

The Impacts Of Teachers' Absenteeism On Students' Academic Achievements: A Case Of Selected Secondary Schools In Tabora Municipality, Tanzania

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Abstract: This study was set out to investigate the impacts of teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievements in Tabora Municipal. It was specifically aimed at achieving the specific objectives namely: - to identify factors contributing to teachers' absenteeism in public secondary schools in Tabora municipal. To examine the impacts of teachers' absenteeism in Tabora municipal public secondary schools on students' academic achievements. Finally, suggesting the way forward for solving the problems of absenteeism in public secondary school teachers in Tabora municipality.

Mixed methods approach was used, where questionnaire and focused group discussion methods were employed as methods for data collection. Teachers (70) were selected basing on purposive sampling technique and students (100) were selected by simple random sampling in which 230 were the targeted sample provided with the closed and opened questionnaires filled in. Quantitative data were analyzed by using Microsoft office excel software (MS- Excel 2007) and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SSPS) version 20.0. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were calculated in order to make inference of the findings in which data were mainly presented in Percentages. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic Analysis.

Findings in this study revealed that personal factors for teachers' absenteeism formed the highest rate (50 %) of absence followed by school factors (45.7%), environmental factors (1.4 %) and others (2.9 %) respectively. The findings from this study has described that the differences between male and female teachers' absenteeism were marginal. Gender issue is not a significant factor to be used in predicting ones levels of absenteeism.

Majority of the school heads and school teachers viewed the levels of absenteeism among the single teachers and married teachers were low in their schools. Also teachers' illness causes absenteeism. Teachers' opinions on personal factors which influence teachers' absenteeism as provided in table 4.4 and with the responses of those who agreed 35 (50%) teachers out of the 70 teachers noted that teachers' illness causes absenteeism. Under focused group discussions with the school heads, it was also supported by 10 (100%) that teachers' illness causes absenteeism, likely to pretending sick also becomes an issue to most teachers in terms of absenteeism.

Keywords: Teachers, Students, Absenteeism, Academic Achievement, Teacher Absenteeism, causes, impacts

I. INTRODUCTION

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discussed the introduction of the chapter, background to the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, specific research objectives, research questions,

significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, definition of terms and conceptual framework.

B. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Absenteeism is one of the worst practices facing many organizations in the world today (Musyoki, 2015). Few

organizations can attain 100 percent attendance by all employees. Teacher absenteeism is high in many countries (Sabarwal, S. & Abu-Jawdeh, M., 2018). Teacher absenteeism rates in many countries measured through unannounced visits to schools are high.

There are several forms that absenteeism is being practiced by teachers such as, coming late to work and leaving very early, extended tea and lunch break contrary to the stipulated time in rules and regulations, immediate attending businesses, sickness of family members, taking a long time to collect working tools, some teachers forge illness to perform their duties (Mwesiga, 2016).

All these forms organizations take them as absenteeism practices. Studies show that a large number of teachers and other educational administrators have been engaging in various undesirable practices across the world (Betweli, 2013) of which absenteeism being one of those undesirable practices.

Miller (2012) reported on teacher absenteeism as a leading indicator of student achievement. The report from the office for civil rights in the United States of America Department of Education on teacher absenteeism included a new item on its biennial Civil Rights Data Collection survey from 2009 to 2012 observed that teacher absenteeism range from a low of 20.9% in Utah to a high of 50.2% in Rhode Island. A ranking of states raises questions about the wisdom of some states' teacher absence policies.

In New Jersey's Camden City Public Schools, 40% of teachers are absent from their classrooms. Such a high figure probably would not stand out in parts of the developing world, but it contrasts sharply with the 3% national rate of absence for full-time wage and salaried American workers and the 5.3% rate of absence for American teachers overall (Miller, 2012).

Teacher absenteeism is a great problem that cuts across national boundaries and it is a much bigger challenge in developing countries as compared to developed countries. Several studies indicate that the rates of teacher absenteeism in England, Canada, Israel and in Ireland range from 3% to 6% (Bowers and McIver, 2000; Clotfelter, et al., 2007; Reddy, et al., 2010; The Auditor General, 2009).

In India, about one in four teachers was absent on a typical day, reaching as high as one in two in the poorest performing state (Kremer et al. 2005, Muralidharan et al. 2017). Likewise, Abadzi (2009) noted that high absenteeism contributes to about two-thirds of total instructional time not being used in several countries. In real situation teachers are paid salaries and other incentives which they do not deserve. Teacher absenteeism is estimated to have an associated fiscal cost of US\$1.5 billion a year in India alone (Muralidharan et al. 2017).

Hubbell, (2008) observed that, in developing countries, the teacher absenteeism rate is above 40% while in developed countries it is as low as 10%. Table 1 indicates the rates of some of the developing countries like Peru, Ecuador, Papua (New Guinea), Bangladesh, Zambia, Indonesia, India and Uganda.

Country	Teacher absence rate (%)
Peru	11
Ecuador	14
Papua New	15

Guinea	
Bangladesh	16
Zambia	17
Indonesia	19
India	25
Uganda	27

Sources: Chaudhury and others, (2006), World Bank, 2004 (PNG); Das and coworkers, 2007 (Zambia)

Table 1: Absence rates of teachers in developing countries

A study which was done in seven countries in Sub-Saharan Africa indicates that five of them, about one in five (1/5) teacher was absent on a typical school day (Bold et al. 2017). A report from UWEZO (2011) in Uganda, points out that widespread teacher absenteeism is generally acknowledged as a major obstacle to the effective and sustainable improvements of the country's education system (table 2).

	All	Kenya	Mozambique	Nigeria	Senegal	Tanzania I	Tanzania II	Togo	Uganda
Absence from class (%)	44	48	56	23	31	53	47	40	57
Absence from school (%)	23	15	45	17	16	23	15	23	28
No. of teachers	16543	2311	991	2968	1222	1740	3518	776	3017
Scheduled teaching time	5h 27m	5h 36m	4h 21m	4h 43m	4h 36m	5h 47m	5h 55m	5h 24 m	7h 13m
Time spent teaching	2h 49m	2h 31m	1h 43m	3h 10m	3h 5m	2h 32m	3h 16m	3h 9m	3h 2m
No. of schools	2001	238	200	435	145	176	344	144	319
Orphaned classrooms (%)	33	38	31	26	-	-	36	24	45
No. of schools	1647	234	150	430	-	-	392	127	314

Source: Bold et al. (2017)

Table 2: Absence of teachers in seven Sub-Saharan African countries

In Kenya, Obeng-Denteh et al. (2011) conducted a research and pointed that access to education in any country is seen both as a fundamental human right and an essential element in the national development strategy to promote growth and productive adult life.

Pitts (2010) however found out that women, younger teachers, teachers with fewer years of experience, and teachers in specialty schools had the highest level of absenteeism. The study done by Pitts, (2010) and Obiero, et al. (2017) suggested that older teachers might have fewer absences because they can purchase service credit on retirement using unused sick days.

Tanzania has experienced incidences that occurred on secondary school sector in different regions as a result of learning problems, which resulted into poor academic performance of students in secondary Schools (Nemes, 2012). The report portrayed through Minister for Education and Vocation Training, Hon. Jumanne Maghembe, demanding that the education officers in regions like Shinyanga, Lindi, Tabora and Mara should investigate the factors influenced for their poor performance.

Table 3 indicates the absence rates in Tanzania for rural and urban in 2007 which was cited by Mageni in 2017. This still indicates that the teacher absenteeism was there since.

Location	Reasons					Total
	Illness	Duty	Leave	Other authorized	Unauthorized	
Rural	8.5	16.9	1.7	3.4	1.7	32.2
Urban	4.9	4.9	0	10.9	10.9	31.6

Source: Bennell & Akyeampong (2007) and Mageni (2017)

Table 3: Teacher Absenteeism Rates in Tanzania

Again, Nemes (2012) noted that 35 head teachers and 3 ward education officers in Shinyanga region were demoted

following the 2008 poor results in the primary and secondary school leaving examinations, in their respective areas.

a. IMPACTS OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM TO STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT AND GOVERNMENT

Teacher absenteeism has negative impacts in many ways but two main ways can be depicted here. It leads to financial losses of employers for paying absent teachers and, sometimes, substitute teachers (Bennell & Akyeamong, 2007). This is in line with the study done by Muralidharan et al. (2017) who reported that teacher absenteeism is estimated to have an associated fiscal cost of US\$1.5 billion a year in India alone.

