

Causes of Absenteeism at the Secondary Level in Jamaica: Parents' Perspective



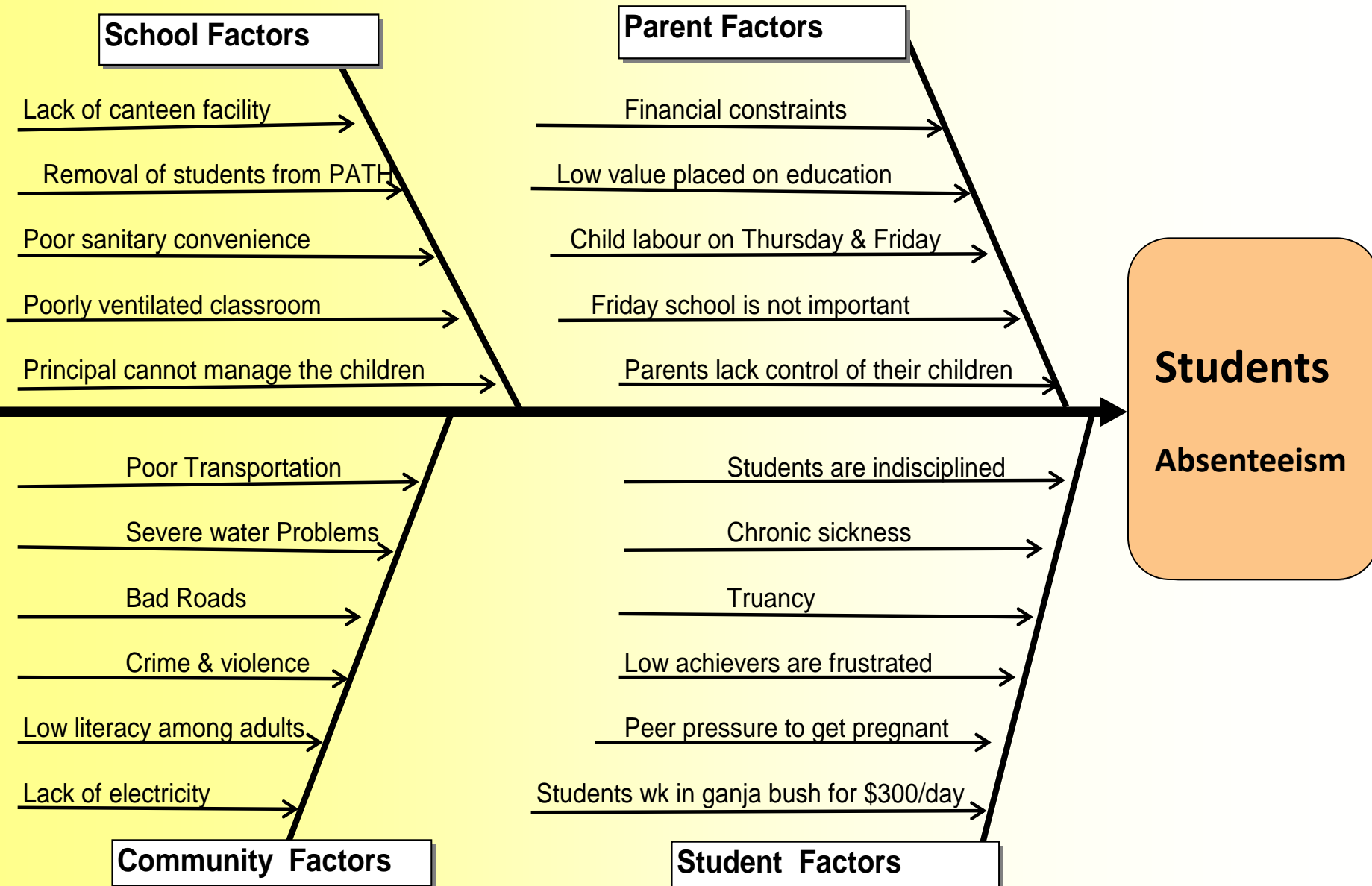
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Absenteeism Has Been Defined as “Persistent, Habitual and Unexplained Absence from School”

(Brooks, 1997 as cited in Bond 2004, p7)



Students Absenteeism: Root Cause



THE PATH PROGRAMME

- PATH - The Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education
- This is a conditional cash transfer programme funded by the government of Jamaica and the World Bank. The programme is aimed at delivering benefits by way of cash grants to the most needy and vulnerable in the society.



Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate parents' perspective on the causes of student absenteeism at the secondary level; and the influence of parents' levels of education on their views of the causes of students' absenteeism.



Research Questions

- What are parents views on the quality of their relationship with the school?
- What factors are identified by parents/caregivers as the main causes of absenteeism?
- Do parents' educational levels influence their views on the causes of student absenteeism?
- What are parents spending priority?



Sample

School Type

		No. of Parents	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Traditional	68	30.8	30.8	30.8
	Non- Traditional	153	69.2	69.2	100.0
	Total	221	100.0	100.0	

Sample of Questionnaire(Extract)

	Not A Problem	Minor	Moderate	Serious
1. Financial constraints, such as inability to pay bus fare & provide lunch money	1	2	3	4
2. Removal of child/children from PATH programme	1	2	3	4
3. I keep my children/child from school on Thursdays & Fridays to work on the farm or sell in the market.	1	2	3	4
4. Parents lack control over students	1	2	3	4
5. There is little or no value placed on education by parents.	1	2	3	4
6. As a result of inadequate transportation child /children is unable to get to school during bad weather	1	2	3	4
7. I am not involved in school	1	2	3	4
8. Lack of canteen facilities at school	1	2	3	4
9. Because I live outside the school community transportation is expensive	1	2	3	4

Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics
- Factor analysis
- PATH analysis
- MANOVA



