

Factors Affecting the Attendance of Advanced Level Students in Government Schools in Sri Lanka

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100400571>

Received: 22 April 2026; Accepted: 29 April 2026; Published: 19 May 2026

ABSTRACT

It is aimed at identifying factors which affect attendance to school for Advanced Level students in government schools in Sri Lanka, with special emphasis on Arts and Commerce streams, since attendance is gradually increasing as an issue, with negative bearing as irregular attendance affects their performance, motivation, and mental well-being as well. This study adopts a mixed method technique, which combines both surveys and interviews, in order to address in-depth different elements concerning attendance. Samples comprising 400 students have been used in this study, with a well-structured questionnaire regarding student preferences, teacher and subject considerations, physical and mental capabilities, non-collegiate activities, facilities in the classroom, personal and health-related considerations, and family and support considerations. Semi-structured interviews with parents and teachers have been conducted in addition to data collection, with views and perceptions regarding attendance in broader regards being addressed. For the quantitative data, the methods employed include descriptive statistics, reliability coefficient, correlation, and regression using the SPSS package, while the thematic analysis was employed on the qualitative data from the interviews. From the findings, it was shown that home environment and support from the parents, followed by activities away from the college, classroom facilities, and teachers, had the greatest effects on attendance. Student preferences and health-related matters had a mediocre effect on attendance. Using thematic analysis, it was observed that while the main focus of the parents is on well-structured programming, finance, and support, the teachers' main focus is on motivation in the classroom and in the institution, including overcrowding. Based on the results, this study suggests that measures be taken in improving teaching practices, provision of better classroom facilities, parent involvement, provision of counseling services, and establishing effective attendance management systems. The researcher confirms that by providing a conducive environment that encourages students to be in school on a daily basis, it will help improve students' results. The importance of the study is that it explains the various aspects of absenteeism in the government schools of Sri Lanka.

Keywords: School attendance, absenteeism, student motivation, parental involvement, classroom factors

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Attending school is basic but important for every student's learning in any country. Students who come to school every day usually perform better, grasp the material more easily and forge good relationships with both teachers and peers. Learning Math and Science is only a part of what happens at school; it also helps young people grow emotionally, socially and mentally. In Sri Lanka, the G.C.E. Advanced Level (A/L) examination is a key moment in a student's school experience. The exam is seen as a way to gain access to universities and professional jobs. So, it is very important for students to attend A/L classes as often as possible to follow the syllabus, study for tests and get help from their teachers. Still, schools throughout the country claim that students in the A/L grades are frequently absent from school. It is concerning since it impacts students' ability to study and do well in the examination. It also makes people worry about possible challenges that students face privately. There are a lot of factors that stop A/L students from coming to school every day. A big cause is the tough and heavy curriculum for A/L students which can leave them feeling stressed and exhausted. Learning in this way could make some students feel tired, stressed or unmotivated. Some families have

problems due to financial difficulties. Some students from low-income families have to find jobs to help their families and they may not be able to afford school supplies or transportation. Looking after family is another important part. In houses where parents have long workdays or where younger children live, A/L students may be required to look after things at home. Having a good bus system or well-built roads is hard for many rural areas and sometimes schools are very far from where students live. Mental health is another common cause of missing work. Many teenagers deal with stress, anxiety and low self-confidence. If students are not emotionally supported at school or at home, they might not want to go or may feel isolated. Students might decide not to attend school if they think their environment is hostile or unsupportive. Students who miss many days of school get behind in their studies, have less contact with others and often feel more alone. Because of this, their self-esteem goes down, they skip more lessons and eventually they quit.

This work seeks to learn the reasons behind students in government schools not attending classes and find ways to support them. The research aims to find out what causes students to be absent and then propose solutions that boost attendance, performance and equality of opportunity for all students.

Statement of the Problem

Although teachers, principals and education authorities have tried a lot to reduce absenteeism, a large number of A/L students in Sri Lanka are still affected by it. Even though the A/L stage matters a lot for students, many do not attend classes regularly. It creates worries about their education and job prospects as well as their exam results. In a lot of schools, it is common for A/L students to be absent for several days or even weeks each month. There are many complex reasons why people may be absent from class. There are students who have to find jobs to help support their families. Other people might be dealing with emotional stress or mental health issues. There are those who think the school environment is dull, uninteresting or even unpleasant. Educators may not be using interesting methods and students might not feel the need to attend classes because private tuition has become more popular. In addition, in rural areas, lacking good roads and far schools make it more difficult for students to attend school daily. Students might not be able to come to school because they are needed to help with siblings or with house duties. Such duties are more common in low-income families, since both parents are often working or not around. A number of studies have examined individual reasons for absence such as issues with transport or mental state, but there is little research on how all these factors join to influence A/L attendance in Sri Lanka. I am trying to address this gap by examining the issue in further detail. If we know how missing school is influenced by academic, emotional, economic, family and logistical factors, we can provide better help to students taking A/Ls. Besides identifying problems, researchers also focus on coming up with solutions schools, communities and policymakers can use.

Importance of the Study

Many members of the education sector, including teachers, principals, education officers, parents and students, can find this study very useful. If we know the reasons behind students' poor school attendance, we can create better strategies to help them. The results can first be used by school administrators and education policymakers to guide their decisions. If transport is a big problem for rural schools, the government can arrange better school buses or give travel subsidies. If mental health is the main reason, schools should hire experts and provide mental health support programs. Secondly, it helps teachers to learn about the unseen difficulties their students go through. Being aware of students' economic, emotional or family issues helps teachers be more considerate and adaptable in their teaching. They could modify their teaching methods or give more help to students who are struggling without speaking up. Third, the study will help parents realize how their actions and home life affect their child's learning. In many cases, parents do not see how much their expectations can contribute to students missing school. Running awareness programs and workshops can help reduce this difference. The main winners in the process are the students themselves. When schools are more supportive, welcoming and attentive to students, they are more likely to keep attending and do well in school. It will give them more choices in college and when looking for a job. Ultimately, the research will provide new data to the academic field because there are few studies on absenteeism in Sri Lanka. Since international studies are accessible, there is also a demand for research that is tailored to the culture and background of Sri Lankan students. All in all, the research aims to create educational equality, lower the number of students dropping out and help achieve the national goal of raising responsible and well-educated citizens.

Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of this study is to explore and analyze the factors that affect the school attendance of Advanced Level students in Sri Lankan government schools. The specific objectives include:

- ✓ To identify and assess the social, economic, and psychological factors influencing attendance.
- ✓ To examine the impact of the home environment, including parental involvement and domestic responsibilities.
- ✓ To evaluate the role of school-based support mechanisms such as counseling and teacher engagement.
- ✓ To analyze the perspectives of students, teachers, and parents regarding attendance challenges.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What are the major social, economic, and psychological factors affecting the regular attendance of A/L students?
- How do household responsibilities and parental involvement influence student attendance?
- In what ways do school-based interventions support or hinder attendance?
- What are the perceptions of stakeholders (students, teachers, and parents) regarding attendance issues?
- What practical strategies can be implemented to enhance attendance rates in A/L classes?

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

Making sure the project's scope is well defined helps maintain attention and results in worthwhile outcomes. This research examines the reasons behind the school attendance of Advanced Level (A/L) students in Sri Lanka and it does so by establishing boundaries that help the study stay organized and meaningful. The decided scope makes it possible for the researcher to study a clear population and gain insights that are valuable and useful in similar schools. This research only looks at students studying in government schools in a chosen educational zone in Sri Lanka. Government schools welcome students from all kinds of social, economic and cultural backgrounds. Selecting government schools prevents the study from including private, semi-government or international schools which have students from different backgrounds, have various resources, are taught by different teachers and are involved differently by parents. In addition, the study focuses on students in Arts and Commerce, not including any students from the Science stream. The reason for this restriction is that Science stream students are involved in different academic routines, use different resources and face different social expectations. Because they must attend labs, participate in group projects and participate in practical sessions overseen by their teachers, Science students are required to attend school more often. This could weaken the focus of this study which is on attendance challenges found more often in the less resource-rich Arts and Commerce streams. Looking at these areas allows the research to study in more detail how economic issues, family tasks, motivational barriers and school assistance affect students. Because these aspects are not as common in the strict setting of Science education, students outside this system can show them more clearly which gives us better data to study. Research will be carried out in one educational zone which can contain both urban, semi-urban and rural schools according to the chosen region. Defining the area helps ensure that data is gathered easily and in the same way each time. Even though the results may be restricted to this area, the approach gives a clearer picture of the problems faced locally, often missing in studies that examine the nation as a whole. Students will be the main group interviewed and the study will also look at perspectives from teachers and parents. Having school principals, zonal education directors or counselors as additional respondents could give different views, but this might make the analysis more

challenging. The research is more useful because it looks at the people who have the most contact with students daily.

Absenteeism caused by medical issues, disciplinary actions or school transfers was not investigated in this study because those are not part of regular attendance behavior. This study looks at aspects that appear frequently, can be prevented or can be changed through school or government action. Also, the research studies students who are still enrolled, not those who have already dropped out. Both groups face alike issues, but the situation of being in school is very different for those who have left and those who are still enrolled. If dropouts are to be included, researchers would need to ask new questions and change their methods. All in all, this study only includes A/L students from Arts and Commerce streams, studying at government schools in one educational zone in Sri Lanka. Such limits on the sample, by excluding Science stream students, private/international schools and long-term absentees due to medical or disciplinary reasons, ensure the study is about regular absenteeism in daily education. Although these restrictions keep the findings from being used everywhere, they improve the study's accuracy and relevance for places with similar students and issues.

Structure of the Research

To maintain clarity, coherence and high academic standards, the research is divided into five logically arranged chapters. Every chapter is important in meeting the research objectives and taking the reader through the entire research process, from finding the problem to proposing a solution.

Introduction

The first chapter introduces the main ideas for the entire study. The first step is to look at the background of the problem, showing how school attendance fits into the overall system of education in Sri Lanka. Next comes the statement of the problem which states why it is important to study why A/L students are absent. After that, the chapter outlines the research's significance and how it might help teachers, parents, education authorities and students. In addition, this chapter sets out the main objectives and questions, making it clear what the research is looking for. The scope and delimitations section defines the areas that are studied and those that are not. In essence, Chapter One gives the reader a clear summary of the research's purpose, direction and significance.

Literature Review

This chapter examines existing studies and research that talk about student attendance, absenteeism and A/L education in Sri Lanka and other countries. It starts by using a theory, in this case Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, as a way to interpret student behavior. After that, similar studies are reviewed to find out what is already known, what has been found repeatedly and where more research is needed. The chapter ends by summarizing the research and stating how it stands out from and adds to what is already available. It helps the reader know the situation, see why the study is necessary and prove its originality.

Research Methodology

The chapter explains the methods that will be used in the research. It outlines the research design that mixes different methods to give a complete view of the issue. This chapter explains who the study is targeting, how data will be gathered by sampling and the questionnaires and interview guides used. The way data will be studied is also explained: quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (SPSS) and qualitative data will be interpreted through thematic analysis. This section explains the methods used to protect the participants' information, ask for informed consent and obey review board guidelines. At the end of the chapter, readers will know how to collect, handle and analyze the data to answer the research questions.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section deals with the greatest amount of data. It starts with sharing the demographic information about the students, for example, their age, gender, financial background and similar important details. After that, the

chapter describes the findings related to the main themes included—economic issues, school responsibilities, supporting family, emotional well-being and infrastructure. Tables, graphs and charts will be used to show data mainly in the quantitative part of the report. For the qualitative part, the most important quotes and main topics from interviews will be shown.

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The research findings are summarized and concrete recommendations are presented in the last chapter. The report starts with a summary of main findings, connecting them to the research questions and objectives. The conclusion then looks at the key points and explains how they can help increase student attendance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Many education systems around the world deal with the ongoing challenge of student absenteeism. It is usually viewed as a sign that there are deeper problems affecting the well-being of students, their families, the school and the community. If students miss a lot of school, they miss lessons, fall behind their classmates and have a harder time doing well academically. The effects of this on their lives include problems in their long-term learning and work options. Therefore, knowing why students are absent is important for helping schools improve their attendance and results. Education plays a major role in helping people grow and advancing a country. For youth in Sri Lanka, education is important because it affects their ability to attend university, move up in society and find work.

For those in Sri Lanka, the G.C.E. Advanced Level (A/L) examination is a key part of their education. It is the last step students need to complete to start university or professional training. So, showing up to school regularly during A/L helps students prepare and perform well in exams. Although A/L education is very important, school authorities and teachers in many areas of Sri Lanka are becoming more concerned because a significant number of A/L students regularly skip school. This should concern us since the A/L curriculum is demanding, moves quickly and requires students to be active all the time. Students who are absent are not present for important lessons, group exercises, comments from the teacher and time to practice again. Not going to class for a few days each month can create holes in a student's education. Absenteeism has many different causes. Many times, it results from a combination of different factors that are connected. In a lot of rural or low-income Sri Lankan families, students often need to help support the family by working, caring for their siblings or doing household chores. But, these obligations prevent students from going to school every day. Students also deal with emotional and psychological difficulties that may not be obvious to teachers or parents. Stress, depression, anxiety or having low self-esteem affect some people. Because of these emotions, students might feel out of touch, uninterested or even scared to attend school. No proper guidance from counselors or mental health professionals adds to the problem. Getting from one place to another is also very important. Most rural areas in Sri Lanka have students living far from schools. They usually depend on unsafe or unreliable public transport or they must walk for long periods, possibly in bad weather. Whenever buses are late or the roads are unsafe, students are more likely to stay home. The environment at school is also very important. When students sense they are not supported, safe or respected at school, they often decide not to come. Harsh rules, weak connections between teachers and students, bullying and dull lessons can discourage students. On the other hand, an encouraging and interactive atmosphere can make students feel comfortable and eager to be there often. Around the world and in Sri Lanka, research has tried to understand these factors. Still, a lot of the studies are about primary or junior secondary students and they only examine one factor at once. Not much research looks at A/L students and explores the effects of several contributing factors at once. Most often, the voices of students their feelings, experiences and requirements are left out of the discussion.

As a result, this literature review has three main functions. First, it explains the main theories that describe why students might attend or skip school. Following this, it looks into prior research on absenteeism by both foreign and Sri Lankan groups. In addition, it points out the missing information that calls for the current research. This chapter therefore provides the basis for a study that explores and attempts to solve the issue of absenteeism among A/L students in government schools in Sri Lanka.