Herrmann and Rockoff (2010) viewed that teacher absenteeism as a daily loss in student achievement resulting from having substitute teachers as comparable to replacing an average teacher with one between the 10th and 20th percentile in terms of teaching effectiveness. Then, teacher absenteeism leads to wastage of time for classroom learning to students.

Meanwhile, student learning is one of the important indicator for students academic achievement, absenteeism poses a serious threat to overall achievement, this is simply logically expressed as the higher the teachers' absenteeism rate, the lower the students' achievement. Generally, teacher absenteeism is disadvantageous to student's education and levels of individual attainment (Brown & Arnell, 2012; Chapman, 1994). Teacher absenteeism affects quality education in many ways.

Tanzanian government has undertaken important efforts to improve access to secondary education in recent years and, in 2015, committed towards global goals to guarantee 12 years of free secondary education by 2030. Most notably, the government took an important first step by abolishing school fees and contributions additional fees charged by schools to pay for the schools' running costs for lower-secondary education in early 2016, in an effort to ensure all young people in Tanzania complete basic education (URT, 2014). With all these initiatives, some teachers are still practicing teacher absenteeism game in one way or another.

Many findings reveal the impacts of teacher absenteeism to student's academic achievement in other regions of Tanzania and worldwide. There is no findings show the impacts of teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievements in Tabora Municipality. In this context where the efficient and effective teaching and learning processes should take place in presence of the teachers at their work places and in classes too is still a question to debate on today, this study appear to be worth pursuing in order to find the impacts of teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievement in Tabora Municipality.

C. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As the background indicated, if teachers attend classes, and engage effective teaching, is a critical prerequisite to educating school students' achievement. A clear evidence of the extent to which factors influences teachers' absenteeism in classes in the Tanzanian context particularly in Tabora municipality and elsewhere is still lacking.

Tanzania is currently implementing a policy for universal secondary education (URT, 2014) by introducing free tuition fees, teachers, infrastructure and instructional materials from pre primary to ordinary secondary level. Schools for each ward are built (commonly known as ward secondary schools) to increase development and sustain the gains in enrollment provided by Universal Primary Education Policy (UPE) which started 2001, in an attempt to decrease poverty and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 2030.

The universal secondary education policy has considerably improved the enrollment rates by 80 % to public secondary schools from poor households; however, there are still many things to be done to improve the quality of secondary education in Tanzania. Despite, the governments' effort to provide Universal Secondary Education (USE) participating schools, teachers' absenteeism is a problem for administrators, students, parents and the society in general.

However, many studies have been done worldwide, considerable knowledge gaps exists on the subject in Tanzania specifically Tabora Municipal. Many of the available studies were conducted on students' absenteeism; causes and effects of drop outs in primary and secondary schools and teachers' support for the USE programme. All these studies based in other regions and not Tabora Municipal in which this study concentrated on causes for the teachers absenteeism, impacts to students and finding the possible solutions in Tabora Municipal, Tanzania.

D. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine the impacts of teachers' absenteeism in public secondary schools on students' academic achievements in Tabora Municipality, Tanzania.

E. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives that guide the study were:-

- ✓ To identify factors contributing to teachers absenteeism in public secondary schools in Tabora municipal.
- ✓ To examine the impacts of teachers' absenteeism in public secondary schools on students' academic achievements.
- ✓ To suggest the way forward for solving the problems of absenteeism in public secondary school teachers in Tabora municipal.

F. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions that guided the study were:

- ✓ What are the factors contributing to absenteeism of teachers in public secondary schools in Tabora municipal?
- ✓ What are the impacts of teachers' absenteeism on the students' academic achievement in Tabora municipal?
- ✓ What should be done to solve the problems of teachers' absenteeism of public secondary schools in Tabora municipal?

G. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The three major questions in research as identified by Creswell (1994) are what, why and how the study adds to the scholarly research and literature in the field; how the study helps to improve practice and why the study will improve policy-making in that particular field of study.

This study would reveal the knowledge about the causes, impacts and strategies to combat teachers' absenteeism in secondary schools. Therefore, the Tanzanian Government through the Ministry of Education and Vocation Training (MOEVT) in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office Regional Administrative and Local Government (PMORALG) may use the findings from this study to know how the problem of teachers' absenteeism is in secondary schools, and find ways and means of reducing it.

The study would encourage people to do more researches in this area in order to inform stakeholders like policy makers on how teachers' absenteeism has impact on students' learning. However, the study would inform the education stakeholders of Tabora region particularly Tabora Municipality such as school inspectors and quality assurers about issues for inspection in schools.

H. SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study was delimited to nine ordinary public secondary schools and only one advanced public secondary school in Tabora municipal. Also the scope can be described in terms of the study site, ownership of the schools, respondents, and categories of teacher absenteeism to be studied. The respondents included 70 Secondary school teachers, ten Head-Masters/Mistresses, and 100 students. It investigated the causes, impacts, and ways to manage teachers' absenteeism with or without leave. However, the study was delimited to the use of questionnaire, interview and focused group discussion as tools for data collection.

I. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The major shortcomings experienced when pursuing this study was difficulty in getting data from teachers especially the information related to absenteeism, professionalism and personal abilities in dealing with pedagogical skills. The related studies for the problem in Tabora Municipal are scarce. The study was limited to insufficient local literature and studies in Tabora, lack of enough find for running properly this study and a very alarming limitation being time due to COVID-19.

Methodologically, it was not easy to maintain respondents' participation and time as they were busy with other activities due to tight schedule (effect of Corona Virus-Schools were closed). Moreover, language somehow was a barrier on the side of students whose language required translation for better understanding the questions (English to Swahili).

J. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Five key terms namely teacher, teacher absenteeism, causes, impacts and academic achievement were selected to be defined in this dissertation. Their selection is based on their importance in understanding the aim of this study in the context intended by the researcher.

A TEACHER

Refers to an employee who is permanently and pensionable to a full time basis so as to teach the students in public secondary schools. According to the National Center for Education statistics (2012), the term teacher refers to as the fulltime or part-time teacher who teaches any regularly scheduled classes on a part time or full time basis in any grade.

TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

Teacher absenteeism is defined as any failure of a teacher to report for or to remain at work as scheduled, regardless of reason. Casio (2003) defined work absenteeism is "any failure of an employee to report for or to remain at work as scheduled, regardless of reason".

CAUSE (S)

A thing/person that makes something (good/bad) happens. In this context of teacher absenteeism, is what makes a teacher not attending the school or class sessions, or what makes a teacher become late after breakfast.

IMPACTS

Realized/marked effects/influences on something. In this study, impact was defined as the effect of students in academics after a teacher misses the class with or without permission.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

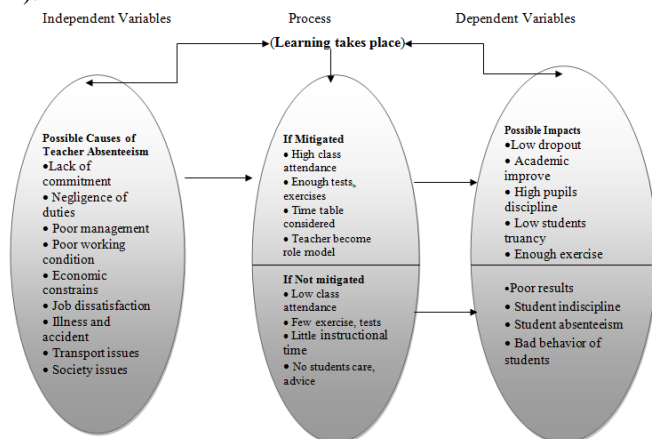
Reyes (2007) defines the term academic achievements as the degree to which student attain concept mastery. It is the final numerical course grade earned by each student as a result of objectives testing within the respective course.

K. CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by dependent and independent variables. The independent variables included teacher absenteeism and dependent variables included students' academic achievement. These independent and dependent variables were explained under the support of a model. A model was defined as a simplified representation of a real situation including the main features of the real situation it represents (Kousoyiannis, 1979).