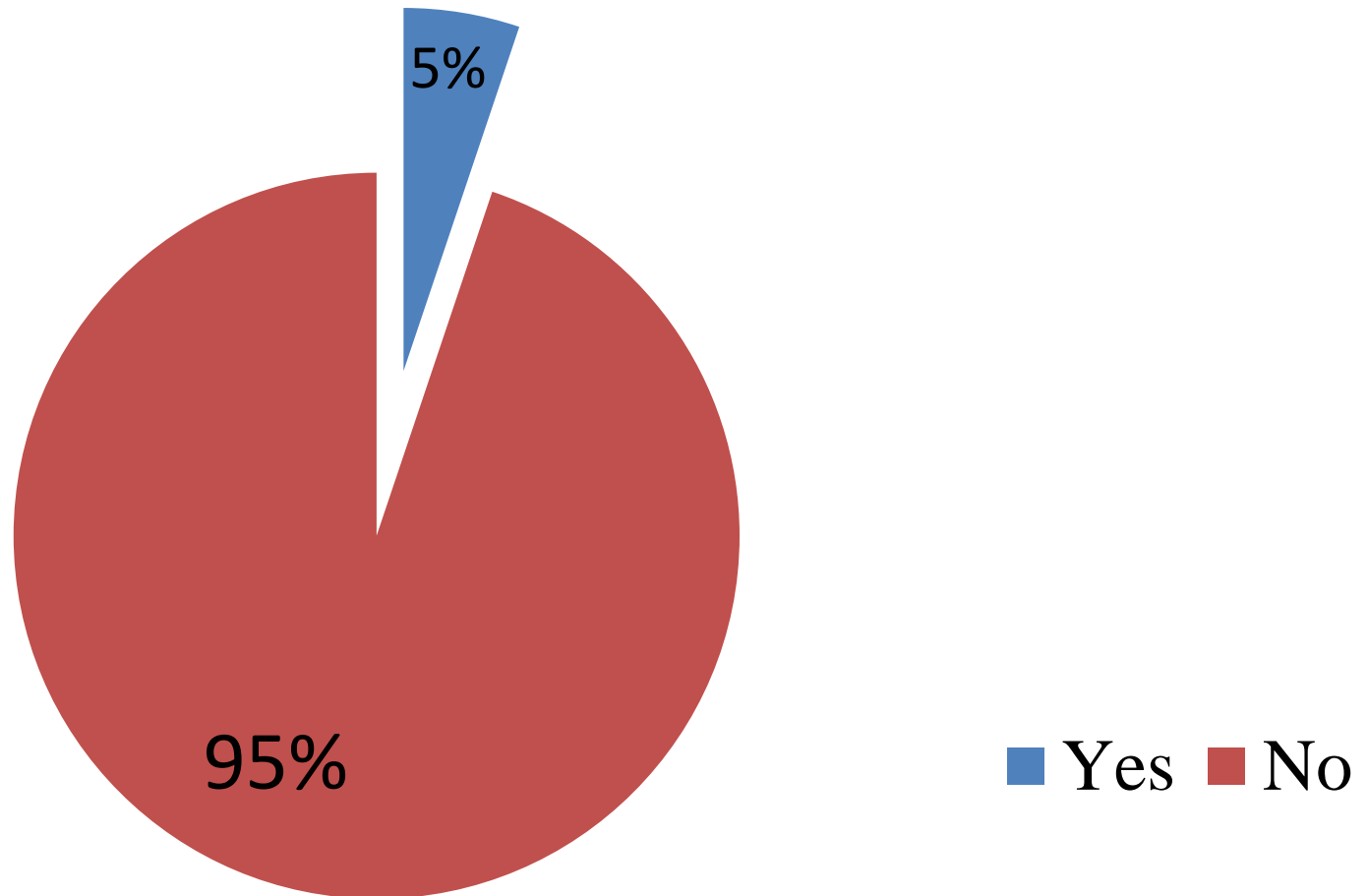
Results

What are parents views on the quality of their relationship with the school?



Parents Relationship with Teachers

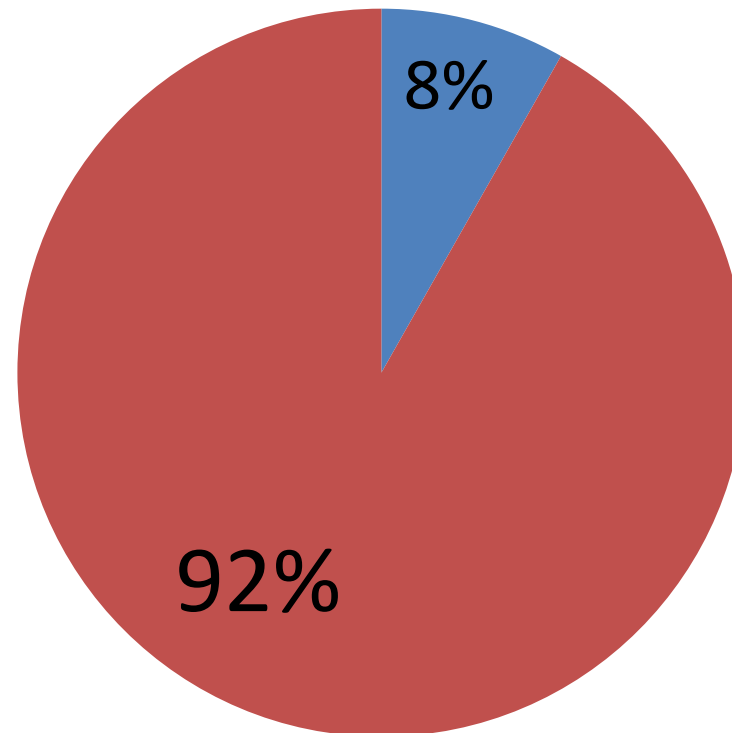
Teacher provides academic information on student