Theoretical Framework

Studying absenteeism in a helpful way involves looking past the actions and finding out what causes them. Instead of just asking if students go to school, it is more important to find out why they go. Why students act the way they do is very important in determining their attendance, academic results and how engaged they are at school. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs which was developed by American psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1943, is one of the most widely accepted theories for understanding human motivation. It is still significant today, mainly in schools, because it shows how certain needs impact a person's decisions and choices such as whether a student will attend class. According to Maslow, each person's needs are organized in a pyramid with five levels, each level linked to a different type of need. Maslow believes that the needs in the pyramid must be met one after another, from the bottom, before a person can concentrate on the next level. The hierarchy consists of five levels called: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization. A person is unable to focus on education, personal goals or being creative when their lower-level needs are not met. The foundation of the pyramid holds the physiological needs which include getting food, water, sleep, clothing and being in good health. To focus on their studies, students have to make sure these necessities are met. If a student does not have enough food or is tired from loud or crowded living conditions, they will probably not pay attention in class. In many parts of rural or low-income areas in Sri Lanka, these problems are usual. Skipping school by some students can be related to their physical health or basic needs, not to their interest in learning

Safety needs come next in the hierarchy. This protects people by ensuring they are safe from injury, their belongings are secure, they have stable housing, their finances are safe and they are not harmed or attacked. In schools, safety also means being free from bullying, harassment or emotional abuse at home or elsewhere. Students who come from unsafe homes, face domestic violence or take unsafe routes to school may feel afraid and anxious which makes it hard for them to go to school regularly. Situations where schools are not well taken care of, lack order or have a lot of bullying are seen by students as unsafe which leads to more absences. Regular school attendance by students is possible when they feel both physically and emotionally safe at school. When someone meets their basic and safety needs, they begin to focus on their need for love and belonging. It covers the feelings people have for each other, friendships, strong family ties and feeling like they belong to a group. How well students are included in the school community has a close link to this need. Feeling appreciated and cared for by others at school makes students more likely to see it as a good and secure place. If a student gets rejected, feels lonely or does not have close friends, they might start to pull back from school. For Sri Lankan students finishing their A/Ls, this stage is crucial since they are very sensitive to what their peers think. After love and belonging, the next need is esteem which covers self-respect, getting noticed by others, being successful and confidence. Students should feel that their efforts are noticed and valued. If a student does not do well often, is frequently told off or feels ignored by the teacher, their self-esteem may drop. Later on, they might feel it is impossible for them to accomplish anything which results in feeling unmotivated and avoiding school. If students get appreciation, motivation and recognition, even without good grades, they tend to remain enthusiastic about their studies. At this point, teachers are very important because acknowledging a student can help their confidence and motivation. The highest level in Maslow's pyramid is self-actualization which means wanting to reach your potential, use your talents, pursue what you want in life and help others. It is here that learning becomes something enjoyable and education is considered an important part of personal development. Some A/L students may want to focus on getting into top universities, starting their careers or achieving things personally. But achieving this stage depends on all the basic needs being satisfied first. A student who has enough to eat, feels safe, has emotional support, is confident and is inspired has a great chance of self-actualization. However, many A/L students in Sri Lanka are unable to reach this stage because of both practical and emotional problems. Without money, inner peace or people who care, students will not do well in school, no matter how much they try.

Maslow's theory encourages people in these areas to see absenteeism as a result of not meeting students' needs, instead of thinking it is caused by laziness or rebellion. A student who misses school to earn money for the family is putting basic needs before his studies. When a girl misses school to take care of her siblings, she is answering her family's call for safety and survival. If someone is depressed or feels bullied, they may skip school to look after their feelings. They do not come from a lack of respect for learning—these decisions are

caused by personal needs that are more important to the individual than school. Because resources and student support are not always available in Sri Lankan government schools, Maslow's theory plays a big role. Schools should realize that raising attendance is more than simply dealing with rules and punishments. It means finding out what each student requires and making sure the environment helps them reach those requirements. Examples of this are to provide lunch to poor students, ensure transportation is secure and dependable, provide ongoing counseling services, train teachers to care for their students and organize activities that help students feel like they are part of the school community. With these needs met, schools can assist students in going up Maslow's hierarchy and achieving their true potential. In short, using Maslow's framework helps us understand why Advanced Level students in Sri Lanka sometimes miss school. It shows why some students focus on family duties, mental well-being or safety instead of school. It also highlights that to see better attendance, educators should use a human-centered method that addresses the primary reasons for absenteeism. If schools, families and communities join forces to address students' basic, emotional and educational needs, the students are much more likely to participate in class, do well and succeed in other areas.

Empirical Studies on School Attendance

Global Perspective

Many researchers have looked at school absenteeism worldwide, finding that factors such as emotion, social life and school settings can affect a student's regular attendance. Kearney (2016) pointed out that emotional and behavioral problems—for example, anxiety, depression and fears of school—can cause adolescents to refuse to go to school. They are usually not easily seen, but they have a big impact on a student's involvement in school. In several developed nations, mental health is now accepted as a main reason for student attendance, mainly during the teenage years when pressures and emotional ups and downs can be high. There is evidence from Gottfried (2014) in the United States that missing even a tenth of the school year seriously affects a student's academic performance. His findings proved that students who are often absent from school struggle more with mathematics and science. A student's academic problems not only decrease their grades, but also raise the chance of them dropping out of school. When students drop out before completing their studies, they have fewer job options and often find it hard to get work which means that absenteeism is an issue that affects society and the economy as well. In the same way, Balfanz and Byrnes (2018) studied how many days students missed in school and found that the more days missed, the lower their learning outcomes became. Losing time in class made students less interested which made them want to skip school even more. Their work points out that recognizing and treating the issue early helps stop students from repeating absences and failing in school. Zins et al. (2017) also contributed to this area by studying school climate and emotional learning. They found that students are more likely to be regular in school if they feel safe, supported and included. If schools put emphasis on emotional learning and provide student-centered guidance, for example through counseling and mentorship, their attendance rates are usually higher. So, if school feels like a place that cares for students as well as teaches them, they are likely to be absent less often.

Sri Lankan Context

Several recent studies have examined absenteeism in Sri Lanka, mainly among Advanced Level (A/L) students. Gunasekara (2018) looked into how changes in the economy affect people's decision to attend events. He realized that a lot of students from low-income families must also work or look after their younger siblings. These tasks cut into time for studying and make it hard for students to be there every day. Since students in rural families are considered important for the family's needs, they often put household work before their studies. There are now major issues with transportation. As stated by Bandara (2020), students in the Central Province have to deal with unreliable buses, need to walk long distances and poor roads. In the rainy season, these problems become even worse because the roads are more difficult to use. So, students from rural or remote areas are more likely to be affected and even those who try hard may not be able to attend school regularly because of these situations. School-aged teens' mental health is also linked to more absences. According to Wickramasinghe and Samarasinghe (2021), there is a strong link between emotional instability and people missing work. Those students with issues such as depression, trauma or anxiety often find it easier to skip school to reduce their emotional stress. It was found that in Sri Lanka, many schools do not offer proper

mental health support or have trained counselors which means students do not receive the help they need to be involved in education. This points out that the school needs a well-structured and welcoming support system. How involved parents are can also influence whether a student comes to school. In a study by Rajapaksha (2019), it was found that more students miss school when their parents have little or no education and are not closely involved with their studies. In several such situations, parents do not supervise their children's homework, communicate with teachers or support the idea of education. Parental encouragement is needed to help students develop the habits needed to come to school on time. If parents are involved in their children's schooling, students tend to be more regular in their school attendance. In addition, Dias (2022) found that motivational elements and teaching methods play a major role in influencing student attendance, mainly for students in A/L Arts and Commerce. Many students said they were unhappy with the teaching style, saying it felt boring, too abstract or unrelated to real situations. Not having guidance about careers and the future made students less interested in studying. When students do not see any importance in what they are learning, they often miss classes more often.

Key Factors Identified in Literature

Several important factors related to school absenteeism are found to appear in the empirical studies conducted in both global and Sri Lankan contexts. They are explained in the sections below.

Socioeconomic Status

Attendance is often affected by how much money the family makes. Those who come from economically disadvantaged families are more likely to face financial challenges which leads them to take on both jobs and responsibilities at home. It is especially noticeable in rural Sri Lanka, where children's schooling is often put aside for their families' work. Not being able to pay for transport, food or school supplies also causes students to miss classes.

Psychological and Emotional Health

Being able to use safe and trustworthy transportation is also very important. Getting to education is difficult for some communities because they have to travel far and transport is not always reliable. Students who must travel far or depend on unreliable buses often decide to stay home from school. Because the infrastructure is poor, students have to deal with bad weather, rough roads and safety issues which results in fewer students attending classes.

Parental Involvement

Struggles like depression, anxiety, trauma and lack of emotional support often make students less willing and able to go to school. Many teenagers keep their feelings hidden, so emotional issues can be very difficult to detect. When mental health support is not available promptly, these problems can make students avoid school and eventually leave.

Parental Involvement

Parents' supervision, motivation and importance they give to education help shape a student's actions. When parents take part in their child's school life by helping with assignments, going to school events and talking to teachers, students tend to feel more encouraged which leads to better school attendance.

School Climate and Support Systems

Having respectful relationships between teachers and students, clear anti-bullying measures and counseling services makes students more likely to come to school every day. However, schools without emotional support, inclusivity or community tend to have more students who miss school. Student-friendly policies and support systems may serve to protect students.

Peer Influence and Motivation

The friendship group a student belongs to and how motivated they are are important too. Good friendships and supportive groups at school can help students attend more often, but being bullied, put down or left out by others can make students less interested in coming. If lessons seem boring or not useful to students, their inner desire to attend school often drops, more often in older students who are already studying for exams.

Research Gaps

The studies I have examined shed light on the causes and effects of absenteeism, but gaps remain, mainly concerning students in Advanced Level (A/L) classes in Sri Lanka. Many studies do not focus specifically on A/L students which is a major limitation. Most research on absenteeism in Sri Lanka looks at all secondary students as one group, without considering the difference between Ordinary Level (O/L) and Advanced Level classes. Because the information is not specific enough, students in A/L are left with a knowledge gap and this gap is greater since they face problems unique to them such as academic pressure, limited time and not knowing what career to choose. At the A/L stage, students must work hard and manage their emotions, since the national exams and getting into universities are more important for them. So, assuming that students in lower grades act the same as A/L students may not be correct. Researchers also face the problem of using mixed-method methods much less than other methods. Most research is done using just one of the two main methods, but very little uses both approaches together. Attendance lists or survey answers allow you to find out what trends and patterns exist. Alternatively, interviewing people and organizing focus groups lets researchers learn a lot about individuals' experiences, ideas and how society works. Using several research methods makes it easier to see the many influences on a student's absence from school. If studies are not well integrated, they may overlook important details and not explain why certain trends happen. The studies on absenteeism show a clear lack of different perspectives from different regions. Many studies are carried out in urban or semi-urban locations, mainly looking at schools that have more resources and are easier to access. So, rural and disadvantaged educational zones are not well studied.

Some students in these regions experience unique difficulties, for example, long distances to school, economic hardship, insufficient educational resources and not enough access to counseling or tuition. In rural areas, people might be absent more often and it can be tougher to find solutions, as there are issues with infrastructure and enough teachers. If rural communities are not well represented in research, any new policies might not meet the needs of rural students. There is a key disadvantage in current studies because they fail to include multiple perspectives from stakeholders. Many studies pay more attention to students and administrators rather than to teachers and parents. Yet, absenteeism involves different stakeholders and needs all of them to understand the problem. Teachers usually observe the behavior of students and the way classes function. They can give details on their children's homes, family finances and what is expected of them in their family. At the same time, students are key to the issue and can share their reasons, challenges and requirements. Considering these different viewpoints can result in improved and inclusive outcomes, though current research does not do this well enough. A major shortcoming in current studies is that they do not study how many factors interact. It is common for studies to assess poverty, transportation or mental health alone, without considering how they might be connected. In truth, many different things influence why someone does not attend work. A student who is poor could also go through stress, have less interaction with their parents and struggle to get around. They do not work separately, but instead affect each other in many ways. A complete framework that looks at all these connections is needed to know the real reasons behind absenteeism and create various plans to address it. Fixing just one challenge on its own will probably not last for long. Thus, this study aims to cover these research gaps by carrying out a study involving different stakeholders that investigates the reasons for absenteeism among A/L students in government schools in Sri Lanka, especially in under-researched regions.

The review has looked at both research and practical aspects of student absenteeism, mainly focusing on Advanced Level students in Sri Lanka. The chapter started by talking about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs which is the main theory behind this study. Based on Maslow's theory, it is unlikely that students will focus on school attendance or results unless their less important needs for physiology, safety, emotions and self-worth

have been addressed. Because of this theory, we can see why students who are hungry, insecure or emotionally troubled tend to stop participating in school. It also highlights the need for schools to be both academically strong and friendly to all students' personal and emotional well-being. Evidence from different countries and in Sri Lanka shows that absenteeism can be quite complex. In many countries, researchers have found that emotional disorders, the climate at school, failing grades and lack of motivation are main reasons for absenteeism. In addition, rural poverty, poor transportation, lack of parental care and boring teaching are specific issues in Sri Lanka. These issues are explained clearly by Gunasekara (2018), Bandara (2020) and Wickramasinghe and Samarasinghe (2021) using real-world cases. While these studies are valuable, they point out several gaps, especially because they tend to focus on one region, are unbalanced and do not include many diverse viewpoints. Literature on the subject repeatedly shows that there are multiple reasons for absenteeism which are related to what happens to students in school and outside it. Such factors are economic conditions, emotional well-being, parental backing, peer relationships, building conditions and how well teachers teach. For this reason, dealing with absenteeism calls for a strategy that looks at all these factors. Fixing only one issue—for example, offering transportation while ignoring mental health—will probably not help much. It also points out that research should be inclusive and based on evidence and should include the views of students, teachers and parents. Looking at people's experiences with numbers and stories can help better understand the issue and find solutions that work. Also, studies should take into account rural and poor communities, as they may deal with higher levels of absenteeism. At this point, it becomes possible to develop policies and programs that solve the main reasons for absenteeism in an equal and lasting manner. All in all, the works analyzed in this chapter provide a clear base for understanding how absenteeism has many complex aspects. At the same time, it points out important issues that this research is meant to solve. By concentrating on A/L students in Sri Lankan government schools, using a combination of methods and listening to different perspectives, this research hopes to offer useful knowledge for both study and policy. The following chapter will describe the research method used to address these gaps and produce research findings that can be used in practice.

METHODOLOGY

Chapter introduction

In this chapter, the methodological paradigm followed in the discussion on factors influencing the levels of attendance of A/L students following their schooling in government institutions within the Matara Education Zone in Sri Lanka will be discussed. Attendance at these institutions has a decisive role to play within the A/L context inasmuch as they directly benefit from such, within the parameters of national-level exams, university eligibility, and ultimately job opportunities. Nevertheless, the problem of persistent absenteeism, particularly within the arts and commerce streams, has emerged as a cause of steadily growing concern.

This approach would help in the systematic collection of data, its analysis, and interpretation in relation to facts about the absenteeism of students in schools. Currently, the study has adopted a methodology that uses a mixed methods approach, which entails the application of both qualitative and quantitative analysis in understanding the phenomenon related to the topic of absenteeism in schools. While the data from students is qualitative in relation to factors associated with absenteeism, the other data is more in-depth from parents and teachers.

It particularly targets students whose rate of school attendance is less than 40% for the first and second terms of each school year, since they are the most vulnerable ones to face failure and disengagement from education. Besides targeting these students, the other stakeholders would be the parents and teachers of students, since they have direct effects on the students' school-going patterns. The methodology presented within this chapter discusses the design of the study, population, sampling techniques, data collection techniques, and strategies employed to deal with administrative and ethical problems, especially when working together with school principals. This chapter presents a foundation for establishing correct and authentic results to create strategies for improving the school-going pattern of A/L students.

Research Design

The report employed a mixed method as part of its research, combining both the qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to achieve a more holistic description surrounding absence among A/L students. The quantitative method was applied with the purpose of identifying elements with measurable impact on attendance, while the qualitative method aimed to investigate perceptions and explanations offered by parents and teachers regarding this issue.

It was a descriptive survey design where the quantitative element involved a structured questionnaire, which was done on students. Therefore, it assisted the researcher in carrying out data analysis on a numerical aspect as may be, barriers such as lack of transport, motivation, parental responsibilities, academic-related stress, and issues of the school affecting attendance. The analysis of the quantitative data enabled the researcher to interpret the findings based on comparison, hence between schools and streams, and calculating mean scores appropriately based on the results.

For the qualitative part, the research utilized semi-structured interviews. This was because the issues related to attendance tend to affect and extend beyond the concerned students. This was done to allow the participants an opportunity to freely express their ideas and opinions while still focusing on the relevant matters under scrutiny.