Models are representations of the phenomena they model and have the purpose of generating a better understanding of the phenomenon (Kebede, 2002). Katz and Harvey (1994)

pointed out that the physical world is too complicated to be studied without recourse to models. They defined a model as a description of a phenomenon that abstracts from the details that were not directly essential to the understanding of the phenomenon at hand, hence enabling individuals to concentrate on important factors. Accurately formulated models can be of great help in achieving clarity and focusing on key issues in the nature of a phenomenon (Creswell: 2003: 121).



Source: Adopted and modified from Biyara (2015).

Figure 1: Conceptual frame work of the study

Figure 1 above was made up with four parts namely independent variables, learning process (content) and dependent variable (Impacts). The independent variables in this study explained different factors that influence to the occurrence of teacher absenteeism. Process shows what happens to teachers if the factors causing teachers absenteeism are mitigated and what happen if they are not mitigated.

Another part is the expected achievement academically by the students which explains the outcomes of teacher absenteeism to students (learners' outcome). The last part of this model is learning process. In this part, learning process takes place to forecast the expected outcome if the solutions of the factors causing absenteeism are taken into consideration. Otherwise, learning process took place without expecting to attain the goals of the students.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a review of related literatures was presented under the following sub-headings; theoretical literature review, empirical literature review (teacher absenteeism, factors for teacher absenteeism, and conflicting evidence about teacher absence behaviour) and research gap. It is true that education must be one of the topics most researched in the past centuries to date. It has been studied from all different perspectives, for the purpose of this research; a researcher will review the literature regarding teachers and specifically impacts of teacher absenteeism on students' academic achievement.

Miller (2012) reported that teachers are the most important school based determinant of students' academic success among all the other factors that intercede on

education. Hanushek (2014) observed that over the last twenty years, different researches on student achievement have pinpointed the central role of teachers. Though there are also other factors families, peers, neighborhoods that are obviously elements in a student learn, it is the school and specially the teachers who are given the public responsibility for the education of our youth. This study is going to concentrate on the impacts of teachers' absenteeism to student academic achievement.

Tanzania being a nation whose peoples is deep-rooted with a developmental mindset and competitive spirit. The attributes are driven by education and knowledge, and are critical in enabling the nation to effectively utilize knowledge in mobilizing domestic resources for assuring the provision of people's basic needs and for attaining competitiveness in the regional and global economy. This demands much the study in Tabora municipality to know if these attributes demanded by the society are achieved and to what extent (URT, 2003). To achieve these attributes, teachers' absenteeism should be addressed to know how they comply with the need of the society.

B. THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

This study encompasses various variables that have to be well understood if and only if studied through a well theoretical framework (Lacket, 2009). These variables include all about causes for teachers absenteeism, impact of teacher absenteeism and students academic achievements. The study is supported by Steers and Rhodes (1978) Process Model of Employee Attendance, in which the model has been lauded as the most influential in the study of absenteeism behaviour (Obiero, O., et al, 2017).

It was studied that there are major influences that affect employee absences of which the two important variables were applied to examine employee absence, motivation to attend and employee ability to attend work (Steers & Rhodes, 1978). They explained that these two variables interact such that a person's ability to attend moderates the motivation to attend (Obiero, O., et al, 2017). Motivation to attend, on the other hand, is influenced by employee's job satisfaction with his/her job situation and various pressures to attend.

Understanding that Steers and Rhodes (1978) Process Model of Employee Attendance combines individual and organizational approaches. Hence, the multivariate approach draws both from the personal and organizational domains. The nature of the job and surrounding work environment interact with employees' values and expectations to determine employees' satisfaction with job situation (Steers & Rhodes, 1978).

Employees' values and expectations are determined by personal characteristics such as age, gender, race, marital status, family size, working experience and education qualification which may assist the researcher to know if are also some factors for teacher absenteeism. The first set is employee values, expectations and satisfactions (Ravari, et al. 2012).

The second set is related to social interaction and social norms within the employee's organization. Although the framework tends to explain why an employee will be absent

from work, it ignores other variables like demographic characteristics such as age, gender, level of education, teachers residence and poverty which are seen as having indirect effect on absenteeism (Obiero, O., et al, 2017).

C. TEACHERS ARE NEEDED IN THE CLASSROOM

The consistent presence of the teacher in the classroom is of supreme importance to provide effective instruction to students (Porres, 2016). Some researchers have suggested that high employee absenteeism indicates poor worker morale (Lippman et al, 1996). Also, some research looks specifically at absenteeism in relation to how teachers report their absences. This research established that teachers are most likely to be absent less often if they are required to notify their principal by telephone about impending absences (Porres, 2016).

Miller, 2012 shows that when a teacher is absent from the classroom, student learning is disrupted. Finlayson (2009) finds that when a teacher is repeatedly absent, student academic performance can be significantly impacted negatively. The study identifies that the more days a teacher is out of the classroom, the lower their students score on every test. The measurement was on the relationship between third grade teacher absenteeism and third-grade student scores on the math and reading sections on the Criterion Reference Competency Test. The research report also observed nationally, teachers are absent from the classroom on average ten days per year. These results are the same as found in the NCTQ 2013 report. Teacher absenteeism studies are generally focused on local school districts. For example, the research mentioned before, by Finlayson, is focused on Cobb County, Georgia (Porres, 2016).

The study done by Miller et al., 2008 focused on an urban school district in Camden City, New Jersey. The latter study used highly detailed data on teacher absences to shed light on the determinants and effects of teacher absences (Porres, 2016). The authors estimate the impact of teacher absences on academic student achievement matched to elementary school teachers (Porres *ibid*). As they reported on the estimated ten days of the teacher absenteeism per year reduces student achievement by almost three point two of a standard deviation.

D. POSSIBLE CAUSES OF TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

As it was indicated in the conceptual framework and discussed in the Process Model of Employee Attendance, there are various factors associated with teacher absenteeism. Under this study, the following are some of the factors selected for discussion: economic factors, health-related factors, poor work conditions, and doing nonprofessional work as discussed in chapter one.

a. ECONOMIC FACTORS

Tanzania as one of the developing countries in East Africa faces some challenges to teachers which includes but not limited poor remuneration, low payments of salary compared to other cadre, and lack of transport money seem to be associated with teacher absenteeism in the literature

reviewed. This section provides a discussion on how such factors might lead to teacher absenteeism.

Studies which were conducted in Tanzania and other African countries such as Ghana and Uganda found out those economic factors particularly poor remuneration is one of the leading causes of teacher absenteeism as reported in Teacher Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2013; Okurut 2012; Betweli, 2010; & Al-Hassan, 2009. The teacher absenteeism can be associated to low income due to low salaries.

Chapman, 1994 indicates that Somalia teachers, pay scales are so low that must have supplemental employment in order to live. Also Betweli, 2010 found out that teachers use official hours to engage in private activities to supplement their meager income, that make them not concentrating with teaching and learning processes as required. Similarly, one study found out that teachers in rural areas can for instance engage heavily in farming activities during work hours (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). Irregular pay-days were also found to contribute more in teacher absenteeism particularly in rural areas. This is because in order for teachers to receive their pay, they are required to report to an urban area or the district to receive their pay. When it is not paid on time they spend days waiting (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Ingiamo, 2012).

On the other hand, the high cost of transport contributes to teacher absenteeism in urban schools where teachers might live long distances from school and have to pay for their transport cost daily. Similarly it can be high for rural schools when there are no decent accommodation for teachers in the villages as a result many teachers live in nearby towns (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007).

b. TEACHERS' HEALTH

Habyarimana *et al.*, 2005, highlighted several health issues that are seen to be factors for teachers' absenteeism in classes or to school generally. Some of these are like illness and pregnancy. They contribute significantly to the total rate of teacher absenteeism in most communities as the background indicated.

