

## **ABSTRACT**

Skipping school is not rare in the educational world, with many students having skipped class or school during their academic careers. However, chronic school absenteeism or truancy can lead to students engaging in substance abuse, delinquent behavior, and other harmful external behaviors. Therefore, understanding why students fall into absenteeism and finding ways to alter an absentee student's trajectory are essential questions that need to be answered. The purpose of this study is to examine three components of a student's life that can affect their likelihood of engaging in absentee behaviors. The student's life components that will be assessed are the family financial support, family social support, and community social support they may or may not receive. Secondary data was used to complete the study and was taken from the study titled, "Raising Healthy Children, Seattle Metropolitan Area, 2004-2011" by Jennifer Bailey. The study initially contained 1,040 individuals from a suburban area in the Northwest United States who were first recruited while they were in the first or second grade; however, the dataset used will be the data collected when those participants were 18, 21, and 24/25. Only 494 individuals were part of this second data set due to only that amount consenting to have their data used. It was found that there was a significant relationship between family social support and community social support with school absenteeism. Additionally, as both family social support or community social support increased, the student's likelihood of skipping class or being absent from school decreased. Understanding these relationships is extremely important in curbing the effect the Covid-19 Pandemic had on schools. especially on student absenteeism. Therefore, the current study provides information that can help develop a plan to bring students back to the classroom efficiently.

# INTRODUCTION

Significance of Study

- Student truancy is much more than a mere marked student absence since it is associated with multiple psychosocial vulnerabilities and life-course problems.
- Truancy has also been associated with increased risk for substance abuse, delinquency, and other harmful external behaviors.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose is to examine three components of a student's life that can affect their likelihood of engaging in absentee behaviors (family finances, family social support, and community social support).

Research Question

How does a student's familial financial resources, familial social resources, and community social resources affect the likelihood of them being absent from school, which can lead to becoming truant adolescents?

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that individuals with less familial financial resources will be more inclined to miss school and be at an increased risk of becoming truant students. However, this risk can be decreased if they have substantial amounts of familial social resources or community social resources.

Family Financial Support Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are overrepresented among students who are absent from school and are more at risk for developing absenteeism than their peers from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. Family Social Support Building a more robust family unit only aids in decreasing student absenteeism and increasing school and education engagement Parental support for student achievement is also a factor for student absenteeism, with little parental support resulting in a higher risk for student absenteeism and lower student achievement. Community Social Support Communities can create positive support environments to buffer things like academic stress while promoting academic engagement Students growing up in disadvantaged communities are at an increased risk for lower academic achievement, which is a risk factor for absenteeism. Ecosystemic Theory and Coleman's Theory of Social Capital The Ecosystemic Theoretical framework helps understand the potential for an environment to produce protective factors to offset risk factors developed from another environment. Coleman argues that students will be less likely to fall into absenteeism or truancy if adult figures within a community communicate with one another to block students from participating in delinguent behaviors. Gaps in the Literature A current gap within the literature is how impactful a family's financial state is on a student enrolled in an all-online education program Research into the systems in students' lives that can affect their access to adequate technology through financial means and parental and community support for students to pay attention to online classes is also missing.

Research Design The current study utilized data from a study titled, "Raising Healthy" Children, Seattle Metropolitan Area, 2004-2011" by Jennifer Bailey. The original study sought to understand substance misuse development within children who stemmed from high-risk environments. The data used was an extension of the Jennifer Bailey's original study in 1993 which had a sample size of 1,040 individuals. Sample The current study sample is comprised of only 494 individuals compared to the initial 1,040; this is due to these individuals consenting to their data being archived. The current study only obtained data from when then participants were 18. **Operational Definitions** Family Financial Support – measured using two variables from the original study that described the individual's family's income and if the child received free or reduced-price lunch. Family social support – measured using two variables from the original study that described the individual's opportunities for family prosocial involvement and their importance on being honest with their parents. Community Social Support – originally measured using two variables from the original data set, however since both variables were perfectly correlated with one another, only one has been used; the one variable used describes the individual's perception of if their neighborhood is proud of them. Absenteeism – measured using using one variable from the original study that asked the individual if they had ever skipped class or school without an excuse.

# School Truancy: A Race Against Resources

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# LITERATURE REVIEW

### METHODS

### **Chi-Square Test**

Those who stated it was not important to be honest with their parents were significantly more likely to skip or be absent from school (89.3%) compared to 61.3% of those who said "Yes" (see Figure 1).

A significant occasion was found  $(x^2(1) = 8.785, p = 0.003)$ , while a phi statistic suggested a weak relationship (-0.150) Those who stated people in their neighborhood were proud of them were significantly more likely to skip or be absent from school (72.4%) compared to 51.6% of those who said "Yes" (see Figure 2). A significant occasion was found  $(x^2(1) = 18.120, p < 0.01)$ ,

while a phi statistic suggested a moderate relationship (-0.213) Logistical Regression Analysis

Results showed the regression model predicting school absence was statistically significant ( $x^2 = 24.874$ , df = 2, p < 0.001 with Nagelkerke  $R^2$  = 0.085). In terms of each contributing variable, being honest with a parent significantly and negatively predicted school absence (OR =0.233, p = 0.02), and a neighborhood being proud of a student significantly and negatively predicted school absence (OR = 0.439, p < 0.01). Participants who stated they would tell the truth to their parents, no matter the possibility of getting punished were less likely to skip class or be absent from school; a one-unit increase in telling the truth to one's parents was associated with a 76.7% reduced likelihood of skipping class or being absent from school.