Furthermore, the amalgamation of the two methodologies ensured that there is methodological triangulation, hence contributed towards improving the validity and credibility of the findings. Mixed methodology had its applicability to the study since the problem not only relates to 'how much' absenteeism is prevalent, but it is also concerned with 'why' absenteeism is prevalent from various viewpoints. Moreover, the mixed methodology makes the study robust enough to offer pragmatic and appropriate solutions to overcome absenteeism in government schools.

Study Population and Sampling

The population targeted for this study was Advanced-Level students from both Arts and Commerce streams who attended eight government schools chosen from within the Matara Education Zone. The eight schools were a mix of urban, semi-rural, and had varying environmental conditions, facilities within the schools, as well as student experiences. The study had to get permission from the concerned authorities of the zone and from school administrators.

The population consisted of 1200 A/L students in the school, and the sample size consisted of 400 A/L students selected from this population using purposive sampling, with a definite criterion: students whose school attendance had been below 40% for the first and second school terms.

“Indeed, this is a criterion-based selection, necessary for the study in question to understand the phenomenon of absenteeism among students who have attendance problems, but not necessarily those who have such problems occasionally, but rather on a chronic basis.”

All the selected participants were roughly aged 18-19 years, which ensured that the participants were somewhat homogeneous on this dimension and not very far from equal ages. Sampling included participants from both Arts and Commerce streams in proportions based on their representations within the schools.

In addition, 10 parents and 10 teachers were selected for in-depth interviews through purposeful sampling. These parents were those with low-attended children, and the teachers included class and subject teachers and section heads. They are directly involved in monitoring student attendance and offer diverse perspectives towards understanding various student response data.

This fact sheet takes immense importance, given the fact that the findings will not generalize evenly to every school in Sri Lanka, yet the findings have immense value in a certain context, given the problem similar to those in attendance at the government schools.

Data Collection Methods

Data was collected using two important instruments. These instruments include structured questionnaires for data from the students. Another one consists of semi-structured interview guides for parents and teachers. The quantitative method of data gathering used was the student questionnaire.

These statements used a five-point Likert scale that ranged from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." To avoid lack of understanding and inclusivity issues due to the inappropriateness of the language of the responses, the questionnaires were designed in both Sinhala and English.

The pilot test regarding clarity, reliability, and time management was done with 20 students from a non-sampled school. Further necessary modifications were made before carrying out the final testing. The questionnaire was administered in school hours under teacher supervision to maintain confidentiality and a high response rate. The necessary data was collected through semi-structured interviews of parents and teachers.

A small scale for both types of interviews regarding the reasons for absenteeism, difficulties at homes and schools, attitudes to education, and solutions to overcome them was prepared. The duration of both types of interviews was about 15-20 minutes after obtaining prior consent from them. To avoid difficulties at school administration levels, a structured activity was employed by the researcher: displaying the official letter of approval from authorities, discussing with them about the importance and appropriateness of this research study to be carried out in schools, ensuring a minimum disturbance to school activities, a promise to maintain confidentiality, and offering a copy of findings summarized to schools. This would be of high importance to develop better levels of trust and cooperation. These will collectively result in developing a wider scope regarding reliability and ethics of collected data regarding variables influencing attendance of A/L students.

Data analysis techniques

Qualitative and quantitative data analysis are done upon completion of the process of data collection to ensure the objectives of the study are met. Quantitative data, which is collected from questionnaires administered to the students, is analyzed using SPSS software upon coding. The reasons why SPSS software is preferred and used are its reliability, efficiency, and suitability when dealing with large data sets and when working with data collected from likert scales in educational settings.

The scales for the likert items ranged from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"). Before analyzing the information gathered, results had to be checked for their accuracy to reduce the incidences of errors in the data obtained. Descriptive analysis methods such as frequency, percentage, mean score, and standard deviation were used to identify the main factors that influence student attendance by analyzing the gathered information obtained from the students in the eight government schools in the Matara Education Zone.

Cross-tabulation analysis was conducted to gain further insight into correlations between different variables. Cross-tabulation analysis helped in investigating correlations between attendance levels and certain demographic factors like study stream and school type, in addition to correlations between attendance levels and critical factors like motivations, concerns related to teachers, concerns related to home environments, as well as personal well-being factors. Mean scores based upon constructs-for example, Student Preference, Teacher and Subject Factors, Home Environment-were determined in order to understand the relative significance of these factors influencing attendance behaviors.

Reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's alpha, which gives the internal consistency of the measures of survey questions regarding each construct. The alpha value guarantees the quality in the measurement of a concept with a set of questions and is of help in enhancing the validity of results.

Results of qualitative research where semi-structured interviews were conducted among 10 parents and 10 teachers were analyzed using thematic analysis. Answers obtained from the respondents were transcriptional, reviewed, and coded manually. The codes were then collated into different themes: parental monitoring,

financial duress, student incentives, student-teacher interactions, and institutional issues. Qualitative research information tried to amplify and give meaning to the quantitative results because there were values and figures involved.

Methodological triangulation was achieved through the integration of both quantitative and qualitative findings, helping to validate and widen the discovery made.

Variable	Type	Source/Reference	Measurement/Indicators
Attendance (ATT)	Dependent	Developed from base article and objectives	Measured by 5 items (ATT1–ATT5) on a 5-point Likert scale assessing frequency, importance, and regularity of attendance.
Student Preference (SP)	Independent	Shakira & Kengatharan (2019)	Measured by 3 items (SP1–SP3) reflecting personal interest, choice, and motivation.
Teacher and Subject (TS)	Independent	Shakira & Kengatharan (2019)	Measured by 5 items (TS1–TS5) on teacher behavior, subject difficulty, and teaching style.
Physical and Mental Capabilities (PM)	Independent	Shakira & Kengatharan (2019)	Measured by 5 items (PM1–PM5) regarding fatigue, emotional state, and concentration.
Non-Collegiate (NC)	Independent	Shakira & Kengatharan (2019)	Measured by 2 items (NC1–NC2) capturing involvement in extracurricular or non-academic activities.
Classroom Facility (CF)	Independent	Shakira & Kengatharan (2019)	Measured by 4 items (CF1–CF4) describing environmental and infrastructural classroom issues.
Personal and Health (P)	Independent	Shakira & Kengatharan (2019)	Measured by 2 items (P1–P2) focusing on illness, motivation, and anxiety.
Home Environment and Family Support (HE)	Independent	Developed based on study objectives	Measured by 4 items (HE1–HE4) assessing family involvement, household responsibilities, and financial issues.

Delimitations of the Study

The investigation needed to be performed within some framework, an important issue that should always be remembered in the evaluation of the result from a study. To start with, the research needed to restrict itself to the eight government schools in the Matara Education Zone, and the results may not be taken en-toto to other parts of Sri Lanka, mainly because the two other types of educational institutions may altogether be different.

First, the study was conducted with students at Advanced Level and included only those students whose school attendance was below 40% for the first and second terms of the school calendar. While this was specific enough to enable the study of chronic absenteeism, students with average or high levels of school attendance may have different problems associated with school attendance.

Thirdly, even though the study incorporated students from different streams, it was mostly based on self-reported data, which are open to recall bias and social desirability bias. Even though it had been assured that the data would be anonymized, some students might have suppressed certain issues related to families, health, and motivation.

Thirdly, the number of parents and teachers involved in the qualitative part of the research was limited to 10 parents and 10 teachers due to time and access issues. These were very resourceful participants, but more would have added different insights. Finally, the cross-sectional study controlled for aspects of attendance at one point in time and did not engage in differences across various academic levels and times of stay.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were given high priority in the conduct of research. Prior approvals were sought from the Zonal Education Office and the school principals of the schools involved in the proposed research. All the concerned persons were explained the purpose, procedure, and importance of the research prior to the conduct of research.

Participation in this study was not mandatory. In this study, all the participants who were students were 18 years and above. They had this capacity to provide informed consent. Parents and teachers were the participants in this study. They provided informed consent to allow data collection procedures to take place. They were also informed of the right to withdraw at any time from this study with no consequences. Anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed by not writing names and any information that could identify the respondents on the questionnaires and transcripts. All information is coded with numbers and stored in computerized files with passwords that only the researcher can access.

Recordings and transcripts of conversations will only be used for academic pursuit and will all be deleted once the research is completed. Care was taken that the questions in the questionnaires and interviews were not intrusive and did not originate from a psychologically unsafe place. Even though there were questions relating to family stress and mental health, they were framed in a psychologically safe manner. Such participants who seemed to show distress were told that they would benefit by seeking help from the counseling staff of their respective schools, and their supervisors would have prior knowledge of this research work.

Chapter summary

This chapter has elaborated on the methodology used in assessing the factors that influence the number of Advanced Level students in government schools within the Matara Education Zone. The Mixed Method Design that this research has utilized incorporates both quantitative information from a pool of 400 students and qualitative information gathered from parents and teachers. The data processing was done using SPSS for quantitative data, while the data from the interview analysis was done using thematic analysis. Though there were limitations and delimitation inherent in research, the framework adopted provided the merits in terms of reliability, validity, and integrity. The next chapter will present the findings from each of the research methods.

Data Analysis

Chapter Introduction

As part of the process involved in the establishment of the framework through which analysis and interpretation of information collected in connection with factors that determine the attendance of Advanced Level students at government schools in the Matara Education Zone, this chapter examines the current literature on issues relating to the attendance of students at Advanced Level programs and the strategies proposed and involved in the implementation of interventions and activities intended at promoting and/or improving attendance of such students enrolled at those programs based both in Sri Lanka and abroad.

The analysis procedure involves ensuring the reliability of the research instrument to check its ability to measure or record the accuracy of data measurement or collection. Secondly, there is a description analysis of the demographical profile of respondents, which involves aspects concerning gender, stream of study, type of school, and average attendance level of respondents within the previous term of attendance. The results of such analysis have been presented systematically to enable answers to be obtained concerning the research objectives and serve as a framework of discussion depending on attendance levels.

Reliability analysis

In addition to this, Reliability analysis is also employed to test the Internal consistency of that questionnaire which has been utilized in this research. Cronbach Alpha of this research has been utilized to measure Internal consistency because this is widely utilized in social researches. In general, if Cronbach Alpha is 0.70 and above, it is acceptable in research.

From the case processing summary, it is noted that all of the 400 questionnaires used in the study were valid. The questionnaires did not omit any data due to lack of information during the processing of the data. The validity of the results has increased due to the high response rate.

The reliability of the test, consisting of a total of 33 questions relating to attendance and the factors that affect the same, has a Cronbach Alpha reliability index measure that stands at 0.865. The fact that the index is high indicates that the reliability and consistency are very high, and the questions used in the test cover all the parameters that the test seeks to measure properly.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.865	33

Subsequently, another test for reliability on the eight composite constructs also confirmed the internal consistency between the parameters, giving a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.808 for the eight dimensions.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.808	8

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SP_MEAN	21.8613	7.504	.466	.795
TS_MEAN	21.6984	7.306	.613	.775
PM_MEAN	21.7949	7.076	.665	.766
CF_MEAN	21.6917	6.747	.722	.756
NC_MEAN	21.5242	7.163	.529	.786
P_MEAN	21.6354	7.304	.529	.786
HE_MEAN	21.7423	7.658	.428	.800
ATT_MEAN	21.8473	8.022	.271	.824

The item to total correlation analysis indicates that each of these constructs has had a positive impact on the total reliability of this scale. The correct item to total correlation of each of these constructs ranged from

acceptable to strong, which indicates a strong relationship between each of these constructs and this overall scale. Although the value of the correlation coefficient of this construct seemed slightly low compared to other factors, this did not affect the overall reliability of this scale. The analysis indicates that each of these constructs, including Student Preference, Teacher & Subject Factors, Physical & Mental Capabilities, Classroom Facilities, Non-Collegiate Factors, Personal & Health Factors, Home Environment & Family Support, and Attendance, is reliable for further analysis.

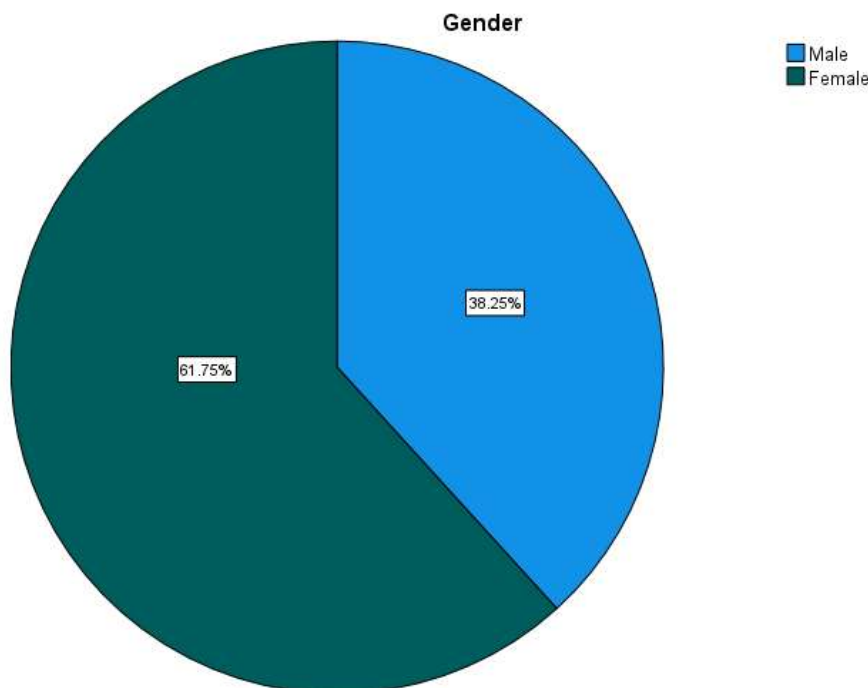
This has been done by describing the demographics of the research subjects in order to provide a very clear idea of who exactly is being researched and in what manner background variables might affect attendance patterns. Such variables include gender, stream of study, type of school, and average attendance rate per last term.

Demographic data of student

Gender

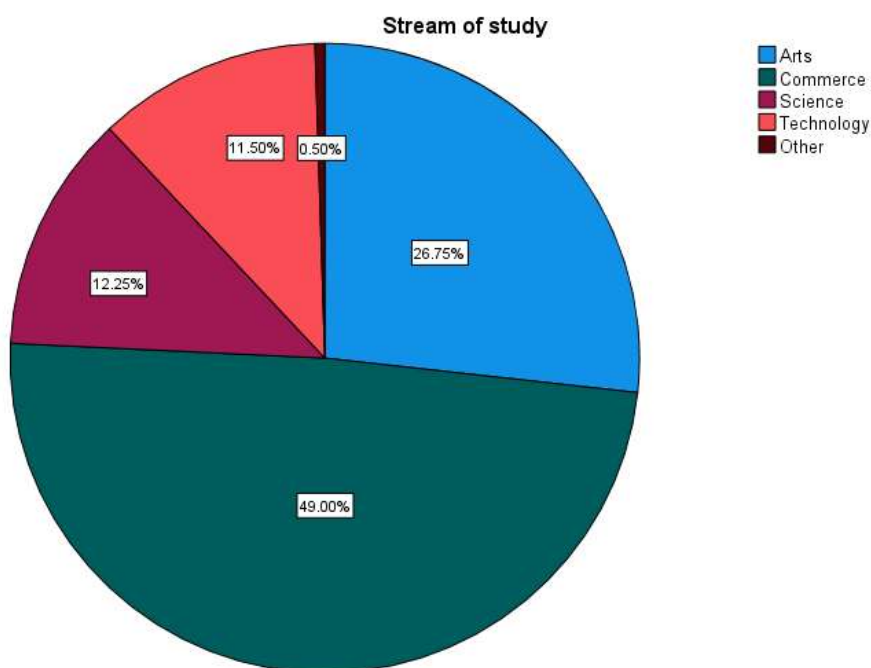
Analyzing the gender composition of the respondents, the study reveals that the greatest gender among the sample population was composed of female students. Of the 400 respondents, the study reveals that 247 or 61.8% of the respondents belong to the female gender, while the remaining 153 or 38.3% of the respondents belong to the male gender. This gives the composition of the Advanced Level classes of the selected schools, particularly those offering Arts and Commerce courses, which have more females.