Parents Relationship with Teachers

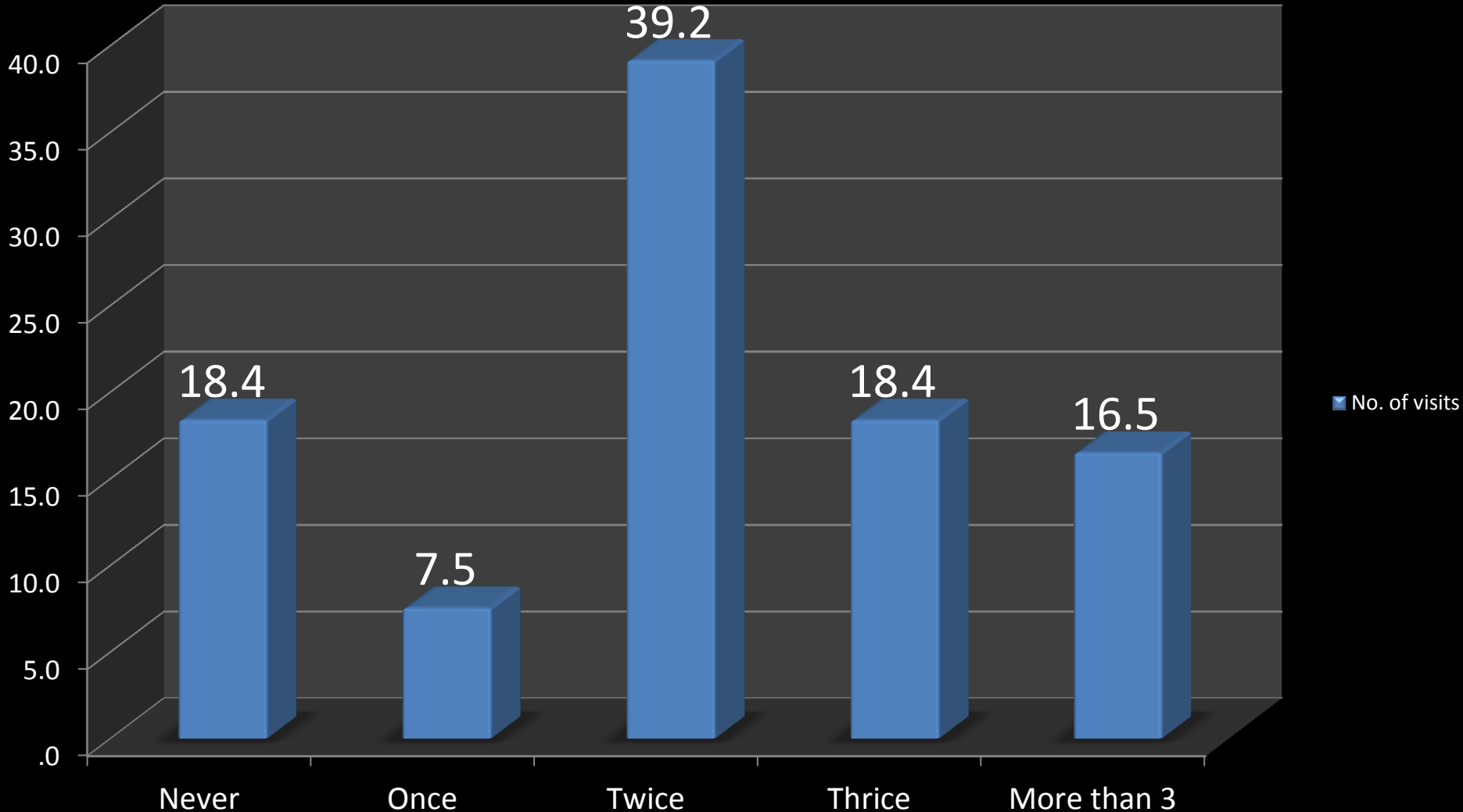
Teacher's Attitude During Discussion on Child's Academic Progress

■ Bad attitude ■ Good attitude



Parents Relationship with Teachers

Number of times parent visited teacher in the last school term



Research Question

What factors are identified by respondents (89% parents) as the causes of absenteeism?