It is true that teachers with some health problems might still attend work; some problems affect the ability of the teacher to guide the learning process. A study on voice-related teacher absenteeism done in the United States of America found out that in the prior two weeks to data collection, 3.35% of female teachers were reported absent due to voice problems. However, the same study reports that during their entire careers, around one-third of teachers missed work at least once due to voice problems (Medeiros *et al.*, 2011). This is generally taken as the health-related conditions that in one way or another can affect teachers' attendance to schools or their teaching. The high rates such causes of absenteeism imply that it has a huge effect on students' attainment.

c. POOR WORK CONDITIONS

Poor work conditions are associated with increased teacher absenteeism rates in different areas (Ngimbudzi, 2009). In Tanzania this is one of the great challenge which sometimes influence to the teachers to run away the job, in

rural areas no electricity, no network, no transportation, no health facilities, no furniture for students and teachers and sometimes toilets are not there. In urban this case is not very critical though the issues of lack of teacher housing force teachers to live far away from the school are also somehow challenges to Tabora municipality teachers. Also, locations of some schools are such that there is no restaurant or food delivery services in the school vicinity which results to lack of staff lunch might that may cause some teachers to skip work (Okurut, 2012; Al-Hassan, 2009; Alcazar *et al.*, 2006).

d. PARTICIPATION IN INDIVIDUAL WORKS

As indicated in the conceptual framework, some teachers do their own activities while are at school environment like selling local foods and juices to students. Some teachers become agents of selling houses, land and cellular phones related issues of which when they receive the calls will tend to move from the school to attend a person who needs to give them money. Absenteeism has also been attributed to teachers' engagement in non-professional work (Steers & Rhodes, 1978).

Eswaran & Singh, 2008 highlighted some of other non-professional works of which teachers involve in include but not limited to election duty, preparation of voters list, survey for people below poverty line and out of school children, campaign against literacy and diseases.

E. MANAGEMENT OF TEACHER ATTENDANCE

As described by Miller, 2012 that teacher absenteeism is a challenge that needs to be contained in order to ensure provision of quality education. This part presents a discussion on management of teacher absenteeism in Tanzania. It can be demonstrated in rules of conduct; disciplinary procedures and action; and non-disciplinary interventions. Under this high officials are concerned in making sure that teachers attend the school and the class as per standing order of the United Republic of Tanzania. It is taken into considerations due to that in specific objective; there is a need of looking forward for rectifying the situation (Specific objective three).

F. INITIATIVES FOR ENHANCING TEACHER ATTENDANCE

Regardless the mentioned above in 2.5 as the ways management can do to insure that teachers attend the school and the class too. Some of the economic reasons are known to cause absenteeism helping teachers reduce financial stress through effective workplace financial education programmes could be one of the solutions to the problem (Kim & Garman, 2003). A study by Guerrero *et al.* (2012) came up with suggestions on indirect interventions against teacher absenteeism.

The suggestions which were put includes programmes aimed at enhancing teacher attendance indirectly such as: Programmes aimed at increasing parental and community participation, hoping this will raise teacher attendance; Programmes providing incentives to teachers for increases in student achievement (output-based incentive programmes);

Programmes offering incentives scholarships for students, hoping they (and their parents) would demand teacher attendance at school; and Programmes tracking students by achievement, hoping that the homogenous composition of the class would have an effect on teacher effort (including attendance). Some of these suggestions would not be appropriate for schools in centralized education systems such as that of Tanzania unless some adjustments are made.

G. SYNTHESIS AND KNOWLEDGE GAP

Clotfelter, Charles, Ladd, Helen, & Vigdor, Job, (2007) used detailed data from North Carolina, the study examined the frequency, incidence, and consequences of teacher absences in public schools, as well as the impact of an absence disincentive policy. This study came out with the findings including schools in the poorest quartile averaged almost one extra sick day per teacher than schools in the highest income quartile, and schools with persistently high rates of teacher absence were much more likely to serve low-income than high-income students. The suggestions given from this study is that a policy intervention that simultaneously raise teacher base salaries and broadened financial penalties for absences could both raise teachers' expected income and lower districts' expected costs and absenteeism to teachers.

MoEVT(2010) argued that overall goal of Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP)1, was to increase efficiency and responsiveness in the delivery of secondary education. Majority of teacher absenteeism related studies carried out in Tanzania investigated on it as a component of comprehensive educational problem teacher misconducts (Mfaume & Bilinga, 2017; Mabagala, 2016; Betweli, 2013). Alternatively, it has been investigated as an effect or indicator of level of job satisfaction and motivation in some studies (e.g. Ingiamo, 2012; Ngimbudzi, 2009; Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007).

Mgonja (2017) in his study of indentifying the mechanisms used to mitigate workplace absenteeism, their adequacy and the effective utilization of those mechanisms in public and private schools in Ilala Municipality and Mkuranga District in Tanzania noticed that workplace absenteeism has widely been reported to be a serious problem which undermines smooth service delivery both in developed and developing nations. The problem is reported to be more serious in developing nations. The study relied on in-depth interviews and documentary review to collect data which was analyzed using excel, content and thematic analysis. This study found numerous measures which have been put in place to deal with teachers' workplace absenteeism both in private and public schools (Ibid). However, the study came out with issues concerning the government schools unlike in private schools, the measures are not seriously executed in public schools.

Betwel, (2013) investigated the nature of teacher professional misconduct in Tanzanian public primary schools. It involves views and/or experience from different groups of stakeholders in education in Rukwa Region, more specifically in Sumbawanga Municipal and Rural Districts. The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches which were informed by a case study design. Data were collected

through interviews, questionnaires, document analysis, and observation checklists. The researcher came out with that teacher professional misconduct was prevalent in both rural and urban settings in Rukwa Region with some variation in terms of type, cause, and frequency. The report identified the variation of teacher misconduct in schools was greatly influenced by teacher's sex, work experience, and level of education.

General view of the research findings recounted, the paper concludes that teacher misconduct is a problem of great concern in both rural and urban schools that affects teachers' work performance, the teaching, and learning process, and the quality of education at large. The misconduct in this study included teacher absenteeism.

As a result of all these studies, there is scarcity of in-depth information on the impacts of teachers' absenteeism on students' academic achievement in Tabora Municipality, Tanzania. This is the knowledge gap that this study aimed to address.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discussed the research methodology including the research approaches, research design, description of the area of the study, targeted population, the sample size, sampling procedures methods and instrument to be used for data collection, validity and reliability of instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations.

B. RESEARCH APPROACHES

This study employed a mixed methods approach where both quantitative and qualitative research approaches are used. This study used both methods because it considered that every research method has its limitations and its strengths' (Seidman, 2006). Creswell and Clark (2007:5) explained that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches if combined provides a better understanding of the research problem than when either approach is used alone. Mixed method research provides strength that offset the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research (Chilimo, 2008). The use of both paradigms in this research will be carefully designed, so as to minimize the expenses, the time consumption and the length of the entire exercise, as advised by Creswell (1994:7).

C. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used a descriptive survey research design, because of the nature of the respondents required and the study itself. The studies under descriptive survey rely on individuals' reports of their knowledge, attitudes or behavior (Creswell, 2011). They assess attitudes, opinion, demographic information, conditions and procedures (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002), and data are usually collected through questionnaires, interviews or observation. This study employed a descriptive survey design to gather data and give a picture of a real situation on the impact of teacher absenteeism

to students' academic achievement in Tabora Municipality. Fowler (2001) contends that survey design gives in-depth responses about what people think and how they feel about the problem.

D. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

According to URT (1998), Tabora is located in Western part of Tanzania between latitude 4° and 7° South and longitude 31° and 34° East. It consists of seven districts namely Tabora municipality, Urambo, Kaliua, Uyui, Igunga, Nzega and Sikonge.



Source: URT (2008). Map of Tabora region in Tanzania indicating Tabora Municipal

Figure 2 is the map of Tabora region indicating Tabora Municipal

E. TARGET POPULATION

The target population for this particular study comprises of teachers, school heads and students of Milambo, Ipoli, Kanyenye, Kariakoo, Nyamwezi, Lwanzari, Fundikila, Bomba Mzinga, Tabora boys', and Kaze Hill secondary schools in Tabora municipality. In this study, a total of 150 students, 70 class teachers and 10 heads of schools involved in this study. This study intends to find out how far teachers absenteeism affect the students' performance.

F. SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

A sample of 230 respondents used in this study in which teachers from the selected sample will be 70; school heads 10 and 150 students of the entire population. Seven (7) teachers from each school were required to respond on the questions and 15 students from each school of form three and four students were selected randomly. Also 30 students from two advanced secondary schools required to respond to the questions and make arrangement for focused group discussions.