Gender-related difference aspects might have further contributed to participation and attendance trends, taking into account their personal and social expectations, as well as education levels of motivation. The comparative equality in gender representation denotes the importance of gender-strategy approaches that need to be adopted while taking attendance-related issues into consideration. Students from both genders were adequately represented to ensure a rounded analysis of data outcomes.



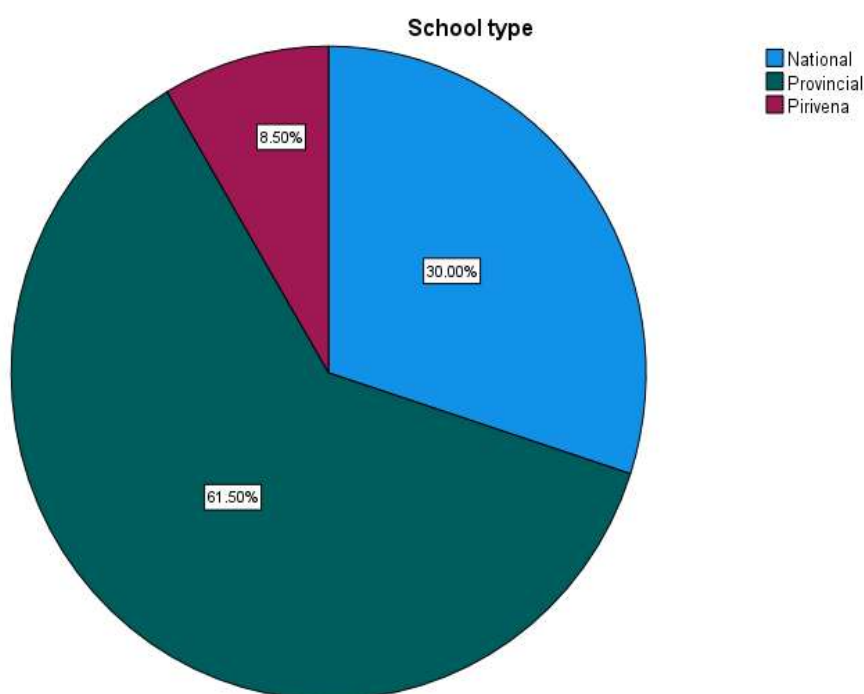
Subject stream

Analysis of the study stream shows that nearly half of the students come from the Commerce stream, which is 49.0%. Students from the Arts group amount to 26.8%, while students from the Science and Technology group amount to 12.3% and 11.5% respectively. Few students come from other groups.



The dominance of Arts and Commerce group students reflects the importance of the research because these groups of students have traditionally been known to be identified with truancy rates influenced by factors such as tuition dependence, lack of involvement, and different employment goals. The inclusion of Science and Technology students allows the researcher to acquire insight because research of this nature will provide a perspective element to this research inquiry about student attendance rates based on Streams of Learning Disciplines.

School type

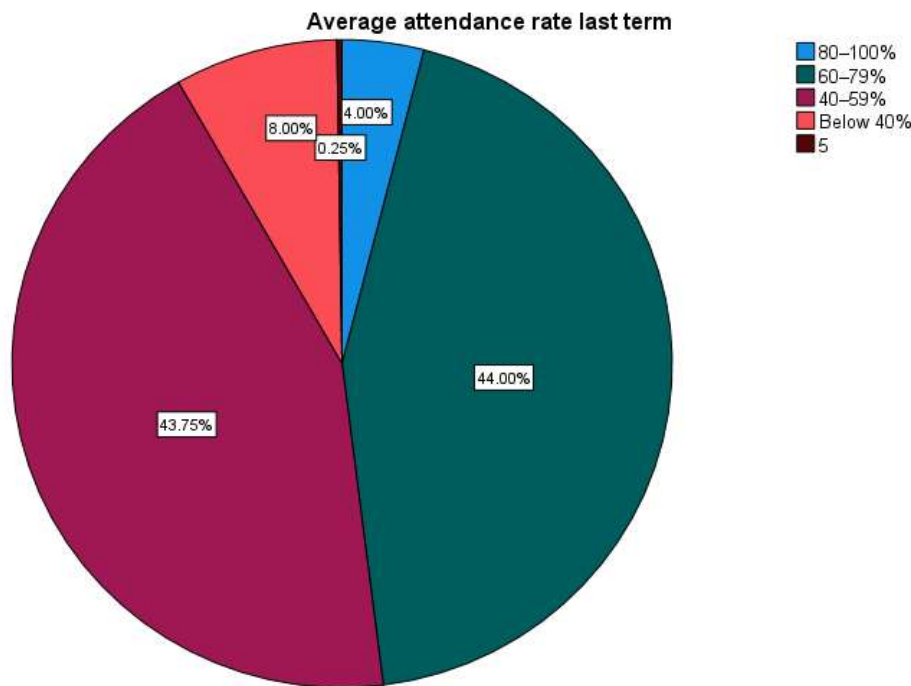


With respect to the type of schools attended by the respondents, it was revealed that a large number of respondents were from provincial schools, contributing 61.5% to the study. Secondly, national schools contributed 30.0%, and thirdly, Pirivena schools contributed 8.5% to the study. The aforementioned findings can be justified based on the distribution of education within the Matara Education Zone. The school type could also have a certain impact on school attendance due to differences in the school facilities and academic's culture.

The national schools could be influenced by the lack of resources and the student-teacher ratio, which could have an indirect influence on the attendance factor. The addition of the national schools and the Piriven schools would add diversity to the study samples and make the study findings relevant.

Average Attendance Rate in the Last Term

This component Average Attendance Rates analysis in the final term raises certain concerns. There are very few students (4.0%) who have rated their attendance rate between 80-100%, and this shows few instances among the respondents regarding this factor. There has been a substantial clientele among the 60-79% and the 40-59% group, which consists of 44.0% and 43.8% respectively. In addition to this, there are also some individuals who have accounted for below 40% attendance, and this has come out to be 8.0% among the test subjects.



These results demonstrate the major aspect of moderate to low level attendance that has been witnessed among Advanced Level students in the selected institutions. As the major group of individuals has been demonstrated by the 40% to 79% level of attendance, it is clear that the absenteeism demonstrated by the Advanced Level students has not occurred among the chosen few. Rather, it has proven to be a phenomenon that has occurred among the general group of people. As the effects of this level of attendance on the education and preparedness pertaining to the examination are likely to be extremely severe, the necessity of identifying the causes pertaining to this level of absenteeism has also come out clearly.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptives for Independent variables

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SP01 - I stay at home to study for term exams.	400	1	5	2.86	.879
SP02 - I do not attend school when I have tuition classes on weekdays.	400	1	5	3.02	.775



SP03 - I am not interested in attending school when the topics are boring.	400	1	5	3.02	.775
TS01 - My teacher's teaching style makes me lose interest in the subject.	400	1	5	3.00	.784
TS02 - I do not like to attend school when the subject is difficult or boring.	400	1	5	3.03	.737
TS03 - I prefer attending tuition classes instead of school lessons.	400	1	5	3.16	.767
TS04 - Teachers are not motivating enough to make me attend regularly.	400	1	5	3.23	.757
TS05 - I feel uncomfortable when the teacher targets me in class.	400	1	5	3.22	.780
PM01 - I find it difficult to concentrate in class when I feel tired or sleepy.	400	1	5	3.05	.804
PM02 - I can't wake up early due to late-night studying or phone use.	400	2	5	3.16	.779
PM03 - Family or relationship problems affect my attendance.	400	1	5	3.01	.787
PM04 - I avoid school when my friends do not attend.	400	1	4	2.94	.794
PM05 - I dislike attending school because of noise and distractions.	400	1	5	3.02	.821
NC01 - I miss school when I participate in extracurricular activities.	400	1	5	3.31	.784
NC02 - I prefer outside events (sports, clubs, social media) over school.	400	2	5	3.30	.756
CF01 - The classroom is too crowded, which makes me avoid school.	400	2	5	3.25	.751
CF02 - Poor ventilation in the classroom discourages me from attending.	400	1	5	3.11	.790
CF03 - I find the seating arrangement uncomfortable during lessons.	400	1	5	3.13	.784
CF04 - Poor lighting and visibility make me less interested in classes.	400	1	5	3.06	.839
P01 - I do not attend school when I am sick or not feeling well.	400	1	5	3.27	.780
P02 - I feel demotivated or anxious about	400	2	5	3.11	.744

school activities.					
HE01 - My parents encourage and monitor my school attendance.	400	1	5	3.06	.822
HE02 - I have to stay home to help with household work.	400	1	5	3.15	.835
HE03 - I sometimes miss school due to family financial problems.	400	1	5	3.18	.849
HE04 - My home environment supports my studies and attendance.	400	1	5	2.96	.830
Valid N (listwise)	400				

This paper shall discuss how the descriptive analysis of independent variables utilized in this research to identify how such competencies specifically impact student school attendance is done. These independent variables comprise student variables, teacher variables, personal and motivational variables, non-curricular engagement variables, class room variables, personal health and psychological variables, and home environment variables. These independent variables were subjected to descriptive analysis using a five-point Likert scale where high scores show high satisfaction with these variables in terms of a five-point Likert scale used in obtaining data from a target sample of 400 students.

The student-related variables identify and measure the personal learning behaviors and interests of students towards going to school. The finding indicates moderate agreement among the students towards staying back home preparing for term tests and how the impact effects going to school, pressures from academia on personal learning and familiarity with school subjects through personal study back home. Similarly, moderate agreement is derived from the students towards not going to school due to conducting tuition lessons within school hours. Similarly, moderate agreement is derived from the student towards not going to school due to losing interests in school lessons because they seem dull or boring. The overall mean values of the student-related variables lie somewhat on the middle scale and play an important role in influencing school attendance.

The factors concerning teacher variables indicate a slightly greater influence regarding student attendance than factors concerning student variables. Students are likely to display moderate agreement regarding the influence of teaching styles in lessening interest in subjects, particularly when dealing with tough or boring subjects. The choice between tuition classes and classes in school indicate a slightly greater value of the mean, which shows that students believe in and value tuition classes more than classes in school. On the other hand, students are likely to display a moderate level of agreement regarding the influence of a lack of teacher motivation and embarrassment when pointed out in a class regarding attendance.

Personal and motivation elements also came up as prominent considerations in going to school. Students face medium difficulties in concentrating during class when they are exhausted and sleepy because they stay up late studying and spend a long time on their mobiles. Moreover, the discovery of stress related to family and relations also comes up as a medium consideration. Peer pressure would also be considered as the students feel that they will be absent from school if their friends are also absent. Environmental noise in the setting of the school also acts as a medium consideration in being late during class because of absenteeism. Thus, the findings indicate that emotional and lifestyle considerations regarding being irregular in going to school are viable.

The variables that belong to the engagement but do not relate to the curriculum, that is, engagement in external activities and engagement in external social events, have relatively greater mean scores than in several other independent variables. The students tend to partially agree that engagement in external activities affects missed school attendance, and similarly for the choice of external activities like sports, organizations, and social sites

instead of attending school. It seems that they give priority to engagement-related activities that might lead to their different satisfaction, namely from enjoyment and relieving stress.

Factors associated with the class environment are those which imply the physical learning environment makes a moderate contribution to the attendance behavior of the students. Class overcrowding is considered by the students to be a factor deterring them from attending classes, in connection with the comfort and ability to gain effective knowledge. Uncomfortable seating, ventilation, light, and visibility of the classroom are considered to be other factors given a moderate degree of agreement. Despite the factors not being extreme in their mean, they are always there, suggesting the students' need to be motivated to attend the classes.

Personal health and psychology show that there is quite a strong link with school attendance. Students are not in complete agreement that they absent themselves from school when they are not feeling physically well or when they are not in good health. Feelings of anxiety and demotivation regarding activities of the school are also reasons why students do not attend school. The results campaign that health and psychology are very essential in campaigns that are involved in improving frequent school attendees. It is evident that health-related absentees are unavoidable, but psychological problems are changeable through activities such as school counseling programs.

Home environment factors include the effect of parental involvement and home responsibilities on the attendance of students. Moderate agreement was reported by students in regard to the effectiveness of parental involvement in students' attendance. Home responsibilities and financial problems in families might lead some students not to attend school due to participation in home chores and unavailability of resources to go to school.

It appears that some students' perspectives with regard to the views of their family environment being supportive of their educational pursuits had some level of variation, since not all students receive the support in the same way.

Descriptive Analysis of the Dependent Variable

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ATT01 - I attend school regularly without missing classes.	400	1	5	3.04	.847
ATT02 - I rarely miss school unless I am sick or have valid reasons.	400	1	5	2.91	.802
ATT03 - I consider attending school daily as important for my success.	400	1	5	2.94	.824
ATT04 - My attendance has been consistent throughout this term.	400	1	5	3.03	.819
Valid N (listwise)	400				

The dependent variable of the study is the school attendance of students, which reflects the regularity of the students' attendance at school. The result of the finding from the descriptive statistics of the study shows that the students' level of agreement on the statements regarding regular attendance, missing school only for valid reasons, understanding the importance of regular attendance of students at school for their success, and regularity of attendance at school throughout the term is moderate. The mean of regular attendance of students at school is indicative of the fact that students consider themselves to be attending school fairly well but not extremely well.

Furthermore, the students agree fairly well on the fact that they do not frequently get recorded to be missing school but only for valid reasons, which suggests that they may not necessarily always intend to be missing school but may be spurred by factors which are external as well as unavoidable on their part. The importance of regular attendance of students at school for attainment of success is also held fairly well by the students, suggesting that they may understand the importance of regular attendance at school but may still not act accordingly on a regular basis. The regularity of attendance of students at school throughout the term remains consistent in depicting similarities on the fact that students exhibit neither high nor low regularity on the parameter of attendance at school.

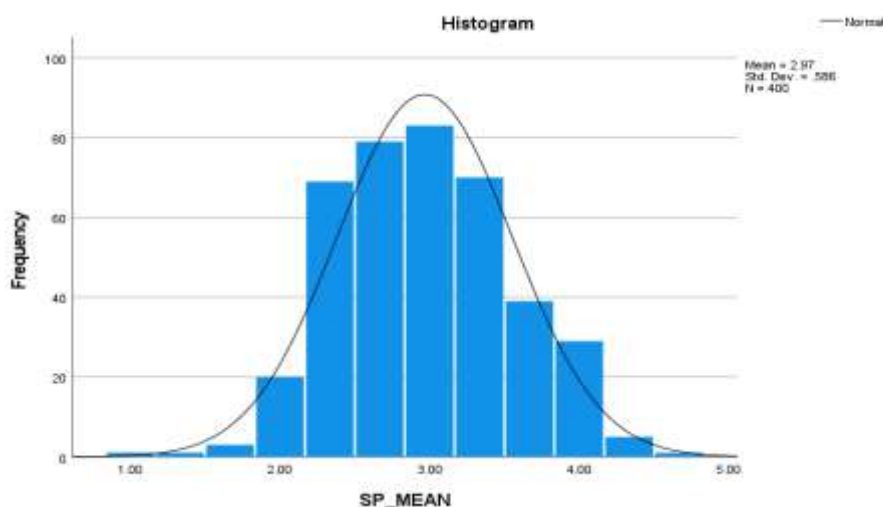
These depictions intimate that students may perform different on different occasions, which may include situations like exams. The conclusion on the description of the dependent variable highlights the fact that the level of attendance of the students at school is moderate and not optimal. Together with the independent variable, it is clear from the results of the study that there may exist various factors, which may be identified by the various factors affecting the regularity of attendance of students at school, and thus, there arises the need for further analysis based on the results of the study through the valid utilization of further inferential statistics on the relationship between the given independent factors and regular attendance of students at school.