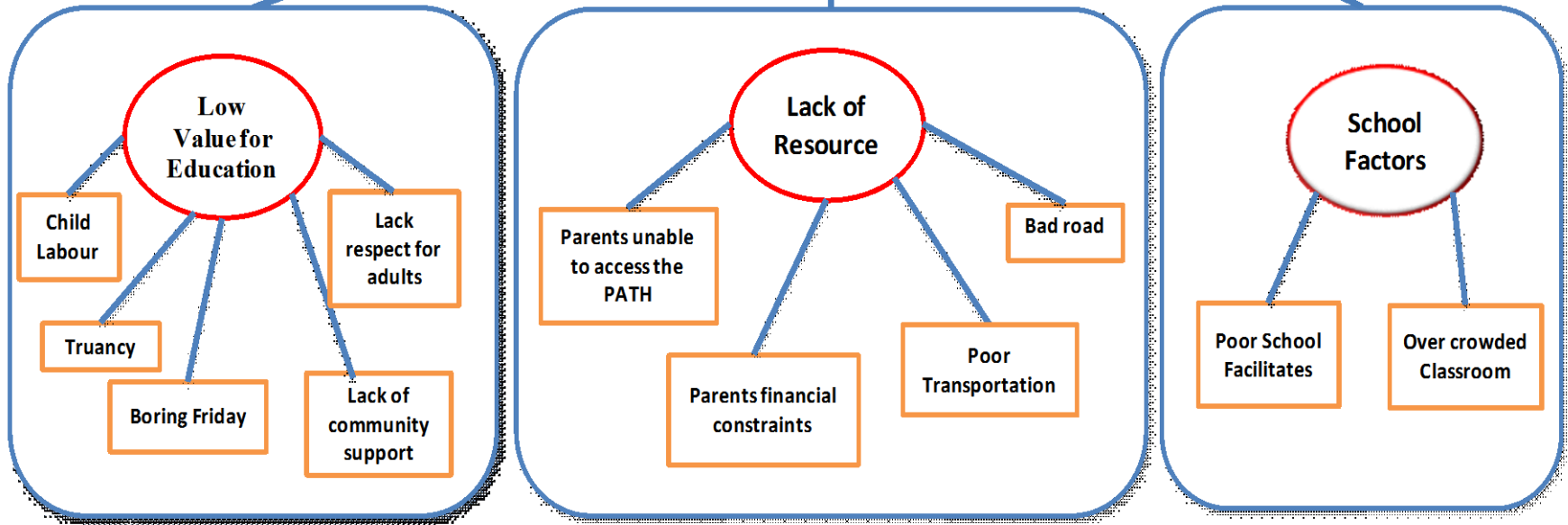


Causes of Student Absenteeism

- Low Value for Education
- Lack of Resources
- Issue Relating to school Environment



Factors Influencing Students Absenteeism



Lack of Resources

Table

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parents unable to provide health care	221	0	4	1.78	1.25
Student Live in flood prone areas	221	0	22	1.65	1.74
Unable_to_access_PATH	211	.00	8.00	3.56	2.03
Parents financial constraints	221	.00	8.00	4.30	2.38
Unemployment	201	1.00	8.00	4.49	2.25
Bad_Roads	211	.00	8.00	3.21	1.77
Poor Transportation	221	.00	8.00	3.39	2.03
No bus stop to shelter from the rain	221	0	4	1.71	1.18
Valid N (listwise)	201				