Studies show that, there are various sampling techniques available to researchers depending on the design employed in the particular study (Cohen, Manion & Marrison, 2000). In this study, sampling technique will involve simple random sampling to the students, in which a reasonable number of respondents that represent the target population are selected. In this kind of sampling a researcher can determine the probability that any element or member of the population will be included in the sample (Mugenda & Mugenda 2003: 45).

The choice of this technique is made because there are so many secondary school students in the selected sample area that have an equal chance of providing information related to this study while purposive sampling technique will be used to select teachers with inclusion of school heads. The sample of the teachers comprised ten percent (10%) of the teachers' population under this study as the academic subject. According to Babbie (2005) and Gay & Airasian (2003) described that for descriptive studies, a sample of ten to twenty percent (10%-20%) of the population is recommendable. A sample of 230 respondents will be selected and comprising 150 students, 10 school heads and 70 teachers.

G. DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTS

This study employed both closed and open ended questionnaire and focused group discussion administered to all teachers, school heads and students respectively. Therefore, survey questionnaires (closed and opened ended) and focused group discussion schedule used in gathering data. For the questionnaire, data were collected soon after a lesson or teacher finished teaching a class. Focused group discussion conducted with teachers and students during the break time so as to make teachers and students attend the lesson as per their timetable. The sections below provide descriptions of the instruments that were used in data collection.

a. FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION

Two or more discussions conducted in each secondary school whereby every selected student and teachers were supposed to involve in either of the two discussions which were held at their schools. Each focused group discussion comprised of 6 to 8 randomly selected participants in which a researcher participate fully in all discussions which were conducted to every school. The key guiding questions were prepared ahead of time and were tested before they are taken to the field.

b. QUESTIONNAIRES

English questionnaire for students, school heads and teachers used to obtain responses related to the key points being dealt with. The closed ended questions have been preferred for the purpose of serving time and cost. The questionnaire included several items regarding to teachers absenteeism, factors for absence, impact for absenteeism and way forward to mitigate the situation to the school teachers. These items had an important role to play in determining impact of teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievements.

H. VALIDATION AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

Validity and reliability were essential for the effectiveness of any research and test (Enon, 1998). To improve face validity a pilot study was conducted in a first week after coming out the quarantine of 14 days due to the fear of COVID-19 which responses to each item were scrutinized to

identify any misunderstandings and ambiguity. Items that were found to be misunderstood or ambiguous were modified thereby improving face validity.

The other type of validity, content validity, refers to whether an instrument provides adequate coverage of a topic. Expert opinions and literature searches were used to improve content validity. Therefore, instruments that used for data collection were discussed before implementation by different lecturers and the supervisor. The questionnaires and group discussion guides were edited to remove unnecessary information before they are taken to the respondents. The pilot study (pre-testing) on the mentioned above instruments aimed at correcting language which was used, terminologies not commonly understood and the whole sentences which might not relate to the study and to detect the part which could be seen with some contradictions for correction making.

I. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The permission for data collection was sought from NIEPA and from the Regional Administrative Secretary, Municipal Director and Municipal Education Officer of Tabora Municipality where this study was conducted. The researcher went to the selected schools without sending any research assistant, this insured that questionnaires reached the respondents and returned back after filling in. For each of the closed ended questionnaires, the respondents were required to tick (✓) the answers that best represent their views out of the choices provided.

J. DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative data were analyzed by using Microsoft office excel software (MS- Excel 2010) and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SSPS) version 20.0. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were calculated in order to make inference of the findings. Qualitative data were analyzed using Thematic Analysis. Therefore, qualitative data from open ended questionnaire and FGDs were processed through editing, coding, classifying the data and putting in table, so as to condense the obtained information to make easy of review of many information at once.

K. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Researcher adhered to ethical principles, rules and guidelines necessary in research process. Therefore, this study employed high ethical standards in order to improve the quality of data collected and to ensure that future education researchers get access to respondents. When research deals with humans, the concern should be on context in the research setting or activity that do not respect and protect research participants, ensure a fair and just process, that obtain informed consent and anything else that could potentially harm participants (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). Therefore, in order to make this study ethical a number of issues will be considered before and during data collection.

a. PRE-DATA COLLECTION PHASE

Before the study was undertaken, formal ethical approval was sought from the NIEPA. This process involved the submission of the approved proposal with clear information on the nature of the study, the aims and objectives of the study, methods of recruiting participants, recruitment forms and other relevant documents upon request. Upon approval by the NIEPA, the research instruments were subjected to pilot study. Questions or responses which were observed to be ambiguous during the pilot study were rearticulated.

The pilot study was followed by identification of potential and consent with respondents. In order to gain informed consent of participants, a short description of the study was clearly given to potential participants. This clarity informed them about the purpose, method and intended possible use of research. This description also informed potential participants about their roles in this research, the need for honesty in collecting and objectivity in reporting data. At that stage, it was viewed important that the potential respondents were given opportunities to ask questions and discuss with peers about the research and their rights (Creswell, 2012). Broom (2006) suggests that it is vital that the process of getting consent involves the participant having a clear idea about what they are consenting to and when their involvement begin and end. This process also involved seeking consent to access documents for review.

b. DATA COLLECTION PHASE

During data collection phase, the integrity in the field was considered as an ethical issue. To maintain integrity in research, Boud, Cohen, and Walker (2000) suggest that, constant review of the degree to which participants are willingly to provide information and the degree to which FGDs are appropriate for the research questions can maintain the research integrity. Therefore, in this study open ended questionnaire and FGDs will be limited to what is relevant to the research although the discussion was allowed to progress as determined by the participants. The FGD processes were sought to work through participants' experiences or guided conversation.

L. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Data presentation adopted concurrent triangulation procedures as recommended in Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) and Bryman (2012) where quantitative data gathered through survey questionnaire will be triangulated with qualitative data gathered via FGDs. Eventually, qualitative data were supported with excerpts extracted from the best quotes of respondents participated in the discussion.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter included data presentations, analysis of data and discussion of results based on the study objectives. The chapter was divided into the following sections:-the response rate of the sampled respondents, section of demographic information of teachers, section of school Headmasters/Mistresses perception in relation to teacher absenteeism, section of reasons for teacher absenteeism as perceived by both teachers and section of personal factors influencing teacher absenteeism as perceived by both teachers and school Headmasters/Mistresses.

Also the section of environmental factors influencing teacher absenteeism as perceived by both teachers and Headmasters/Mistresses, section of any other causes of teacher absenteeism and finally section of proposed mitigation measures to reduce the teacher absenteeism.

B. RESPONSE RATE OF THE SAMPLED RESPONDENTS

Table 4.2 shows response rate of sampled respondents. The researcher issued questionnaires to 70 teachers and 10 Headmasters/Mistresses. The filled questionnaires were collected at the same date of visit no any questionnaire was lost. The arrangement for focused group discussion was conducted with the few school heads while documentary review was done in five schools to represent the rest. Other questionnaires were distributed to 150 students, only 100 (66.3%) were returned.

Category	Targeted Population	Sample Population	Respondents	Percentages
Teachers	700	70	70	100
School Heads	10	10	10	100
Students	1500	150	100	66.3
Total	2210	230	180	88.7

Source: Field Data (2020)

Table 4.2: Response Rate of the Sampled Respondents

Table 4.2 indicates the response rates from three categories of respondents namely: teachers, school heads and students. The table reveals that 70 (100%) teachers responded to the questionnaires. It was very easy to collect all questionnaires from the teachers since they were distributed the same day and collected on the same day. For the school heads, 10 (100%) responded to the questionnaire and 5 (50%) of them also involved in the focused group discussion.

The table 4.2 indicates that 100 (66.3%) of the students responded to the questionnaires provided to them. This happened when they were given questionnaire and at the same time they had to attend extra activities, attending tea breaks and many other factors which lead to their failure of returning the questionnaires.

C. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 4.3 provides cross tabulation of teacher's perception on background information in relation to teacher

absenteeism. This study examined the background information of the respondents who are secondary teachers, school heads and students. Thus, the information on participants' demographic characteristics was essential in examining their capabilities in responding the specific questions given to them. Questionnaires and focused group discussions were used to gather the demographic characteristics of respondents that included gender, age, length of services (years), teaching subjects to teachers, class of study to students, qualification and class level of students.