Participants who stated that people in their neighborhood are proud of them were less likely to skip class or be absent from school; a oneunit increase in people in their neighborhood being proud of them was associated with a 56.1% reduced likelihood of skipping class or being absent from school.

### RESULTS

Table 3					
Logistic Regress Skipping Class of	ion Results: Pa r School Absen	rent and Neighbo ce	orhood Conn	ections and the Lik	elihood of
	В	S.E.	df	Significance	Odds Ratio
Important to Be Honest With Your Parents, Even if you Get Punished	-1.457	0.627	1	0.020	0.233
People in My Neighborhood are Proud of Me	-0.823	0.219	1	0.000	0.439

### Table 3. Linear Regression Results

Table 1			
Study Variables Descriptive Statistics	п	%	
Max Per Capita Household Income Grades 7-10			
Under \$5,000	13	2.9	
\$5,000 to \$9,999	56	12.5	
\$10,000 to \$14,999	44	9.8	
\$15,000 to \$19,999	74	16.6	
\$20,000 to \$24,999	42	9.4	
\$25,000 to \$29,999	26	5.8	
\$30,000 to \$34,999	54	12.1	
\$35,000 to \$39,999	28	6.3	
\$40,000 to \$44,999	0	0	
\$45,000 to \$49,999	31	6.9	
\$50,000 to \$54,999	30	6.7	
\$55,000 and Over	49	11	
Have You Received Free/Reduced Lunch Grades 1-5			
Yes	174	35.2	
No	320	64.8	
In My Family There are Low Opportunities for			
Family Prosocial Involvement			
Yes	143	33	
No	290	67	
Important to be Honest with you Parents, Even if			
They Get Upset or You Get Punished			
Yes	401	92.6	
No	32	7.4	
People in My Neighborhood are Proud of Me			
Yes	182	40.5	
No	267	59.5	
Skipped School or Classes Without			
Excuse			
Yes	260	64.2	
No	145	35.8	

 Table 1. Study Variable Descriptive Statistics



Summary
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I want to thank God for all his blessings in my life. I also want to thank my family, my girlfriend, my friends, and all my cohort for their love and support. Lastly, I would like to thank all my professors from the program, especially Dr. Capp for assisting me on my capstone project.



Chi-Square Results: Family Financial Support, Family S Support and Skipping Class or School Absence	ocial Support, Commi	inity Social	
upport und Skipping Cluss of School Absence			
	Skipped Cl	ass or was	
	Absent from School		
	Yes	No	
Family Financial Support			
Max Per Capita Household Income Grades /-10	$(\langle ( \langle \langle 70 \rangle \rangle )$	2 (22 20/)	
Under \$5,000	6 (66.7%)	3 (33.3%)	
\$5,000 to \$9,999	29 (61.7%)	18 (38.3%)	
\$10,000 to \$14,999	26 (72.2%)	10 (27.8%)	
\$15,000 to \$19,999	40 (64.5%)	22 (35.5%)	
\$20,000 to \$24,999	23 (59.0%)	16 (41.0%)	
\$25,000 to \$29,999	17 (77.3%)	5 (22.7%)	
\$30,000 to \$34,999	34 (66.7%)	17 (33.3%)	
\$35,000 to \$39,999	13 (52.0%)	12 (48.0%)	
\$40,000 to \$44,999	0	0	
\$45,000 to \$49,999	19 (65.5%)	10 (34.5%)	
\$50,000 to \$54,999	16 (59.3%)	11 (40.7%)	
\$55,000 and Over	25 (56.8%)	19 (43.2%)	
Have You Received Free/Reduced Lunch Grades			
1-5	/ //		
Yes	88 (65.2%)	47 (34.8%)	
No	172 (63.7%)	98 (36.3%)	
Family Social Sunnort			
In My Family There are Low Opportunities for			
Eamily Prospecial Involvement			
Voc	82 (66 10/)	12 (22 60/)	
I CS	65 (00.470) 166 (62.29/)	42 (33.070)	
INO	100 (02.270)	(27.8%)	
Important to be Honest with you Derents Eyon if		(37.870)	
They Got Unset or You Got Durished			
Voc	(2) ((1) 20/)	1/1	
1 55	223 (01.3%)	141 (29 70/)	
No	25 (80 20/)	(38.7%) 3 (10.7%)	
	23 (09.370)	3 (10.770)	
Community Social Support			
People in My Neighborhood are Proud of Me			
Yes	83 (51.6%)	78 (48.4%)	
No	173 (72.4%)	66 (27.6%)	
		× /	
Italicized Variables are Significant			

### Figure 1. Family Social Support

Figure 2. Community Social Support

### DISCUSSION

### of Findings

sults indicated that students with stronger connections with nily and community were less likely to be absent from school. current study did not find any significant relationship between financial state of a student's family and school absenteeism. sults were somewhat consistent with the original hypothesis ce both family social support and community social support re significant protective factors regarding student absenteeism, wever, family financial support seemed to not be a significant ctor in determining student absenteeism.

nd Policy Implications

e implication is that the study provides tools for schools or unselors that work towards reversing a student's trajectory vards continued absenteeism.

derstanding the best way to decrease school absenteeism is of at importance, especially in the aftermath of Covid-19 which w an increase in student absenteeism, and the dawning of a w type of schooling filled with technology and distance learning. ngths and Limitations

e study's strength lies within its methodology in obtaining propriate data to measure its dependent variables, family ancial support, family social support, community social support, d its independent variable skipping or being absent from

e study's limitation also lies within its methodology since not all asures obtained were perfect, and future studies should look more completely assess family financial support, family social pport and community social support.

### Acknowledgments