The Key Factors Identified by Parents as the Causes of Students Absenteeism

Table 2
Low value for education

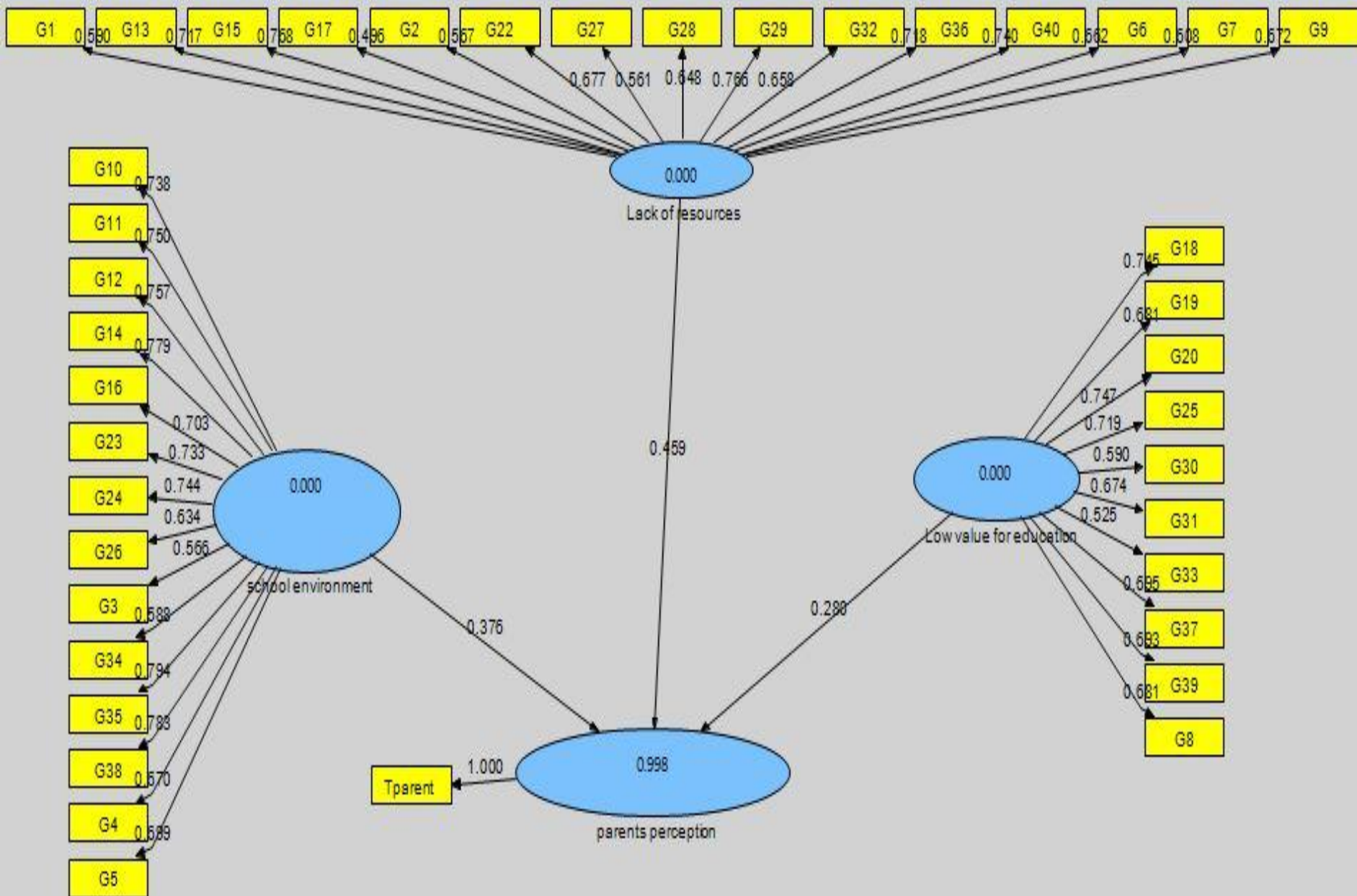
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Truancy	211	.00	8.00	3.07	2.04
Child_labour	211	.00	8.00	3.05	1.86
Friday_school	199	2.00	12.00	4.81	2.35
Lack_of_community_support	221	.00	8.00	3.06	1.89
lack_respect_for_adults	221	.00	8.00	3.45	2.09
Non- literate Parents	221	0	4	1.35	1.05
Valid N (listwise)	199				