Normality analysis

Normality tests were conducted to determine the nature of the data of the independent and dependent variables in terms of whether they are normally distributed or nearly normally distributed. The importance of normality lies in the application of correlation and regression analysis. Normality tests were conducted based on different indices, compare means and medians test, trimmed means test, and other indices. But in this research, due to the application of a large sample size consisting of 400 respondents, there were no strict requirements for normality because, as stated in the Central Limit Theory, once the sample size exceeds 30, the sample can be approximately normally distributed.

Student-related factors

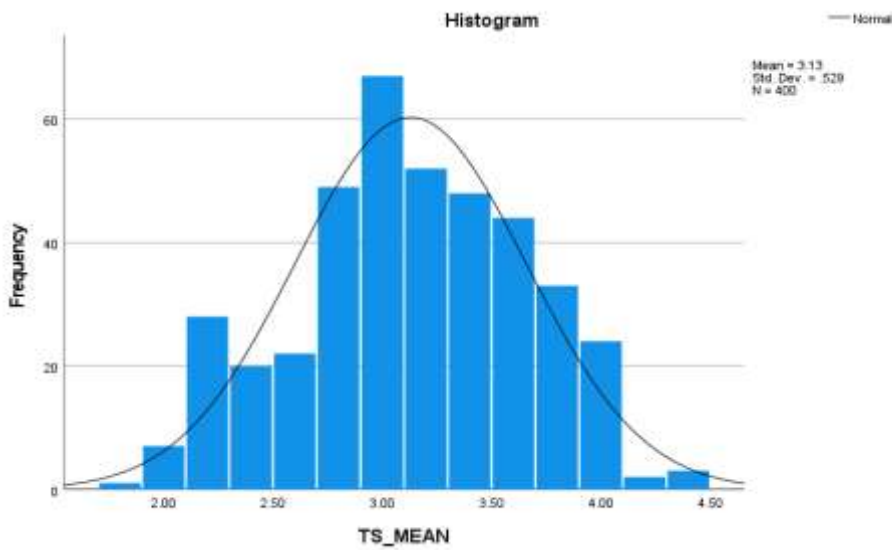
For the student-related factors, the mean and median are nearly equal, which gives a clear indication of symmetry. Further, for this group of factors, the trimmed mean and mean are nearly equal, which indicate there are no outliers. The skewness index is very small and positive, within the acceptable limit of ± 1 . The kurtosis is slightly negative. For kurtosis, a value of 0 represents a perfect normal distribution. The findings indicate that student-related factors meet the requirements of normality.



Teacher-related variables

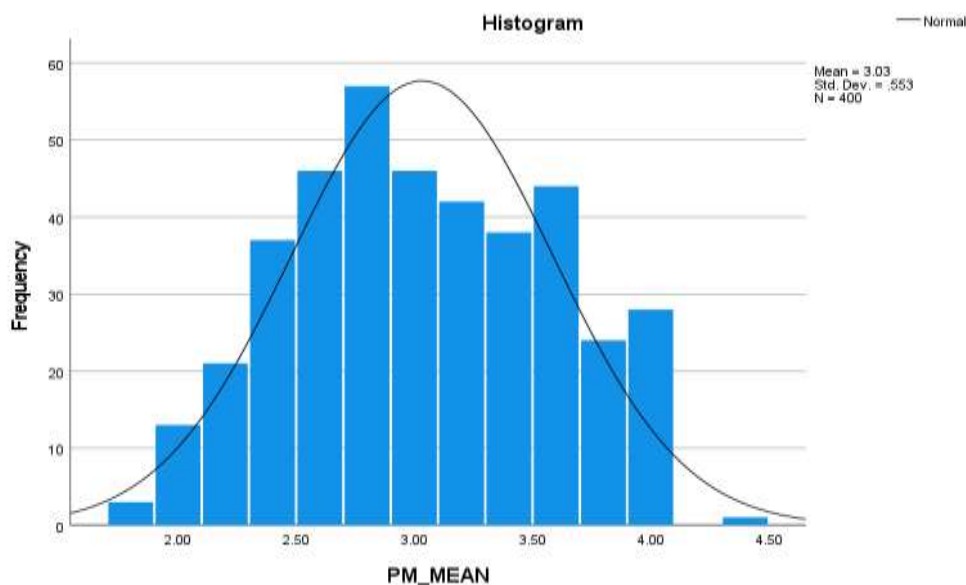
It is observed that the distribution of teacher-related variables is also nearly normal. Here, the value of the mean and the median can be considered equal, thus supporting the result that the distribution is nearly normal

through the trimmed mean value. The measure of shape or the skewness of this distribution is found to be slightly negative with very minor left skewness, and the measure of leptokurtosis or kurtosis is moderately negative with minor platykurtic distribution in this case. However, the values of skewness and kurtosis for this distribution can still be considered within acceptable limits.



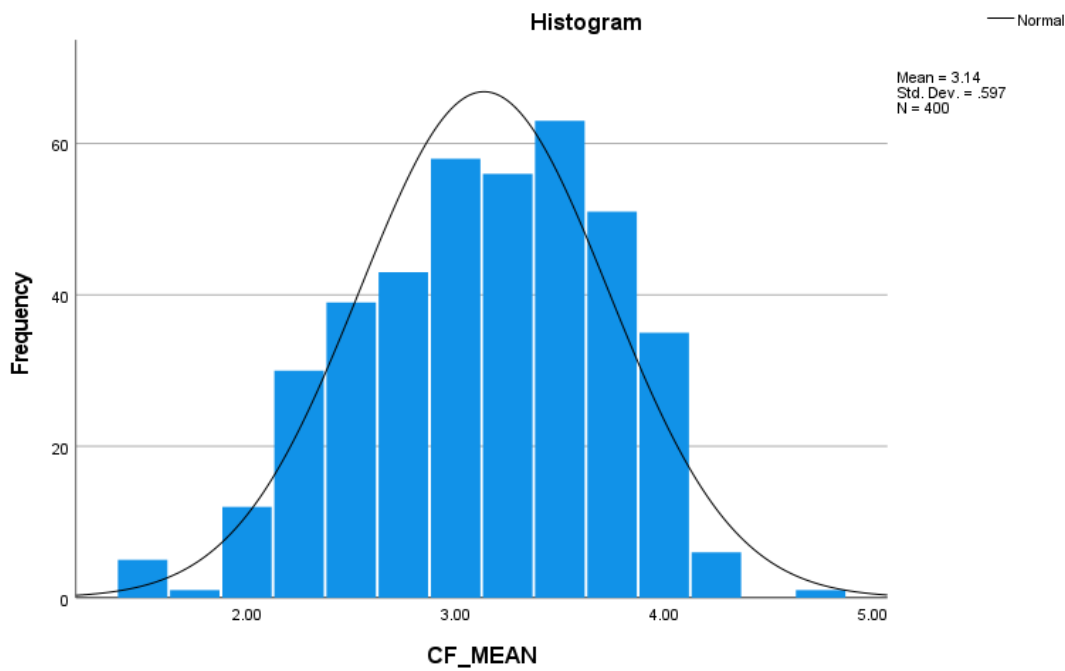
Physical and Mental Capabilities

Regarding the personal and motivational variables, the outcome of the descriptive statistics reveals a strong indication of normality. In this case, the values of the mean, median, and trimmed mean are almost similar. This is a clear indication of well-balanced data. On the other hand, the value of skewness is close to the value of zero, showing excellent symmetry. Furthermore, the value of Kurtosis is slightly negative. In this case, it shows flat data. However, all the values fall within the acceptable range, ensuring the data follows a normal distribution.



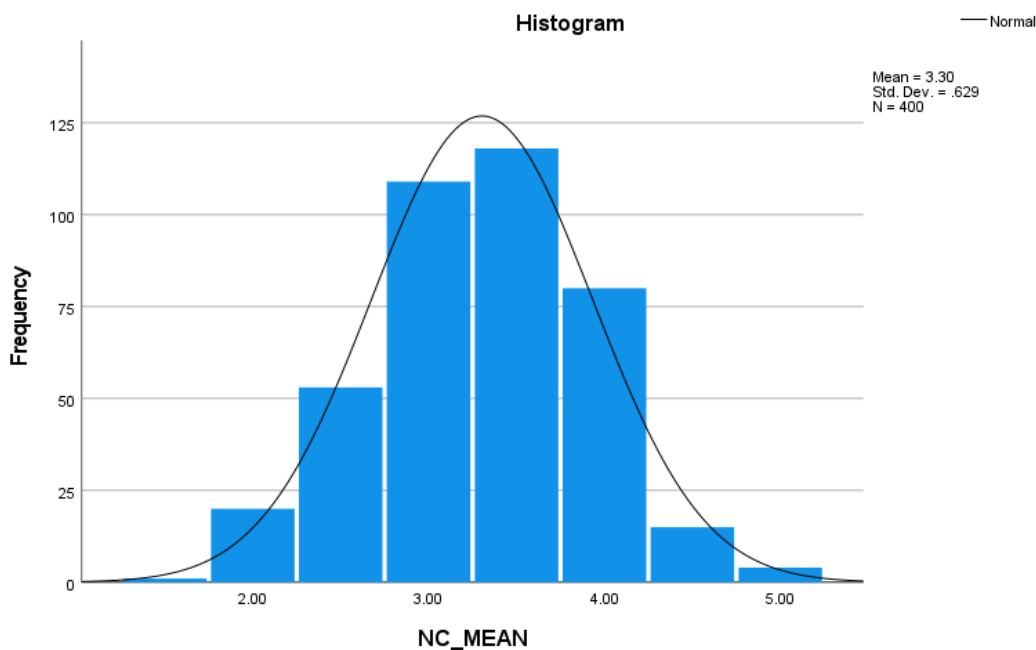
Classroom Facility

Distribution of the factors associated with the classroom is normal as well. Mean slightly leans on the lower side than the median; however, it's barely noticeable and doesn't point out the presence of any sort of extreme skewness. Trimmed mean again confirms the normality of the distribution. Both the skewness and the kurtosis are slightly on the negative side and stay within the acceptable limits of statistics. All these tests once again reaffirm that the distribution of the factors associated with classroom is normal.



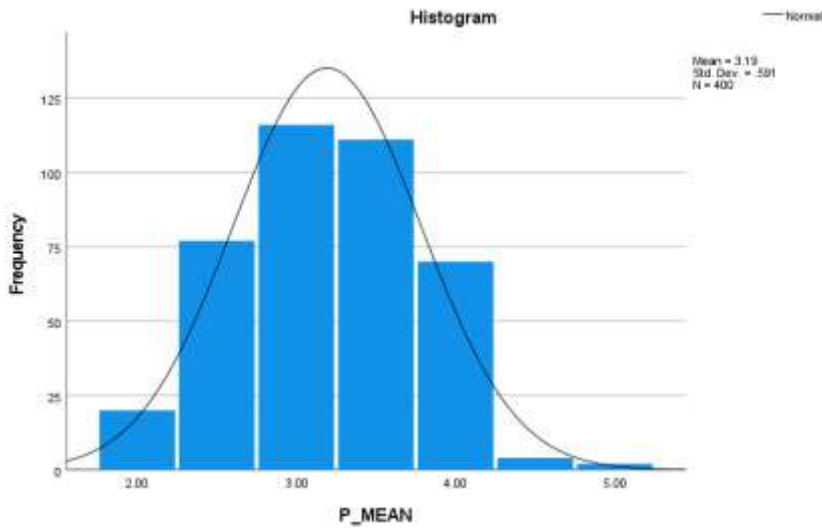
Non-curricular factors

Considering the next set of factors, which are those of non-curricular engagements, it is evident that the values of mean, median, and trimmed mean are relatively close to each other, thus ensuring data validity in terms of consistency. Skewness is also relatively closer to zero, which makes it symmetrical. In addition to this, kurtosis is slightly negative. This is data for flattop normal distribution. Given that all values are within critical limits, it is safe to assume that data is normally distributed for analysis purposes.



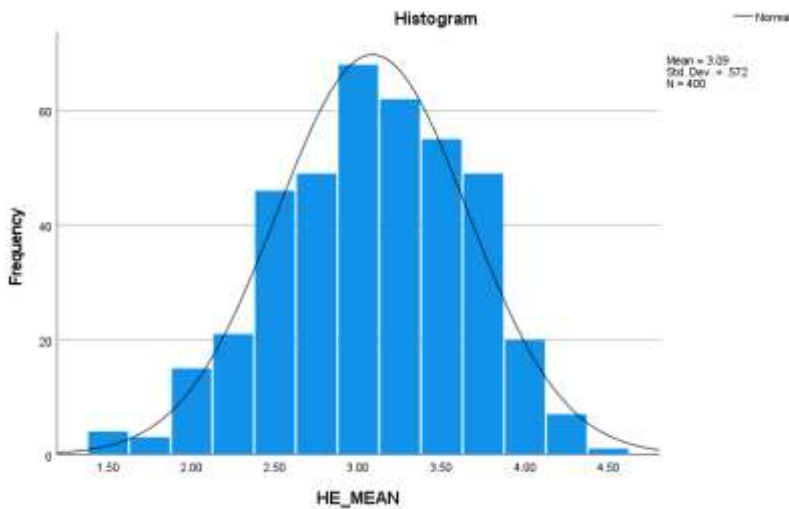
Personal and Health Factors

The data from the personal health and psychological factors indicates a stable and symmetrical distribution. The median and mean are relatively close, and this is further assisted by the trimmed mean value. The skewness is almost at zero, and this is close to perfection for symmetry, while the kurtosis is somewhat negative but still within acceptable limits. Hence, it could be concluded that the normality assumption is satisfied for the personal health and psychological factors.

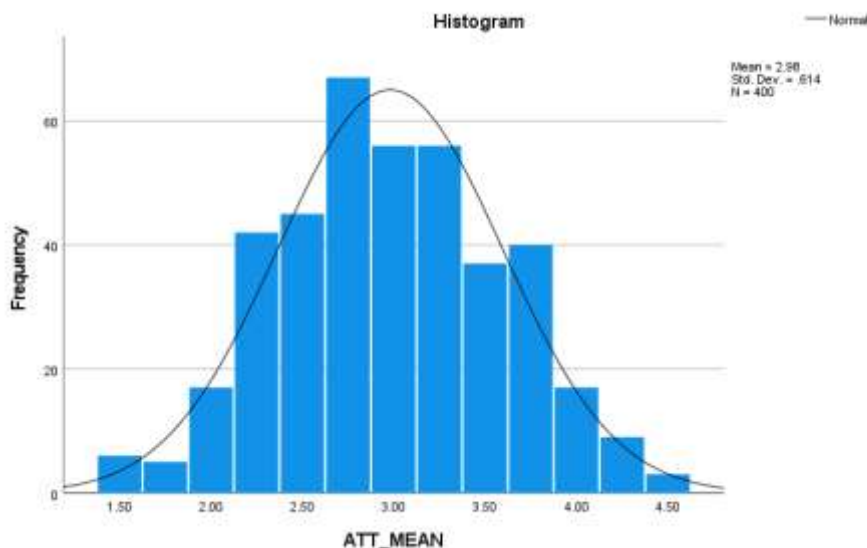


Home Environment and Family Support

As regards home environment factors, the mean and median values are closer to each other with negligible significance of outliers as revealed by the trimmed mean value as well. Skewness is slightly negative and marginally negative for kurtosis in this case. Both of them are acceptable in this scenario. This verifies that home environment factors have a normal distribution.