Sample characteristics		Respondents	
Items	Criteria	Students	Teachers Heads
Gender	Male	35 (35)	40 (57.1) 8 (80)
	Female	65(65)	30 (42.9) 2 (20)
Age	Below 15 years	12(12)	
	15-20	70 (70)	
	20-25	17 (17)	
	25-30	1 (1)	20 (28.6)
	30-35		37 (52.8)
Year of Study	35-above		13 (18.6) 10 (100)
	Form three	63(63)	
	Form four	26(26)	
	Form five	11(11)	
Educational Qualification	Certificate		
	Diploma		10 (14.3)
	Degree		50 (71.4) 4 (40)
	Masters		10 (14.3)
Teaching Subject	PhD		6 (60)
	Mathematics		10 (14.3)
	English		19 (27.1)
	Language		23 (32.9)
	Kiswahili		12 (17.1)
	Biology		5 (7.1)
	Chemistry		1(1.4)
	Physics		
	History		
	Civics		
Length of Service	General Studies		
	Agricultural		
	0-5 yrs		11(15.7)
	5-10		46 (65.7) 3(30)
	10-15		13(18.6) 7(70)
	15 above		

Key: Value in table above represent frequency and percentage in brackets.

Source: Field Data (June, 2020).

Table 4.3: Descriptive statistics of sample characteristics (N=180)

a. STUDENTS

One hundred (100) students participated in this study. 35% of students were males, while 65% of them were females. Students below 15years were 12%, while 70% of students aged between 15-20 years and those aged between 20-25 years

were 17%. Only one (1%) of students was above 25 years. In addition, 63% of students were in form three classes, 26% were form four students and 11% were form five. The students undertook different subjects as the school description.

The study required a large number of form three and form four respondents because they had more experience as they had stayed at school for two and 3years respectively, they had an added advantage in informing about the impacts of teachers absenteeism over students academic achievements. Females are many compared to males, because they were eager to know what is going on teachers' absenteeism over students' performance in Tabora region than males.

b. TEACHERS

Table 4.3 indicates that 57.1% of male teachers and 42.9% female teachers were engaged in the study, in which most of them aged between 30-35 years by 52.8%. Teachers (65.7%) had working experience ranging between 5-10 years; 18.6% had working experience ranging between 5-10 years and 15.6% of teachers had a working experience below five (5) years.

Educational Qualification, 71.4% of teachers had Bachelor Degrees in different specializations, while 14.3% of teachers had master degree in different specializations. The same teachers with Diploma qualification were about 14.3%. It adds value that, 32.9% of the teachers were scientists and specifically biology teachers.

c. SCHOOL HEADS

Table 4.3 indicates that 80% of the school heads were males while 20% were females. They all have more than 35 years old. 60% of the school heads were having Master degree while 40% of them had Bachelors degree. This implies good in decision making basing on academic qualifications. Also the table indicates that 70% of the respondents had enough working experience ranging between 10-15 years old in the field of teaching, while only 30% of the school heads ranged between 5-10 years of working experiences.

D. REASONS FOR TEACHERS' ABSENTEEISM

The teachers were required to indicate reasons for their absenteeism at schools. This was affirmed in the questionnaire, focused group discussion and the analysis of documents obtained at the respective schools. The teachers indicated the reasons for their absenteeism, which were categorized into personal, school, environmental and others. Table 4.4 shows the frequencies and percentages of the reported reasons.

Reported reasons	Frequency	percentage (%)
Personal	35	50
School	45.7	32
Environmental	1	1.4
Others	2	2.9

Source: Field Data (June, 2020).

Table 4.4: Reasons for Teacher Absenteeism (N=70)

Table 4.4 shows that personal factors formed the highest absence rate (50 %) followed by school factors (45.7%), environmental factors (1.4 %) and others (2.9 %) respectively.

E. PERSONAL FACTORS TEACHERS’ ABSENTEEISM

Referring to the teachers’ opinions on personal factors which influence teacher absenteeism as provided in table 4.4 and with the responses of those who strongly agreed and agreed, 35 teachers (50%) out of the 70 teachers noted that teachers’ illness causes absenteeism. Under focused group discussions with the school heads, it was also supported by 10 (100%) that teachers’ illness causes absenteeism, likely to pretending sick also becomes an issue to most teachers in terms of absenteeism.

Chaudhury et al. (2006), is in agreement with this study indicating that 10% of the teachers’ absenteeism is attributed to illness. Likewise, Habyarimana, et al. (2004), found similar results in Uganda and Zanzibar that HIV infection was responsible for the largest share of teachers' absenteeism.

Additionally, several teachers agreed that family conflict causes absenteeism and drug abuse among teachers cause absenteeism respectively. Interview done to 05(50%) School Headmasters/mistresses said also family conflict causes absenteeism represented 5 school heads. Likewise, school heads that is 10 (100%) Headmasters/Mistresses noted that drug and substance abuse among teachers causes teachers’ absenteeism.

In focused group discussion made with the school heads, some questions which were asked include “How many teachers (average) attend school every day of work?” The corresponding answers on the questions were about 86% of the staff teachers attend while 14% of the respondents do not attend regularly. The common reasons that are being provided by teachers are family matters.

“Sometimes family conflict causes absenteeism” this is in line with the research done by Musyoki, 2015 entitled key factors influencing teacher absenteeism in public secondary schools in Nzau sub count Makueni County in Kenya, who noted that 37 teachers (77.08 %) and 37 teachers (77.09%) of the teachers agreed that family conflict causes absenteeism and drug substance abuse among teachers causes absenteeism.

Key: Value in table above represent frequency and percentage in brackets.

Source: Field Data (June, 2020)

Table 4.5: Personal Factors Influencing Absenteeism of Teachers (N=170)

Results in table 4.5 show that, majority of teachers 45 (64.3%) strongly agreed that Drug and substance abuse among teachers cause absenteeism inclined with 13(18.6%) that drug abuse to some teachers cause school absenteeism. It is indicated that family conflicts cause teachers absenteeism 6(60%) of the school heads agreed with this. 53 (72.6%) of the teachers agreed too that family conflicts tend to bring back the development of the school. This implies that many teachers stop going at their schools due to several factors illness being inclusive as indicated in table 4.4.

When focused group discussion data were analyzed, it was revealed that teachers and students did not accept (strongly disagreed) that older teachers are absent more often than young colleagues 46(65.7%), similar to school heads disagreed that elders are absent more often than young colleagues 5(50%). This study is in line with Pitts, (2010) and Obiero, O.,et al. (2017) who suggested that older teachers might have fewer absences because they can purchase service credit on retirement using unused sick days. The study is contrary to the research done by Musyoki (2015) in Kenya who discovered that the principals agreed that older teachers are absent more often than young colleagues. This may be the factor of retirement age limit depending to country to country.

In one of the FGDs on personal factors, some of the factors were answered during the discussion.

“Teachers with high qualification are more absent than less qualified colleagues especially when they miss ruling posts, also do perform poorly at their schools and become disturbing people.” [Focused group discussion on 30th June, 2020]

Basing on the above discussion, teachers with high qualification starting with Master Degrees tend not to attend the classroom sessions especially when they miss ruling powers. This may cause to poor academic achievements of the students. This is supported by Musyoki (2015) who discovered that 7(70.83%) of the principals said that high ranked teachers tend to be absent more often.

In addition, the school heads who suggested that married teachers tend to be more absent than the single colleagues were 02(20%) as shown in table 4.5. Though, most of the respondents disagreed with this factor that is very little to justify the attendance of the married teachers 45(64.3). These facts were also established by Glewwe & Kremer (2006), in the study which showed that teachers join the teaching profession when they are highly motivated but then “burnout” as the age of the teacher increases and marriage is done.

In addition, Musyoki (2015) identified that 34(70.83%) of the teachers and 10(83.34%) of the principals noted that married teachers tend to be more absent than the single colleagues which could be due to household responsibilities.