School Environment

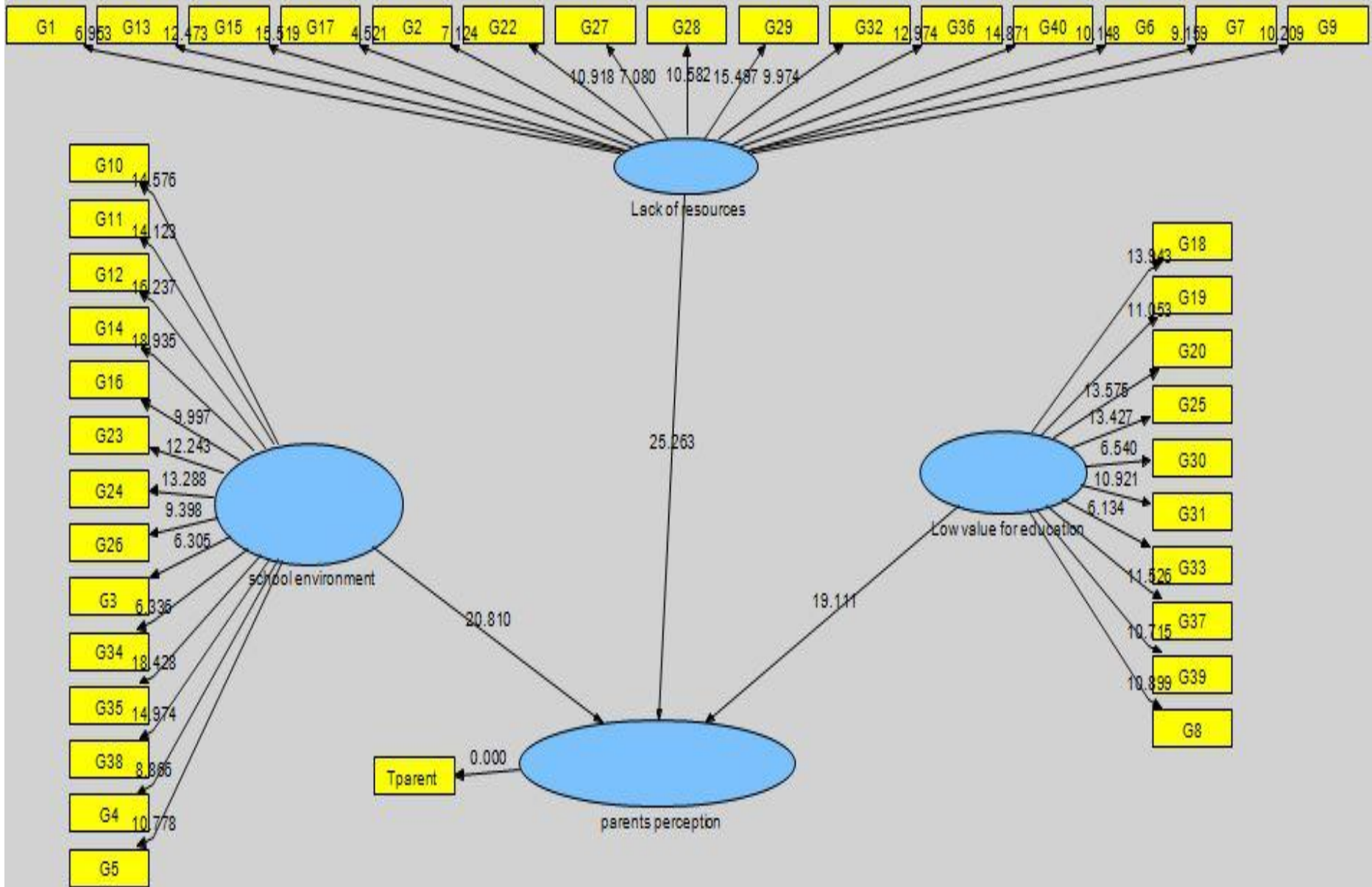
Table

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Poor_School Facilitates	197	2.00	8.00	3.61	1.89
Over_Crowded_Classroom	149	2.00	8.00	3.84	1.99
Inadequate resources in the schools	200	1	4	1.56	.89
Poor Leadership	201	1	4	1.78	1.01
Teacher Absenteeism	198	1	4	1.64	.88
Low achiever are not catered for	201	1	4	1.75	.99
Impact of community violence on the school	203	1	4	2.17	1.25
Valid N (listwise)	137				