Attendance



Final testing would be that of the variable of school attendance, regarded as the dependent variable of this study. This follows a normal distribution pattern as well. Nonetheless, the mean and median of this variable are exactly the same, symbolizing perfect symmetry. The value of trimmed mean is extremely close to the total mean value, meaning that this variable is not influenced by outliers in any manner whatsoever. This variable has an almost-zero value of skewness and a moderately negative value of kurtosis in this case. Taken together, the result of this normality test clearly states that the values pertaining to strength, elasticity, and that of the dependent variable – all of the independent variables – have acceptable levels of skewness and kurtosis within a range of -1 to +1. The nearly perfect agreement among the mean, median, and trimmed mean values contributes further to the fact that this follows a normally distributed pattern. Hence, this data set is normally distributed and ready for processing by the various tools of a parametric test.

Normality Summary Table

Variable Relationship Name	Mean	Median	Skewness	Kurtosis	Normality Status
Student-related factors	2.97	3.00	0.13	-0.23	Approximately normal
Teacher-related factors	3.13	3.20	-0.13	-0.54	Approximately normal
Personal and motivational factors	3.03	3.00	0.04	-0.82	Approximately normal
Classroom-related factors	3.14	3.25	-0.31	-0.43	Approximately normal
Non-curricular engagement factors	3.30	3.50	-0.08	-0.19	Approximately normal
Personal health and psychological factors	3.19	3.00	0.01	-0.47	Approximately normal
Home environment factors	3.09	3.00	-0.24	-0.31	Approximately normal
School attendance	2.98	3.00	0.05	-0.42	Approximately normal

Correlation Analysis

The analysis was done to reveal the degree and direction of the relationship that exists between the independent variables and the variable school attendance. Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used in the analysis, and it was made sure that all the assumptions necessary for normality and interval data had been met.

The analysis allows the determination of the level to which variables associated with students, the teacher, subjects, abilities, facilities, activities, personal factors, and the home environment relate to the trend of school attendance behaviors portrayed by the students.

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was interpreted using conventional standards, which measure the level of relationship using the dimensions weak, medium, and high for values below 0.30, 0.30-0.50, and above 0.50 respectively.

The relationship between student factors and the attendance of the school shows that the correlation coefficient is weak but positive and significant. It is understood that the personal preferences of students to carry out self-studies, personal tuitions, or other activities that may prevent them from attending the school, for example, influence their levels of school attendance, but the strength of the relationship is not that great. Personal preferences of students influence school attendance but may be dependent on other variables that might be of equal or greater significance.

Correlations

		SP_MEAN	TS_MEAN	PM_MEAN	CF_MEAN	NC_MEAN	P_MEAN	HE_MEAN	ATT_MEAN
SP_MEAN	Pearson Correlation	1	.501**	.358**	.416**	.319**	.184**	.255**	.177**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
TS_MEAN	Pearson Correlation	.501**	1	.421**	.550**	.640**	.340**	.203**	.135**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	.007
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
PM_MEAN	Pearson Correlation	.358**	.421**	1	.730**	.369**	.473**	.435**	.231**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
CF_MEAN	Pearson Correlation	.416**	.550**	.730**	1	.485**	.606**	.262**	.200**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
NC_MEAN	Pearson Correlation	.319**	.640**	.369**	.485**	1	.357**	.196**	.122*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001	.015
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
P_MEAN	Pearson Correlation	.184**	.340**	.473**	.606**	.357**	1	.358**	.145**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001	.004
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
HE_MEAN	Pearson Correlation	.255**	.203**	.435**	.262**	.196**	.358**	1	.320**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400
ATT_MEAN	Pearson Correlation	.177**	.135**	.231**	.200**	.122*	.145**	.320**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.007	<.001	<.001	.015	.004	<.001	
	N	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Another category of factors which have had a weak positive relationship is teacher and subject-related factors. This is an implication that while teacher variables such as subject and teacher difficulty have had a slight impact on school attendance, these factors still play an important role in determining school attendance in secondary schools. This is evident that while high-quality teachers and high-quality subject areas are vital, it is not entirely responsible for ensuring that students are in school every day in senior secondary schools due to external pressures of academics.

A slightly stronger relationship between physical and mental capabilities and school attendance exists; that is, a low-to-moderate positive relationship. Results indicate that the variables of students' fatigue, levels of concentration, emotional condition, and influence of peers are important in explaining the attendance behavior because the presence of physically and mentally improved students in schools can be observed. The need for health, sleep patterns, and emotional well-being can thus be deemed crucial in explaining regular school attendance.

The relationship between classroom facilities and attendance is also positive, statistically significant, yet of medium strength. It shows that overcrowding, light, seating, and overall comfort, in addition to other classroom facilities, have impacts on students' attitude toward, as well as their physical attendance in, school. Inadequate learning environment may act as a disincentive to the students to attend school, while an effective or conducive learning environment may act as a good reason or factor to impel or encourage the students to be in school.

Non-collegiate variables like non-collegiate activities and events, and the use of social media platforms, are weak and positively significant to attendance at school. This result shows that other factors are competing for the time that would have been spent in school and may be having a negative impact on attendance at school due to the activity that is taking place. But the weak correlation level shows that this non-collegiate variable acts as an indirect determinant.

The relationship, though weak, is statistically significant for personal and health-related factors towards the attendance at school. There is no doubt that health-related factors, fear, stress, and lack of motivation impact absence from school, but within a limited measure, since the strength cannot be matched with any of the

structural factors impacting health. This indicates that health-related absence from school is a situation, and it is not a chronic condition.

One of the major findings of this analysis is that the correlation between home environment and family support and school attendance has the strongest positive correlation value out of all the independent variables. The moderate and significant correlation value between these two factors indicates that the support and guidance provided by parents, monitoring by parents, home chores, financial assistance, and home environment play a pivotal/decisive role in determining the patterns of students attending school.

The students who remain under the constant support and guidance of their families usually remain regular in attending school. Apart from the correlation between the variable attendance, correlation analysis highlights the relationship between and among the independent variables. High positive correlation is exhibited between physical and mental facilities and attendance, and between teaching variables and activities outside college. These findings and results clearly denote that there is no independent attendance factor but all factors are linked with each other. For example, if there is poor class environment, it might have some negative bearing on physical and mental concentration of students, and if there is dull teaching, it might cause students to prefer tuition and activities outside college.

As far as correlation analysis is concerned, it is manifested and revealed that there is significant relation between all independent variables and attendance at school. However, their strength varies. Home environment and support stand at first, followed by physical and mental capabilities and facilities available in class.

Student preference, teacher and subject, activities outside college, and personal components of health rank third. Since there is absence of high correlation among independent variables, there is little possibility of multicollinearity, and as such regression analysis will not create any serious problem.

Regression Analysis

Multiple Regression Analysis was used to analyze the combined effects and individual effects of the chosen variables on the attendance of students in the Advanced Levels program. The variables that served as independent variables in the study comprise student preference, teaching and subjects, physical and mental abilities, facilities in the class room, activities that are contracted outside the college, personal and health-related variables, and home and family factors, while the attendance of the students served as the dependent variable. In multiple regression analysis, the study aimed to determine the variables that define the attendance of the students.

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.449 ^a	.422	.106	.58020

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.329	7	2.618	7.778	.000 ^b
	Residual	131.958	392	.337		
	Total	150.287	399			

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.584	.235		6.738	.000
	SP_MEAN	.066	.060	.063	1.100	.042
	TS_MEAN	-.020	.081	-.018	-.251	.002
	PM_MEAN	.036	.083	.032	.431	.666
	CF_MEAN	.113	.088	.110	1.286	.049
	NC_MEAN	.009	.062	.009	.143	.886
	P_MEAN	-.048	.065	-.046	-.730	.466
	HE_MEAN	.299	.060	.279	5.022	.000

The result of the model in the form of a summary indicates that the regression model has a moderate level of explanation. The measure of the correlation coefficient indicates a moderate level of relationship between the independent variables and student attendance, which indicates that collectively, the independent variables are related to student attendance. The measure of the coefficient of determination indicates that student attendance is a phenomenon to a moderate level of 42.2% determined by a set of seven independent variables. Although there has been a decrease in the measure of the adjusted coefficient of determination, this has also been expected, and it has been a resultant of taking a number of independent variables. The overall regression analysis suggests that the phenomenon of student attendance has a number of reasons rather than a single reason.

The result of ANOVA bears testimony to the fact that the regression model is significant. The value of F is significant at a significance level of one percent. This is a testimony to the fact that a regression model is a better fit to the data than a model with no predictor variables. It is a testimony to the fact that at least one predictor variable is significantly associated with the attendance of students. The regression model is a fitting model to explain the attendance pattern of Advanced Level students of government schools.

The regression coefficients assist in explaining the significance of each of the individual independent variables while factoring in the effects of other variables on it. The significance of the constant is statistically significant and represents the level of attendance without factoring in the variable effects.

This means that the individual preference of the student has a strong positive significance to the attendance of the student. It confirms the hypothesis that the individual preference of the students on attending the school or paying tuition and attending the self-study in the school or home will have a strong significant effect on the attendance of the students. Hence, Hypothesis 1 is acceptable.

Findings related to the teacher and subjects are significantly related to attendance, and the coefficient is negative. A negative coefficient indicates that a lack of perception and motivation by the teachers might be a possible cause of a lack of attendance. Significance on this variable tends to indicate that the class instruction and the relationship between teachers and their pupils are indeed a factor even when other variables are controlled. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted.

On the other hand, physical and mental abilities do not exhibit significance in the regression analysis on attendance with respect to physical fatigue, concentration, and emotional stress. Owing to the existence of a

certain level of correlation among variables such as physical fatigue, concentration difficulties, and emotional stress and attendance in the previous analysis, it is very obvious that after considering various variables, none of the variables individually determine attendance with respect to physical fatigue, concentration difficulties, and emotional stress.

As such, Hypothesis 3 is tentatively rejected. Similarly, non-collegiate activities will not act as a Predictor in determining students' attendance in the regression test as well. The rationale is that although it is quite likely that activities, socializing, and online interaction may or may not affect students' attendance, it is minimal and therefore will not become a Predictor variable as well.

Therefore, in concluding Hypothesis 4, The facility of the classroom is found to be a statistically significant positive predictor of attendance. The relevance of a learning environment is highlighted. The learning environment encompasses classrooms, ventilation, seating capacity, and lighting. The pupils are likely to attend classes if the learning environment favors them.

The relevance of a school facility to attendance is reinforced. The hypothesis 5 is accepted. The regression result shows that personal and health-related variables fail to demonstrate a statistically significant contribution to the attendance of students after considering other variables. Although illness, anxiety, and the role of certain emotions related to being affected the attendance of students elsewhere, those variables and factors do not add to the existing set of relevant variables, such as support from family member surrounding and the availability of support in the class environment, hence failing to accept hypothesis number 6.

Home and family support emerges as the most powerful predictor having a strong positively significant effect on attendance. This underlines the fact that family support and a good home and family environment have a vital role to play in facilitating the students' attendance at an educational institution. Family-related variables show the largest standardized impact on attendance among all predictors for this study and thus underlined their supreme significance in playing their part to influence educational behavior at the individual student level.

Thus, Hypothesis 7 has been confirmed. Concluding, it is clear from the regression analysis results that individual student preference, teacher and subject matters, class facility, and home and family environments rate as significant predictors of students' attendance. Most particularly within this study, the home and family environments have been revealed to be the determinant having the utmost significance to students' attendance. Capabilities, non-collegiate activity-related variables, and personal and health-related variables are the ones that do not remain significant within the context of individual influence within the context of multiple regression analysis.

The regression analysis findings offer a strong validation of the conceptual frameworks applied to the context of this study and have significant policy implications for policymakers, education administrators, teachers, and parents alike. It can thus be generalized that approaches aimed at improving family support, class environments, and teacher quality would be of much greater aid within the context of facilitating increased attention than strategies emphasizing on individual students themselves.

Thematic analysis

Thematic Analysis for Parent

The aim of analyzing the interviews with parents was to gain an understanding of the perceptions of factors that support or hinder the school attendance of Advanced Level students. The semi-structured nature of interviews with parents helped in outlining aspects of their perspectives on factors related to school attendance that could not be anticipated from the mere analysis of quantitative data. Themes emerging from the analysis of interviews of parents were: study priorities and examination orientations, support and monitoring by parents, responsibilities and financial pressures within households, motivations and emotional well-being of students, and school-parents' communications.

Theme 1: Examination-Oriented Study Priorities and Tuition Culture Theme

A common theme that cropped up was the importance attributed to preparing for A/L examinations, especially in tuitions and home study classes. Most participants expressed a view that the classes were more beneficial than school classes. One parent stated, "Most days, my child prefers to stay at home and do past papers because the A/L exam has become highly competitive" (Parent 01, 2025). The view was suggested by another parent that "Tuition classes cover the syllabus at a quicker pace compared to school, and for that reason, the child has decided to remain at home to attend tuition" (Parent 03, 2025).

One thing that came out clearly in this study is that even though school attendance is recognized as significant, priority is given to performance in examination results, and this is due to societal pressures and limited places offered in universities. The examination-orientated culture indirectly leads to school absenteeism because students are encouraged to or tend to opt for things that are deemed more examination-oriented. This clearly falls in line with the findings in relation to 'student preference and teacher/subject' for attendance.

Theme 2: Parental Support and Attendance Monitoring

On the issues of attendance, encouragement and supervision of parents played an important role. Parents reported monitoring their child's attendance and encouraging them to regularly attend classes. Parent 02, 2025, mentioned, "I check if my child goes to school every morning and make her understand the importance of regular attendance." (Parent 05, 2025), emphasized making the child feel better: "I always try to talk to my child and make her happy if she is tired or fed up of going to school."

However, this engagement was not uniform among the parents, as several were either busy with work or did not know the importance. Others stated that they allowed their children to manage their timetables. Variations of this parental involvement suggest that similar effectiveness lies where support and monitoring occur simultaneously to bring a positive impact on attendance behavior. The outcome provides confirmation of the home environment and family factors playing a crucial role since it was also witnessed to be the strongest determinant in the regression test.

Theme 3: Domestic Responsibilities and Economic Constraints

Domestic chores and financial problems were also cited as reasons for not regularly going to school. Economically disadvantaged parents pointed out that their children were engaged in some domestic activities that meant they stayed at home and did not have to go to school. Parent, 'Sometimes my daughter has to help at home when I am not well, so she misses school' (Parent 04, 2025). Financial problems were another factor, 'Financial hardships make providing transport and study materials difficult, which, in turn, leads to disturbed attendance' (Parent 06, 2025).

These reactions depict that absenteeism among children and teenagers may not be a matter of personal choice. Parents mentioned that when they have financial crises, it adds to emotional stress on the children, thereby making it difficult for them to be regular in class. This is the reason why this particular aspect signifies social inequality in schools, particularly government schools.

Theme 4: Student Motivation, Health, and Emotional Well-being

"Many parents expressed their concerns about motivation, stress, and health as the reasons for staying out of school." Some of them reported that "exhaustion" was created by intellectual burden in school.

"My child feels mentally exhausted due to exams and tuitions, so sometimes she does not feel like going to school," Parent 07 in 2025 said.

Another parent highlighted, "My child, when stressed or anxious, avoids going to school because it is overwhelming." (Parent 08 in 2025) Physical and intellectual disadvantages can instill inadequate motivation in the learners, making them unenthusiastic and unsupportive towards attending school. Parent 08 in 2025:

"The children who experience disadvantages or have a lack of motivation may express fatigue in order to get their parents' attention.