F. SCHOOL FACTORS FOR TEACHERS’ ABSENTEEISM

In the focused group discussion done on 15.09.2020 in

Personal Factors	Respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teachers' illness causes absenteeism	Heads	6(60)	4(40)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	1.40	.60
	Teachers	35(70)	10(14.3)	5(7.1)	15(21.4)	5(7.1)	1.59	.78
Female teachers are absent more often than male colleagues.	Heads	7(70)	1(10)	00(00)	2(20)	00(00)	1.90	.91
	Teachers	10(14.3)	6(8.6)	4(5.7)	20(28.6)	30(42.9)	1.67	.86
Older teachers are absent more often than young colleagues	Heads	00(00)	1(10)	00(00)	5(50)	4(40)	1.95	.94
	Teachers	2(2.9)	10(14.3)	00(00)	12 (17.1)	46(65.7)	1.76	.78
Drug and substance abuse among teachers cause absenteeism	Heads	6(60)	3(30)	00(00)	1(10)	00(00)	1.90	.45
	Teachers	45(64.3)	13(18.6)	00(00)	6(8.6)	6(8.6)	1.61	.69
Family conflict causes teachers absenteeism	Heads	6(60)	4(40)	00(00)	00(00)	00(00)	1.75	.72
	Teachers	53(72.6)	11(15.7)	00(00)	4(5.7)	3(4.3)	1.85	.83
Married teachers tend to be more absent than the Single colleagues	Heads	2(20)	00(00)	00(00)	3(30)	5(50)	1.80	.77
	Teachers	6(8.6)	6(8.6)	00(00)	13(18.6)	45(64.3)	1.60	.03

Tabora Municipal on the perception of teachers and school heads to factors and their influence on absenteeism was that “staff welfare and get together in schools reduce teacher absenteeism”. This shows that more than teachers and slightly more school heads agree that staff welfare in schools reduces teacher absenteeism. In addition, it’s true that good leadership style of the school head provides a conducive working environment which reduces teacher absenteeism based (focused group discussion, 2020), between teachers and school heads. Then, most of the teachers and the principals in totality agree that good leadership style of the school head provides a conducive working environment, which reduces teacher absenteeism.

Again, teacher’s regular supervision by the school head reduces teacher absenteeism as per discussion with the school heads. Moreover, Quality Assurance and Standards Officers guide book describes that regular school assessment reduces teacher absenteeism. If Tabora Municipal Educational Officers regular visit school for assessment reduces teacher absenteeism.

Thus 52.08 % of the teachers agreed that regular school assessment by the quality assurance and standards officers reduces teacher absenteeism. Majority of the school heads affirmed this suggestion that school assessment by ministry of officials reduces teacher absenteeism.

These findings matched to those found by Rockoff (2008), in New York City that monitoring program reduce teacher’s absenteeism, and improve retention. Also the findings are in line with Duflo & Hanna (2005) in India that teacher’s attendance improved when cameras to monitor attendance were introduced. Glewwe & Kremer (2006), in the country survey report that monitoring of teachers by school accompanied by disciplinary action reduces teacher’s absenteeism evidenced a high rate of attendance.

Most of the school teachers showed that schools with poor infrastructure do experience more teacher absenteeism (focused group discussion, 2020). These findings are contrary to those by Chaudhury, et al. (2006) that average schools with best infrastructure and equipment had far much lower absence rate than those with worst infrastructure even after controlling other factors Musyoki (2015).

The findings of this study conquers with those of Glewwe & Kremer (2006), which indicated that schools with good quality infrastructure and adequate teaching and learning equipments have smaller absence rate.

G. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS FOR ABSENTEEISM OF TEACHERS

Table 4.7 displays how teachers and schools heads respectively look on environmental factors and their influence on teacher absenteeism. 56(80%) of the teachers and 7(70%) of school heads observed that teachers who come from poor background are rarely absent. The assignment of other non-teaching duties in the society causes teacher absenteeism, 45 (64.3%) of the teachers agreed while 4(40%) of the school heads disagreed with the reason.

In the focused group discussion, it was noted that environmental issues like teaching in the village (local community) and teaching in town is seen in the way that, most

of the teachers wish to teach in town than in the village. This is affiliated with teachers leaving in towns while teaching in local communities. They are then affected with the school time table since they do not go daily to school due to distance issues as in table 4.7 below 48 (68.6%).

The findings of the absence rate is higher for teachers who do not come from the local community, this go contrary with the findings established by Alcazar, et al, (2004) and Hubbell (2008), who observed that teachers having a local origin have lower absenteeism rate than those from other communities and that indigenous teachers tend to be more absent than non- indigenous teachers.

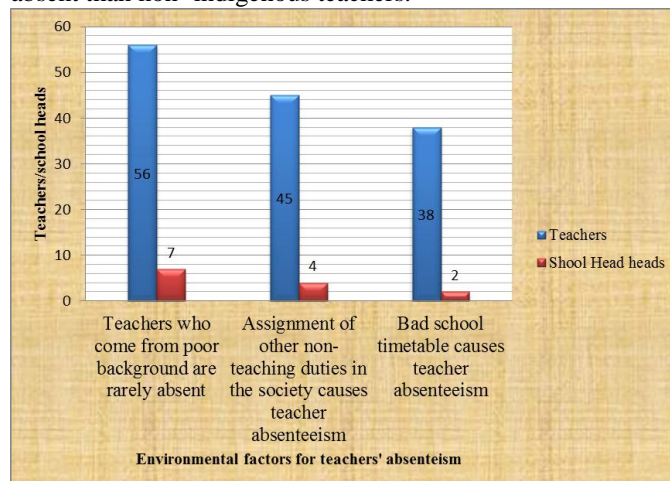


Table: 4.7: Environmental Factors Influencing Absenteeism of Teachers (N=80)

H. OTHER FACTORS FOR TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

It may be expressed in any way that one may look on this factor for teacher absenteeism through observation of different factors not mentioned prior. In a focused group discussion one of the respondents spoke that:

“If my child or any other house hold becomes sick I do take all responsibilities to the hospital for the checkup, my husband just go to work and if possible may inform the authority or not” [Focused group discussion on June, 2020]

Most of the students argued that ignorance among the teachers are the leading cause of teacher absenteeism with a high rate followed by attending further studies, court cases, religious issues, social factors and insecurity which has a rate of second as it was discussed in the focused group discussion with students.

I. THE IMPACTS OF TEACHERS’ ABSENTEEISM ON THE STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN TABORA MUNICIPAL

Findings drew in tables 4.4, 4.5, 4.7; documentary review and several focused group discussions show that teachers’ absenteeism has great impacts to students’ academic performance. Many respondents believed that the absence of teachers there is a possibility of not accomplishing the syllabus being taught to be incomplete and then this yields to poor academic performance.

Several findings revealed that current trends of teacher absenteeism seriously disrupt the learning environment of the

classroom. Other studies went further to show that when teachers are absent in classrooms, there is a certain percent that is reduced to the achievement of the students (Mwesiga, 2016).

In a focused group discussion, it was noted that, most of the young teachers do not like teaching. Teachers entered into teaching career because of the Government loans and employment opportunities. Several young teachers said:-

"Dear researcher, most of secondary schools here in Tabora Municipal has young teachers whose age range from 27-38 years. We young teachers, we are called by seniors that teachers who do not like teaching (teaching is not our first priority) in many cases. At the end of the day, many teachers take loans from financial institutions and run away from teaching and leaving students without teachers to replace." [Focused group discussion on July, 2020]

Several studies indicate that teacher presence in schools matter and there is no doubt that teacher absence has an effect on the achievements of the students (Miller, Murnane & Willet, 2007). Also on the same view, Dorward (2000) cited in Brown and Arnell (2012), intimated that teacher absenteeism has a direct impact on student achievement.

The study done in the United States of America in 2006 conducted in North Carolina, rural, urban, and suburban districts were analyzed and it was determined that each 10 days of teacher absence reduced "student achievement by 1% or 2% of a standard deviation (Brown & Arnell, 2012). These findings clearly show how teachers' absenteeism affects students' academic performance.

In one of the focused group discussion, it was raised by one of the students that many students come from different historical backgrounds of life then:-

"Most of the students coming from the poor families fail due to lack of books and tuitions for compensating the lost time due to absence of the teacher. The poor in most cases underperform due to lack of money to pay for the extra lessons and the rich ones have the opportunity to pay for the extra lessons to compensate the lost lessons in their schools due to teacher absenteeism" [Focused group discussion on July, 2020].

It is now seen that, many students from minority group, poor families and remote society miss good education and at the end of the day is poor academic performance and poor discipline in the society. This is supported by the study done by Mwesiga, (2016) who reported that one parent commented that they consider teachers to be the "port" that cooks children but when they are absent no close follow up hence our children will not be cooked in a way that is expected.