Path Analysis



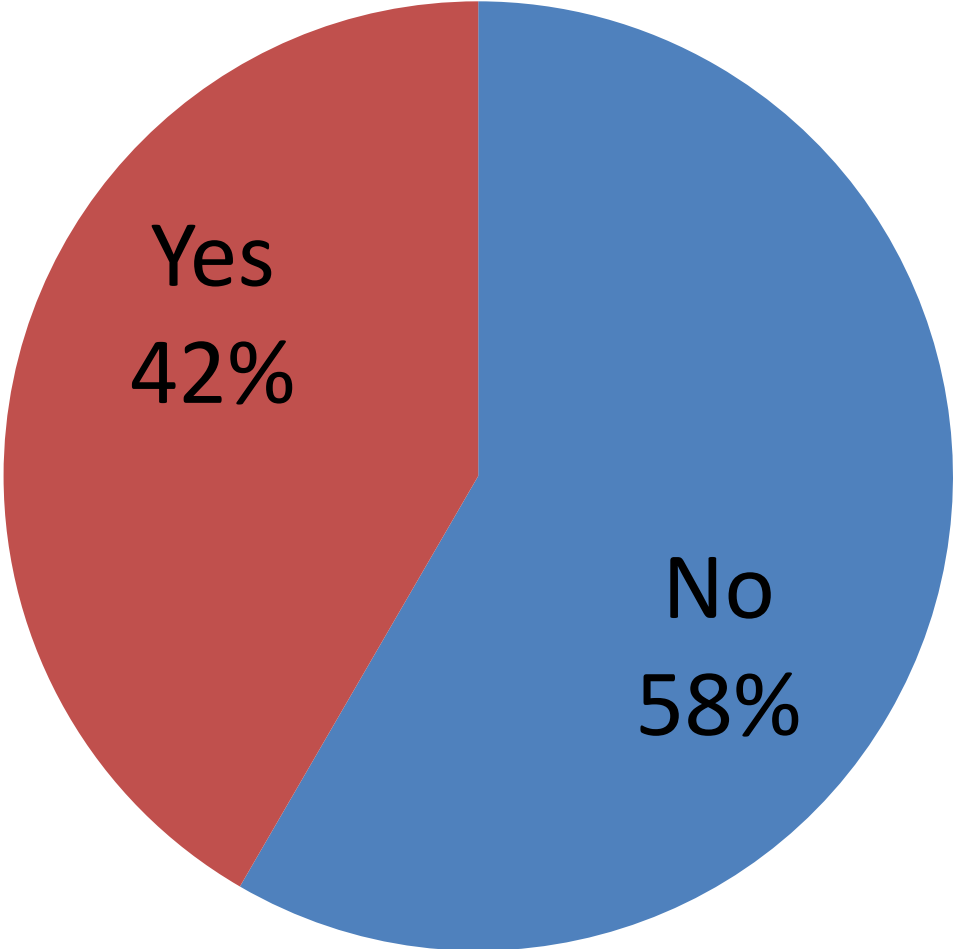
Path Analysis



Significant Univariate Effects for Level of Education

Dependent Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>df</i> error	<i>F</i>	Level of Education	Mean	SD	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
School Environment	3	121	2.45	Primary	17.214	8.61	13.191	21.238
	3	121	2.45	Secondary	16.290	7.63	15.008	17.571
	3	121	2.45	Tertiary	14.782	7.69	12.752	16.812
	3	121	2.45	Others	22.000	5.12	16.982	27.018
Lack of Resources *	3	121	10.5	Primary	35.429	9.4	29.204	41.653
	3	121	10.5	Secondary	27.949	12.2	25.967	29.932
	3	121	10.5	Tertiary	21.127	11.79	17.987	24.268
	3	121	10.5	Others	39.333	8.86	31.57	47.097
Value for Education *	3	121	6.5	Primary	26.857	9.55	21.305	32.409
	3	121	6.5	Secondary	21.500	10.61	19.732	23.268
	3	121	6.5	Tertiary	17.927	10.13	15.126	20.728
	3	121	6.5	Others	32.333	13,17	25.409	39.258

Parents' Ability to Access PATH



What are Parents' Spending Priority?

- Parents of children in non-traditional high schools spent on food and clothes.
- Parents of children in traditional high schools spent on food and books.



To address absenteeism, attention needs to be given to:

- Enabling parents to become gainfully employed so that they can afford the things that their children need to attend school – lunch money, transportation, uniform, etc.
- Giving access to PATH to the needy
- Engaging students with more meaningful learning on Fridays
- Improving facilities in schools such as sanitary conveniences, canteens and ventilation of classrooms.
- Providing more classroom spaces to ease overcrowding



Thank You