Health-related illnesses and absences are also noted, particularly when there is stress or illness affecting a child or family. Parents recognize these as important to attendance and engagement and relate closely to general emotional or psychological well-being. These variables did not enter the regression model as a predictor for positive attendance and engagement; however, it is suggested here through these results that their influence is indicated and may be interactive with other constructs such as family and/or class environment.

Theme 5: School Parent Communication & Institutional Support

The last theme is based on the parental perceptions related to communication regarding attendance problems between the institution and the parents themselves. Whereas some parents were satisfied with the communication received from the teachers, for most, it was minimal. "The school only contacts us when attendance becomes very poor; otherwise, there is little communication" (Parent 09, 2025). Another commented, "If teachers discussed attendance problems with parents earlier, parents would be better placed to assist the children" (Parent 10, 2025). The parents further gave constructive suggestions, such as better counseling, parent awareness, and teaching methods. Improvements in cooperation between schools and parents were believed by many parents to possibly help in improving attendance. It is thus clear that the absenteeism problem is of concern to both the schools and the parents. Parent Thematic Analysis Overall Summary of Parent Thematic The findings of the theme analysis of the parent interviews reveal the different academic and social schemes that influence the attendance of the students. The parents are indeed fully aware of the importance and the need for the being there and presence of the kids and are doing everything humanly possible to support the very same. However, the actual and bitter realities of life are also being encountered by them.

Thematic Analysis for

As such, the interviews were carried out in a semi-structured manner, with the intention of finding the classical factors, within the realm of the classroom, institutional, and parental, which contribute towards absenteeism among students attending schools at the Advanced Level, through the process of thematic analysis, by making use of the semi-structured interview platform with these teachers, even though these teachers are the key agents in the process, but these teachers were invaluable in providing an insight into the process of absenteeism, the reasons, and the intervention strategies available, through the process of carrying out these semi-structured interviews, five themes emerged.

Theme 1. Prevalence and Patterns of Absenteeism

Absenteeism among A/L students was a crucial area identified by teachers as a major concern in their schools. In particular, the teachers observed that the absenteeism phenomenon was more prominent in the arts and commerce group of students, especially during periods when they face extreme pressure in their academic studies. As one of the teachers stated, "Absenteeism is a regular phenomenon, especially when the students feel that the syllabus is too much to handle or when exams are fast approaching" (Teacher 01, 2025). A teacher further added that some 'students come to the school occasionally without any reason; they get bored, experience depression, and in some cases, peer pressure' (Teacher 02, 2025).

Teachers emphasized again that absence is not steady but climaxes and subsides according to test dates, personal and motivating levels, and so on. Thus, in Mean? Theme, there is importance in recognizing and appreciating the pattern and nature of attendance in order to deliver the intervention in time and effectively. Even their views align with the results obtained in terms of attendance rates varying greatly in streams and attendance rates differing according to students and their respective levels of engagement.

Subject 2: Teaching Methodology/Academic

The second major theme was connected to the role of teaching methodologies, subject difficulty levels, and the coverage of topics within classes that might have an impact on school attendance. Teachers confirmed that

students sometimes do not attend classes if they find the classes less interesting or too difficult. One teacher was quoted: “If the subject is tough or the teaching methodology is not attracting, then students get bored and would rather not attend classes” (Teacher 03, 2025). Another teacher stated: “Students think that they would acquire more and quicker knowledge from outside tuition classes and thus do not feel like attending classes at school” (Teacher 04, 2025).

These points imply that academic engagement is intertwined with the quality of instruction. The instructors reported that instances of a lack of academic engagement by students tend to coexist with whether those academic activities are relevant and clear to them. The themes described here are an addition to the quantitative findings on value-added factors that impact instruction and instructors.

Topic 3: Tuition and study habits influences

Absenteeism is also identified as related to tuitions and self-study practices undertaken by most of the teachers. According to most of the teachers, students do not want to join classes in school if they are also required to attend tuitions outside. One of the teachers explains: “Students often refrain from attending school to join tuitions because they feel tuitions are more exam-oriented” (Teacher 05, 2025). Another teacher has clearly hinted that it becomes a hurdle to handle in excess load when students feel: “Students feel that it is better to devote more hours to revise at home to live with A/L demands and hence refrain from school” (Teacher 06, 2025).

These findings verify the quantitative data on the matters of student preference and other collegiate factors, supporting the conclusion that attendance at school is impacted by other education commitments. Teachers themselves included the improvement of coordination between school classes and teaching times in their list of suggestions to improve attendance.

Theme 4: Environment and Facilities in the Class

The teachers also identified the environment that encompasses the classroom physically and socially, which is an important consideration that influences attendance rates. Overcrowding, lack of ventilation, poor lighting, and seating arrangement that is not comfortable was identified. “Sometimes the students don't want to come to school due to the environment, where classrooms are small and not comfortable, and as a result, they don't see the reason to attend the school,” said Teacher 07, 2025. It was also noted that “sometimes the environment, which is the class conditions, makes them feel estranged, most especially during long or tired sessions.”

These thematic findings suggest that an improvement in the environment within the classroom may increase the students' comfort and participation levels, thus ensuring that they attend school on a regular basis. This theme is also reflected in the factor analysis of the results from the survey with respect to the facilities within the classroom, which is an intervention that is rather easy to undertake.

Theme 5: Parent and peer participation

At last, teachers mentioned a favorable environment created by parents and friends. Teachers explained that if parents are very supportive of their children attending schools and supervise this attendance when they're going out, this motivates the children to regularly attend schools. One teacher elaborated: “When parents are very keen on monitoring and encouraging school attendance, then students can come to school regularly” (Teacher 09, 2025). Conversely, teachers found friends a double-edge sword because they mentioned that if their friends will not attend schools, then their friends will not come either: “Some skip classes due to the absence of their friends; peer pressure plays a big role in attendance decisions” (Teacher 10, 2025). This is in line with the quantitative information available regarding the home environment and family support, also including the fact that every socio-influential aspect, whether family or peers, has a considerable impact on attendance.

Results of the thematic analysis of the teacher interviews reveal the following regarding the phenomenon of absenteeism in the A/L community, identifying a number of inducing factors, including teaching techniques, pressure to perform academically, patterns of private tuitions, classroom settings, and socio-influences.

The qualitative theme analysis of teacher interviews helps to reveal the existence of patterns of absenteeism, teaching and subject-related difficulties, the impact of tuitions, factors of the environment, and the role of parents and peers. The qualitative themes of teacher interviews help to supplement survey research, validating and establishing trends of quantitative characteristics of student absenteeism patterns. The above-said practical considerations, derived from the teachers' thematic analysis, further validate the research findings and enumerate possible areas of interventions, such as teaching techniques, classroom improvements, parental involvement, and monitoring systems, to reduce absenteeism patterns.

DISCUSSION

This research was carried out mainly to identify variables influencing the attendance of A/L students studying in government schools in Sri Lanka, specifically in the Arts and Commerce streams, among others. Other variables to be considered were students' preferences, aspects related to teaching and subjects, physical and mental aptitudes, extra collegiate activities, class facilities, personal matters, and home background and support. In this light, a mixed-methods research strategy helped the researcher delve deeper into the attendance irregularities of students and the reasons underlying them.

Results from the descriptive analysis of the survey dataset indicated that certain independent variables moderately impacted the presence of the students. The factors concerning students' preferences for staying back for self-learning and attending tuition classes had mean values ranging between 2.86 and 3.02, signifying that such practices, while not very frequent, had the necessary momentum to bring about differences in the student attendance pattern. Such observations fit well with the findings from the teacher interview session where some teachers mentioned that many students give precedence to private tuitions and home revisions over school attendance (Teacher 05, 2025; Teacher 06, 2025). Parents also agreed that students have been avoiding school to prepare for exams, signifying that while academic student-directed learning strategies have immense potential to improve performance, they at times contribute to the reduction in regular school attendance (Parent 03, 2025).

Teachers and subject-related factors were also found to play significant roles in absenteeism. In determining teaching behavior, subject difficulties, and student motivation, it recorded moderate values of 3.00-3.23. These values clearly indicate how students are responsive to the teaching behavior, subject difficulties, and motivation. These insights were supported through the analysis of teacher interviews conducted in this research. They validate how the behaviors of teachers, difficulties posed by subjects, and low motivations among students act to demotivate and hence lower school attendance. For example, in the case of Teacher 03 (2025) and Teacher 04, it was observed that ". Students miss classes when lessons seem uninteresting or irrelevant." Perceptions among students that lessons given through tuition classes provide better and more efficient learning opportunities are also obvious in lowering motivations among students to attend school and, as such, act to remind them of external pressures to attend school. These findings validate the empirical research carried out in previous studies by Dias (2022) and Bandara (2020) on how the link between educational qualities and student engagement and attendance is conceptualized in Sri Lankan A/L classrooms.

Physical and psychological capabilities are another very important element that has been taken into consideration here. The outcome from the surveys has revealed that the average scores fall in the range 3.01-3.16, which pertains to factors like lack of sleep, disruption in sleep patterns, personal problems, and peer effect, which has a moderate effect in terms of absenteeism among students. This is very clear when reported by teachers that how lack of sleep due to late night studies, indulging in phone, or feeling emotionally distraught affects the ability of students to focus as well as engage actively in the classroom (Teacher 03, 2025; Teacher 06, 2025). Emotional fluctuations, stress, and underlying health problems are also cited by parents for absenteeism. Indeed, there is a universally established need herein, which supports the views presented by authors like Gottfried (2014) as well as Wickramasinghe & Samarasinghe (2021).

Therefore, sports, clubs, and social media have relatively higher average scores (3.30-3.31) to indicate that students consider them more than their educational pursuits. Also, this has been justified in the interviews conducted with teachers, stating that sometimes students' engagements with outside events or social

obligations cause them to be absent from class (Teacher 05, 2025). The same has also been justified by the parents, stating that sometimes the students' engagements with social and recreational pursuits cause them to be absent (Parent02, 2025). The importance of having a well-rounded strategy, with structured outside activities and still attending educational classes, is established from the study conducted by Balfanz & Byrnes (2018).

The factors attributed to the class facility, such as class overcrowding, poor lighting and ventilation, and poor classroom sitting capacities, add up to an average mean of 3.06 and 3.25. Teachers stated that a poor class environment makes it impossible for good participation among students and leads to absenteeism. Teacher 07, 2025; Teacher 08, 2025. This augurs well with the results and points to the fact that environmental conditions within learning institutions have a critical role in promoting learner participation and validity. Research by Zins et al. (2017) on the relationship within environmental factors and learning achievements.

Means concerning individuals and health ranged from 3.11 to 3.27, indicating that all were a moderate influencing factor. The teachers and parents were also made to understand that health concerns of students, lack of motivation, and anxiety relating to stress were some of the factors that discourage regular attendance. Again, a pointer to the need for facilities for psychological support at schools and stress-related counseling, as recommended by Kearney (2016).

The home environment and family support were one of the influential variables that determined attendance. The scores ranged from 2.96 to 3.18, showing moderate to strong impact. Parents indicated that support, monitoring, and home chores impact attendance of children; their statements are: Parent 01 (2025); Parent 04 (2025), while teachers remarked that active participation of parents leads to good attendance of students, as stated by Teacher 09 (2025). This study has again highlighted the importance of a parent participation program and pointed out the need for school-home collaboration for regular attendance, which was also supported by studies conducted by Rajapaksha (2019) and Gunasekara (2018).

Further confirmation for these results comes from the correlation and regression analysis. The home environment and parental support (HE_MEAN) variable has shown the strongest positive relationship with student attendance (ATT_MEAN). In the regression analysis also, the same was confirmed as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.279$, $p < 0.01$). While other variables, such as student choice and class facilities, present a relatively lower contribution, it is still significant enough to confirm the fact that efforts need to be aimed at changing family involvement and improving home-school links. A regression analysis of 0.422 R^2 has confirmed that the combined effects of factors involving the individual and surroundings have accounted for 42.2% variation in student attendance.

The discussion underlines how absenteeism in A&L students is a complex phenomenon affected by academic, personal, contextual, and social variables. Such complex determinants of absenteeism are better valued by combining insights into the qualitative research findings of the parents and teacher stakeholders to support the findings of this research study. Schools will need to consider quality of teaching and learning in classrooms, provide a positive learning environment within and outside classrooms to ensure positive attendance rates.

Summary of Chapter

The chapter introduced and explained the analysis of data from 400 A/L students attending government schools in Sri Lanka, comments from parents, and teachers, and it is clear from the reliability analysis of the instruments used that those instruments were reliable and consistent given the values of Cronbach's alpha of more than 0.80 on most of the scales used, ensuring the results were statistically valid. The demographic analysis of the data showed that the population is diverse and representative based on gender, stream, school type, and attendance figures.

Descriptive statistics showed that all the independent variables had moderate means, implying that student preference, modes of instruction, mental and physical abilities, class room facilities, non-collegiate activities, personal health, and home environment influence student attendance moderately. Student attendance was slightly lower in terms of means, signifying potential to improve on the regularity of attendance in school.

Normality tests verified that parametric methods of correlation and regression analysis was appropriate as the values for skewness and kurtosis were within acceptable limits. Correlation analysis indicated that all independent variables were positively related to attendance, with the strongest relationships being that of home environment and parental support variables.

Regression analysis further showed parental support, preference, and facilities within the classroom as significant predictors of attendance, accounting for an overall variance of 42.2% in attendance levels.

Thematic analysis of interviews with parents and teachers triangulated the findings from quantitative analysis and resulted in five major themes. These were patterns of absenteeism, teaching and academia-related problems, the role of tuition and self-study, classroom facilities, and parental and peer engagement. Parents stressed motivation, home chores, economic circumstances, and conducive environments as very important. Teachers stressed teaching strategies, classroom environments, and peer factors.

Complementation of the findings from both qualitative and quantitative analysis gives a holistic explanation of factors influencing the attendance of A/L students and points out ways of engaging them. Conclusion In conclusion, this chapter establishes that absenteeism among A/L students is a phenomenon that is influenced by a large number of interconnected variables. In part, this phenomenon demands interventions by all concerned parties and these include A/L students themselves, lecturers, parents, and administrators. By so doing, this chapter provides the foundation and background to be used in the next chapter.

CONCLUSION

Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter discusses the conclusions drawn from the research, which were intended to examine the factors affecting school attendance of Advanced Level (A/L) students in government schools in Sri Lanka. The chapter integrates both the quantitative analysis of survey data from 400 students and qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews from parents and teachers of these students. Through such integration, the chapter draws attention to the major factors of influence, their relative importance, and finally helps generate a clear understanding of dynamics of absence from schools from a research-informed platform.

The conclusion of a research helps provide a clear indication of whether the research objectives were achieved and allows readers to draw a clear implication for and from the research. The conclusion of this particular research draws attention to the objectives of the research, including the hypotheses set within the context. The conclusion of a research also helps create interest and therefore a clear implication for further research. The conclusion of this research helps create an implication for further research, particularly in the educational sector. The educational sector has a major implication for the conclusion of this research, mainly due to the nature of the research, which involves educational institutions and factors affecting students, particularly A/L students, within these institutions.

Conclusions

The results of this research indicate that school attendance of A/L students is a complex phenomenon which is affected by a number of academic and non-academic factors. The findings obtained from quantitative information indicate that student preference, teacher/subject-related aspects and capabilities of students, non-collegiate activities, availability of facilities in the classroom and outside classes, and home environments and parental influence have a significant impact on school attendance. On the other hand, descriptive statistics obtained from this research indicate that these factors have a moderately high value to be considered important. Among them, home environment and parental influence is identified as a most important predictor emphasizing the importance of parental engagement to attend school regularly. This is consistent with research studies obtained from other studies stating that parental influence and engagement of children in academic activities significantly increase attendance and engagement of students at schools (Rajapaksha, 2019; Gunasekara, 2018).