Furthermore, the raised concern here by the parent is of disciplinary matters and this concern is in line with what Mbonambi (2002) intimated that in an extreme case the impacts of teachers' absenteeism is evident in those learners who roam around the streets during school hours. Consequently, the absence of teachers results to students "misbehaviors such as truancy, a decline in students" performance and being disrespectful to his/ her elders (Mwesiga, 2016). It is obvious when teachers are absent students are reduced from learning opportunities. Students should be taught daily as the time table of the school indicates to avoid them from becoming street children.

J. POSSIBLE MEASURES TO REDUCE TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

Basing on the information given by students, teachers and school heads in the focused group discussion done in June, 2020 reported that "proper supervision reduces teacher absenteeism by the highest rate". When school heads and the school management create conducive environment like paid annual leave, public holidays maintained, salary increments, supply of water, public transport, electricity, good salaries and any other kind of the related motivation to the school teachers lead to better teaching of teachers.

To make a justification of the above findings one of the heads had this to say:-

"In some villages of Tabora municipal have no water and electricity, it is very difficult to some teachers to live there. What they normally do is to live in town, everyday go and return which at the end cause them to stop at least one day or two days a week. It is advised that the government should look on this and intervene to solve the prevailing problem. Teachers will be attracted to be near the school and will not live far away from their respective schools" [Focused group discussion on August, 2020].

In a focused group discussion, one teacher spoke that:-

Teachers do not hate teaching, except we are sometimes demoralized by supervisors who come and abuse us. Teachers need support, advice, counseling and directives to reach the prescribed objectives of schools." [Focused group discussion on August, 2020]

Mwesiga, (2016) identified that close supervision is also stressed and some of the heads who proposed this believe strongly that if supervision is done accordingly the rate of teacher absenteeism can be reduced. It is also in line with Mgonja (2017) who reported that the supervision of the heads of the school in collaboration with their administrative assistants like deputy heads and academic and teachers on duty results into better performance. Through this collaboration, then teachers' absenteeism is reduced.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of study approach, analysis procedures and the major findings of the study based on the specific research objectives stated in chapter one. It also gives a general conclusion and recommendations on findings of impacts of the teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievement. In particular, the chapter opens an overview for the need of further research on this problem.

B. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter one of this study established the purpose of the study which was to examine the impacts of the teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievement in Tabora Municipality. Specifically, the study aimed to investigate on:-

- ✓ To identify factors contributing to teachers' absenteeism in public secondary schools in Tabora municipal.
- ✓ To examine the impacts of teachers' absenteeism in public secondary schools on students' academic achievements.
- ✓ To suggest way forward for solving the problem of teachers' absenteeism in public secondary school in Tabora municipal.

Chapter two of this study reviewed literatures indicated that, extensive study on the impacts of the teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievements has been done worldwide. However, studies done to address the impacts of teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievements are very few. Furthermore, in Tanzania context, studies addressing the impacts of teachers' absenteeism are very few, specifically, Tabora Municipality nothing have been done. In addition, literatures reviewed explained the primary teachers' absenteeism, legal procedures for unlawful teachers, policies and general aspects of teaching.

Chapter three presents the methodology used in the study. It displayed strategies for sample selection, the sample and sample characteristics. It also described the process for data collection that is the approach and design, research instruments and procedures for data collection and analysis. It also discussed on validity and reliability as well as ethical issues observed in this study.

C. SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS

- The study has revealed that,
- ✓ It was reported that personal factors for teachers' absenteeism formed the highest absence rate (50 %) followed by school factors (45.7%), environmental factors (1.4 %) and others (2.9 %) respectively.
 - ✓ The findings from this study has described that the differences between male and female teachers' absenteeism were marginal.
 - ✓ Gender issue is not a significant factor to be used in predicting ones levels of absenteeism.
 - ✓ Majority of the school heads and school teachers viewed the levels of absenteeism among the single teachers and married teachers were low in their schools.
 - ✓ Teachers' illness causes absenteeism. Teachers' opinions on personal factors which influence teacher absenteeism as provided in table 4.4 and with the responses of those who strongly agreed and agreed, 35 teachers (50%) out of the 70 teachers noted that teachers' illness causes absenteeism. Under focused group discussions with the school heads, it was also supported by 10 (100%) that teachers' illness causes absenteeism, likely to pretending sick also becomes an issue to most teachers in terms of absenteeism.
 - ✓ Teachers and students strongly disagreed that older teachers are absent more often than young colleagues 46(65.7%), similar to school heads disagreed that elders are absent more often than young colleagues 5(50%).
 - ✓ Teachers with high qualification are more absent than less qualified colleagues especially when they miss duty posts.

- ✓ Teachers with high qualifications perform poorly at their schools and become disturbing people when they miss duty posts.
- ✓ There is a direct impact to the students' academic achievement in terms of final results when teachers miss classes.
- ✓ Majority of teachers 45 (64.3%) strongly agreed that Drug and substance abuse among teachers cause absenteeism.
- ✓ It is indicated that family conflicts cause teachers absenteeism 6(60%) of the school heads agreed with this. 53 (72.6%) of the teachers agreed too that family conflicts tend to bring back the development of the school. This implies that many teachers stop going at their schools due to several factors as indicated in table 4.4.
- ✓ The individual assignments of other non-teaching duties in the society causes teacher absenteeism, 45 (64.3%) of the teachers agreed
- ✓ Staff welfare and get together in schools reduce teacher absenteeism
- ✓ About 52.08 % of the teachers agreed that regular school assessment by the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers reduces teacher absenteeism
- ✓ Teachers' absenteeism seriously disrupt the learning environment of the classroom
- ✓ Many students from minority group, poor families and remote society miss good education and at the end of the day is poor academic performance and indiscipline people in the society
- ✓ Teachers do not hate teaching, except they are sometimes demoralized by supervisors
- ✓ Teachers need support, advice, counselling and directives to reach the prescribed objectives of schools
- ✓ The government should intervene to solve the prevailing basic needs' problems. Teachers will be attracted to be near the school and will not live far away from their respective schools.

D. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- ✓ Through general findings, if all causes of teachers' absenteeism are mitigated, the following issues are identified
- ✓ High class attendance- This reduces the dropout
- ✓ Enough tests and exercises-Improves academic performance to the students
- ✓ Time table become considered and followed well-Low students truancy
- ✓ Teacher become role model to the students- High students discipline
- ✓ Personal motivation is an important factor which forces teachers to improve their teaching methods and contribute to the learning processes by the students.
- ✓ Gender issue is not a significant factor to be used in predicting ones levels of absenteeism
- ✓ Tanzania would support itself on teachers absenteeism to attain creativity, innovativeness and a high level of quality education in order to respond to development,

challenges and effectively competence regionally and internationally

- ✓ The government should intervene to solve the prevailing basic needs' problems to teachers living in the villages. Teachers will be attracted to be near the school and will not live far away from their respective schools
- ✓ Teachers' absenteeism seriously disrupt the learning environment of the classroom
- ✓ Teachers do not hate teaching, except they are sometimes demoralized by supervisors

F. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section points out the recommendations based on the findings and the conclusion drawn in this study. It highlighted several issues that needs attention and hence needs to be addressed in order to enhance the effectiveness of teaching/learning and thus be able to monitor teachers' attendance in secondary schools. In this section two categories of recommendations are addressed; namely, recommendation for action and recommendation for further studies.

a. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIONS

This study recommends that the negative perception developed by school heads and some few teachers that female teachers had a tendency of being absent more than male counterparts should be eliminated. It is also recommended that the school boards should consider awarding exemplary teacher who assist students to perform well annually as well as enforcing existing sanctions fairly and consistently for the same reasons.

In view of the findings, the study recommends schools to introduce the biometric attendance register that will be ideal to curb absenteeism. Furthermore, teachers' attendance record should be used by Municipal Human Resources Officers as one of the criteria during promotion. This would likely curb voluntary absenteeism by teachers.

b. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- ✓ There is a need to conduct a study across all secondary schools (Private and Public) in different regions to determine the impacts of teachers' absenteeism to students' academic achievement.
- ✓ Further teachers' absenteeism research needs to be done to establish the resource distributions' policy to provide basic needs both rural and urban.

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