, other demographic factors such as age, gender, family

income, number of children, and distance from school showed no significant relationship with absenteeism. These findings underscore the importance of addressing health-related challenges and fostering parental engagement in promoting regular attendance, thereby ensuring better educational outcomes and reducing absenteeism's impact on early childhood learning trajectories.

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