"Student preference variables: These are the aspects that the student considers when making a decision on whether to attend school. These include self-study, tuition classes, and participation in other activities. "The results showed that the mean value of the student preference variables was between 2.86 and 3.02. These values indicate that the students are making thoughtful decisions on whether to attend school based on their priority. In support of this finding, it was clear from the results that parents and teachers also argued that some students choose to attend private tuition classes when the class is in session or stay back home to engage in self-study sessions when they are supposed to be in class (Parent 03, 2025; Teacher 05, 2025). Findings from this research support the need to create a conducive environment that aligns with the self-study initiatives taken by the students and provides adequate motivation to the effect that the students will be regular in class."

"Teacher and subject-related factors such as method of teaching, level of subject difficulty, and teacher motivation have all played important roles in influencing attendance." Descriptive statistics showed that the score mean varied between 3.00 and 3.23, indicating that the relationship between attendance and the interest in subjects and the teaching level is moderately related. The teaching factor using thematic analysis emphasized that the presence of monotonous and difficult lessons, and the absence of motivating factors in the teaching processes, affect student engagement and regular attendance (Teacher 03, 2025; Teacher 04, 2025). In addition, the fact that students prefer tuition classes to school lessons indicates the perception that external academic assistance may be more efficient, causing the inadvertent reduction in school attendance.

Physical and mental abilities were also identified as critical determinants of absenteeism. Data from surveys revealed that variables like fatigue, lack of sleep, poor health, and mental stress moderately influenced attendance, with mean scores ranging between 3.01 and 3.16. Participants in the study argued that physically and emotionally stressed students find it hard to focus in class, causing them to be absent (Teacher_06, 2025). Similarly, parents pointed out that students experiencing stress, slight health concerns, and mental issues occasionally keep them away from school (Parent_08, 2025). All these observations and quotes draw attention to the importance of implementing supportive mechanisms that address students' physical and mental needs, such as professional counseling, stress education, and healthy study and rest practices in institutions.

Even non-collegiate activities such as sporting and social undertakings, social media interaction, and other such non-curricular student engagements showed high values for absenteeism, with slightly higher mean values (3.30-3.31). It has been discussed by both teachers and parents that sometimes these student engagements clash with school attendance schedules (Teacher 05, 2025; Parent 02, 2025). Even though it is vital for comprehensive student development to be involved in such non-curricular activities, it is also significant to balance schedules in such a manner that it doesn't affect academic duties. Facilities within the classroom, such as overcrowding, poor ventilation, inconvenient seating, and inappropriate lighting, had a moderate effect on absence, with means ranging from 3.06 to 3.25. Teachers felt that uncomfortable learning environments demote student motivation to attend the lesson (Teacher 07, 2025; Teacher 08, 2025). Providing sufficient infrastructure within the classroom is thus an essential factor and aspect within the scope of improving attendance. It is important that educational policymakers and administrators dedicate resources towards improving the learning environment within schools.

Personal and health-related factors, having a mean value of 3.11 to 3.27, showed that illness, anxiety, and lack of motivation were contributing factors for not attending school. Parents and school teachers noted that emotional well-being, stress, and common illnesses have been known to contribute to students' absenteeism from school (Parent 08, 2025; Teacher 06, 2025). The significance of providing emotional well-being support for students within schools to prevent absenteeism and create a conducive operating environment for students should not be underestimated. The home environment and support from parents were found to be the most critical factor influencing the attendance of students. Teachers showed how students who benefit from a good home environment display good attendance levels in class (Teacher 09, 2025). Correlation analysis showed that all the independent variables were positively related to attendance, thus establishing that factors related to absenteeism are interrelated. Home environment and parental involvement showed a higher positive correlation with attendance followed by student choice and class environment.

Suggestions

Based on the results obtained from this research, several recommendations and suggestions are put forward to counter the phenomenon of absenteeism among A/L students in government schools in Sri Lanka. The suggestions and recommendations will seek to cope with the phenomenon related to the absenteeism of the A/L students with consideration to various dimensions related to the phenomenon.

1. Improving Student Participation and Interest

It came to light that preferences, be it in the form of giving importance to tuition classes or self-studying, have been observed to affect attendance by a great degree in students.

Students will evade class attendance that sounds uninteresting or quite useless to them, and thus prefer other learning activities such as private tutors, external engagements. The way to mitigate this challenge is that schools must effectively address classroom engagement by infusing interactive learning strategies, examples, and technological integration in learning. Programs or projects that can be executed by groups of students, for example, should be considered, as well as a multi-media approach so as to address and intrigue students.

Providing ownership in education by engaging them in planning or activities in class is another way that will boost attendance. According to Dias (2022), Kearney (2016), feedback sessions between students and teachers will help in understanding students' preferences in education and, therefore, modify strategies by teachers. Ownership of education will promote attendance whereby students are taught. Giving students ownership in education by involving them in planning or class activities will improve attendance.

Arranging feedback sessions between the students and teachers will be very helpful to understand students' preferences in education and thus modify strategies from the teacher's end accordingly.

2. Teacher Training and Professional Development

The factors proven to impact student Attendance are teacher and subject-related factors, including teaching pedagogy, difficulty level of the subject, and motivational urge of the teacher. Teachers who are unable to make learning for students interactive or motivating indirectly, influence students to attend school or reap the consequences of absence. Schools should engage teachers in professional development programs such as teaching innovations, differentiated instruction and classroom management. Seminars for teachers on motivational skills, student-oriented learning and effective communication will better equip them to manage students and their needs effectively (Gottfried, 2014). Teaching mentorship programs assigned for novice teachers where experienced teachers teach them to handle students in a manner that will uplift the quality of teaching standards and quality of the Attendance standards of the students.

3. Improving Classroom Facilities and Environment

The study highlighted that the factors affecting attendance, which are of average importance, include conditions inside the classroom, such as overcrowding, poor ventilation, and not having enough seating and lighting. Schools can be quite sure that the first step is to increase favorable learning with the improvement of conditions related to physical infrastructure. This may be achieved by practices like reducing the number of students in each class, improving ventilation and lighting, and organizing proper ergonomic sitting. It is quite reasonable that keeping healthy physical conditions and ensuring all the educational tools are available can contribute to students' motivation to attend lessons; this is directly related to physical comfort and familiarity, as explained by Bandara (2020).

4. Supporting Students' Physical and Mental Well-being

Physical and psychological capacities, such as fatigue, stress, sleep deprivation, and minor health issues, were found to impact school attendance. Schools should provide programs related to promoting general well-being, including, but not limited to, counseling, managing stress, and managing time. Schools may raise awareness

about the need for adequate sleep, healthy nutrition, and regular physical activity, which, if provided, students can maintain at school due to sufficient levels of energy. School teachers, and at the same time school counselors, should be sensitive to the students' emotional status, particularly in the context of stress, anxiety, and a lack of energy. Parents also play a crucial role since the parents' recommendations regarding good habits can serve as a vehicle for school attendance.

5. Improving Home Environment & Parental Involvement

Home environment and parental support proved to be the most influential factor in persuading student attendance. Parents' contribution cannot be belittled in persuading students to attend school regularly, monitoring progress, and organizing home environments that do not present conflicts with student education. Schools need to urge upon parent-teacher interactions, awareness, and workshops regarding the importance of regular school attendance. Parents can also be counseled regarding the construction of home environments that promote study and optimize household chores and education commitments within the home environment to keep them away from interference with education. Poor family students can also be provided with facilitating mechanisms by schools, including scholarships, free learning resources, and financial planning, which do not act as deterrents to school attendance

6. Extracurricular Activities Inclusion

Extra-curricular programs, though non-collegiate pursuits including sports, and use of social media networks, have been recognised to have their worth for development, findings from this study have shown the existence of a conflict created by school attendance. The school should integrate programs out of the classroom into the school calendar without undermining school participation for students. Organized programs and policies to enable students to strike a balance between school and extra programs successfully should be put in place to enable students manage the two aspects of their life successfully. Encouragement of a culture of extra program and school program complementarity would enable students win on all fronts.

7. Development of Attendance Monitoring and Support Systems

A systematic method of monitoring attendance might enable patterns of chronic absenteeism to be noticed and measures to be taken to act on such patterns. Schools may use technology like attendance tracking systems and initiatives for support like special support programs for students with chronic absenteeism. Teachers, school counselors, and administrative staff might support each other in acting on reasons, mentoring students, and adopting remedial measures like catching up on lost education in special classes or peer tutoring programs. A supportive school environment which nurtures and supports rather than punishes students' chronic absenteeism might facilitate improved voluntary attendance (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2018).

8. Policy Level Recommendations

In a broader perspective, the possible measures the policy framers can keep in mind for fair access to these resources in all schools, especially in rural and deprived regions, would be essential. It would be necessary to enhance teacher training programs, class infrastructure, counseling activities, and participation by parents for effective reduction of absenteeism. Government initiatives in dealing with poverty, medical issues, and inequality in education would have an indirect effect of improving attendance ratios in the A/L student population.

9. Promoting Collaborations of Effective interventions should involve collective efforts from various stakeholders such as students, parents, teachers, and school administrators. By providing platforms for interaction and mechanisms of feedback, schools will be able to design interventions geared at tackling particular needs of students. Intervention strategies may be based on mentorship activities, volunteer participation by parents, and buddy or peer assistance. Schools respond to motivational needs, logistical and socio-emotional needs to create a positive environment of regular school going.

10. Continuous Evaluation & Research

Finally, schools should establish measures for continuous assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of strategies aimed at improving school attendance. Technology-based approaches can provide insight into the effectiveness and areas for refinement of the strategies adopted to deal with school absenteeism. More research should be encouraged to better comprehend the dynamics surrounding the pattern of school absenteeism in order to help develop recommendations for the adoption of such strategies in the future (Maslow, 1943; Kearney, 2016).

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter brings the conclusion to the research by combining the results and their implications in providing valuable recommendations on how the A/L student attendance in the Sri Lankan government schools can be improved. A number of variables that cause absenteeism among the students were identified by this research as including and being influenced by student predilections, teachers and subjects, physical and mental aptitude, non-collegiate commitments, class facilities, personal and health matters, as well as home and parental support.

Results showed that the most prominent influence on attendance was exerted by the home environment and parental support, as backed by the statistics on correlation and regression. Moderation by the other variables was identified by the support of the statistics on descriptivism. These recommendations stressed a comprehensive method of addressing this absenteeism by combining efforts of engagement strategies in the classroom, teacher training and development, enhanced learning environments and mental and physical wellness alternatives, parental engagement, and effective extracurricular activity management. Educational institutions can benefit by establishing effective attendance tracking processes and adopting a collaborative and data-driven method of ongoing assessment and intervention.

At a macro-level intervention approach can be equally effective by promoting resource equity distribution and teacher training opportunities. Through the implementation of these strategies, it is possible to create a positive and encouraging learning atmosphere, lower the number of absences, and improve the overall educational performance and welfare of students. The results and recommendations obtained from this research would form an extremely valuable guideline for teachers and administrators to deal with the issue of absenteeism systematically and scientifically, and thus ensure that A/L students reach their ultimate educational potential.

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APPENDIX 01 - QUESTIONNAIRE

Factors Affecting the Attendance of Advanced Level Students in Government Schools in Sri Lanka

Section A: Demographic Information

Gender: Male Female

Stream of study: Arts Commerce Science Technology Other:

School type: National Provincial Pirivena

Average attendance rate last term: 80–100% 60–79% 40–59% Below 40%

Section B: Statements Related to Attendance Factors

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. Use the scale below:

1 – Strongly Disagree | 2 – Disagree | 3 – Neutral | 4 – Agree | 5 – Strongly Agree

1. Student Preference (SP)

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
SP1	SP01 - I stay at home to study for term exams.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SP2	SP02 - I do not attend school when I have tuition classes on weekdays.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SP3	SP03 - I am not interested in attending school when the topics are boring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Teacher and Subject Factors (TS)

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
TS1	TS01 - My teacher's teaching style makes me lose interest in the subject.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TS2	TS02 - I do not like to attend school when the subject is difficult or boring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TS3	TS03 - I prefer attending tuition classes instead of school lessons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TS4	TS04 - Teachers are not motivating enough to make me attend regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TS5	TS05 - I feel uncomfortable when the teacher targets me in class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Physical and Mental Capabilities (PM)

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
PM1	PM01 - I find it difficult to concentrate in class when I feel tired or sleepy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PM2	PM02 - I can't wake up early due to late-night studying or phone use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PM3	PM03 - Family or relationship problems affect my attendance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PM4	PM04 - I avoid school when my friends do not attend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PM5	PM05 - I dislike attending school because of noise and distractions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Non-Collegiate Factors (NC)

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
NC1	NC01 - I miss school when I participate in extracurricular activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NC2	NC02 - I prefer outside events (sports, clubs, social media) over school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Classroom Facility (CF)

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
CF1	CF01 - The classroom is too crowded, which makes me avoid school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CF2	CF02 - Poor ventilation in the classroom discourages me from attending.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CF3	CF03 - I find the seating arrangement uncomfortable during lessons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CF4	CF04 - Poor lighting and visibility make me less interested in classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Personal and Health Factors (P)

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
P1	P01 - I do not attend school when I am sick or not feeling well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P2	P02 - I feel demotivated or anxious about school activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Home Environment and Family Support

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
HE1	HE01 - My parents encourage and monitor my school attendance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HE2	HE02 - I have to stay home to help with household work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

HE3	HE03 - I sometimes miss school due to family financial problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HE4	HE04 - My home environment supports my studies and attendance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Attendance

No	Statement	Scale (1-5)
ATT1	ATT01 - I attend school regularly without missing classes.	1-5
ATT2	ATT02 - I rarely miss school unless I am sick or have valid reasons.	1-5
ATT3	ATT03 - I consider attending school daily as important for my success.	1-5
ATT4	ATT04 - My attendance has been consistent throughout this term.	1-5

Section C: Open-Ended Question (Optional)

1. What do you think are the **main reasons** why students miss school in your grade or class?

Appendix 02 - Semi-Structured Interview Guide – Parents

The purpose for: The study will also aim to explore the parents' perceptions regarding the factors that affect their child's school attendance, and the home environmental influences and parental support with regard to A/L education.

Parent Interview Questions

1. What do you think are the main reasons your child does not attend school regularly?
2. How does your child's preparation for A/L examination (self-study or tuition classes) affect school attendance?
3. What kind of support do you give to encourage your child to come to school regularly?
4. Does your child have any family or household duties that sometimes make it impossible for them to attend school?
5. How do financial conditions in your household influence your child's education and school attendance?
6. In your opinion, to what extent is your child motivated to go to school, and what factors affect this motivation?
7. Have you noticed any health, emotional, or stress-related issues that affect your child's attendance?
8. How well do you think the school keeps parents informed about problems with attendance?
9. What suggestions would you have for schools or teachers that may help to improve your child's regular attendance?

Appendix 03 Semi-Structured Interview Guide – Teachers

Purpose: To explore the teachers' views on classroom-related factors, parental involvement, and institutional challenges faced by A/L students regarding attendance.



Teacher Interview Questions

1. In your experience, how serious is the problem of absenteeism among A/L students in your school?
2. What are the most common reasons students give for being absent from school?
3. In what ways do teaching methodology, subject difficulty, or syllabus coverage influence the students' motivation to attend the class?
4. To what extent do tuition classes influence students' attendance at school at the A/L level?
5. Have you noticed any correlations between the students' emotional well-being and their attendance?
6. How do school conditions-whether overcrowding, ventilation, and other facilities-affect students' attendance?
7. What role do you think parents play in monitoring and supporting student attendance?
8. How does peer influence impact the decisions of students to attend or skip school?
9. What are some strategies that your school uses to address chronic absenteeism?
10. What recommendations would you suggest to improve regular attendance among A/L students?