

Between Broken Bonds and Empty Seats: Understanding Academic Absenteeism among Students from Non-Intact Families

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Abstract

Academic absenteeism is a concern in the academic field. I explored the perceived situations, mitigating actions, and gains of students from non-intact families regarding academic absenteeism. Qualitative descriptive research design, purposive sampling technique, in-depth interview approach, and thematic analysis were the methods I used. The data from six students revealed that participants experienced hardships leading to absenteeism. Through support systems, they survived and improved their learning engagement. School leaders may enhance support programs to improve resilience, confidence, and attendance among students from broken families. Future researchers may use a quantitative design to study how family instability and support systems influence academic engagement among Generation Alpha students from broken families, to identify key factors affecting absenteeism and coping for improved interventions.

Keywords: Between broken bonds and empty seats, understanding academic absenteeism, students from non-Intact families

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem and Its Scope

Globally, academic absenteeism among Generation Alpha students from broken-family backgrounds is a growing concern in the education sector. Recent international reports highlighted that school attendance challenges remain prevalent among vulnerable learner groups, including those experiencing family disruption, as education systems continue to struggle in ensuring consistent participation and engagement in learning activities across different contexts (UNICEF, 2023). Similarly, global education monitoring emphasized that absenteeism remains a persistent issue that undermines universal learning goals, particularly among learners facing unstable home environments (UNESCO, 2023).

In various countries, academic absenteeism among students from broken families is also observed as a significant educational concern. In the United States, national education data indicated that school attendance disparities continue to affect learners from non-traditional family structures, contributing to inconsistent participation in formal schooling (U.S. Department of Education, 2023). In the United Kingdom, attendance reports showed that school absenteeism remains a critical issue, closely monitored across public schools, particularly among disadvantaged student groups (Department for Education, 2023). In India, education monitoring systems similarly reported ongoing challenges in maintaining regular school attendance among vulnerable learners, including those from fragmented family settings, across both rural and urban schools (Ministry of Education India, 2023).

In the Philippine context, academic absenteeism among Generation Alpha students from broken families is also recognized as an important educational concern. National reports from the Department of Education highlighted ongoing attendance challenges among learners, particularly in public schools with diverse family backgrounds (Department of Education Philippines, 2023). In addition, child-focused education studies in the country emphasized that attendance patterns remain a key focus in efforts to strengthen inclusive and equitable access to basic education (UNICEF Philippines, 2023).

Academic absenteeism among students from broken families results in several significant educational consequences. International education evidence indicates that irregular school attendance is associated with disrupted learning continuity, reduced academic performance, lower mastery of competencies, and decreased engagement in classroom activities (UNESCO, 2023). Over time, these consequences accumulate, negatively affecting students' overall academic development and progression through the education system. Thus, it is urgent to explore this problem in the situations, mitigating actions, and gains. However, amid this urgency, limited information is available on the specific types of students in broken families and on students' absenteeism among Grades 7–10. It is for this reason that I conducted this research.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This research may provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders by examining academic absenteeism among Generation Alpha students from broken families. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, in line with Lee and Park (2018), the study highlighted students' experiences and explained how family disruption affects educational outcomes. The findings may help the Department of Education create targeted policies and assist school leaders in developing supportive strategies for these students. Social studies educators may also use these insights to strengthen character education, empathy, and social awareness in the classroom. Furthermore, parents and students may gain a better understanding of the importance of family influence and interpersonal skills. This study may also serve as a foundation for future research and school programs that promote inclusivity, respect, and academic achievement.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to explore the situations faced by Generation Alpha students from broken families who exhibit academic absenteeism. It sought to capture their personal narratives, emotions, and perceptions to gain deeper insight into how family structure influences their academic motivation and participation. Specifically, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived situations faced by students from non-intact families regarding academic absenteeism?
2. What are the perceived mitigating actions to manage the academic situation related to academic absenteeism?
3. What are the perceived gains of students from non-intact families after applying the strategies?

1.4 Theoretical Lens

My study is anchored in Urie Bronfenbrenner's original proposal of the Ecological Systems Theory in 1979. The theory fundamentally asserts that a child's growth and development are shaped by the different environmental systems surrounding them and by the interactions among these systems. Bronfenbrenner believed that human development does not happen in isolation; instead, it is influenced by relationships, experiences, and social environments that range from immediate settings, such as family and school, to broader cultural and societal influences.

The theory identifies five interconnected systems: the microsystem (the immediate environment, such as family and school), mesosystem (connections between microsystems), exosystem (indirect environments that affect the child), macrosystem (culture, values, and societal norms), and chronosystem (changes and transitions over time). Bronfenbrenner's central assertion is that changes or problems within one system can influence the child's behavior, emotional well-being, and development across other systems.

1.5 Paradigm

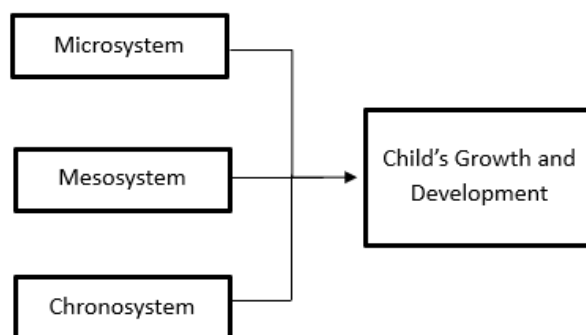


Figure 1. Ecological Systems Theory

1.6 Assumptions

It is assumed that the perceived situations faced by the Generation Alpha students from broken families, with their academic absenteeism, exist and can be meaningfully understood through their own perspectives. It also assumed that knowledge about these situations can be obtained through careful engagement with their narratives, providing valid insights into the factors affecting their academic engagement. Furthermore, Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is assumed to offer a useful lens for understanding how various environmental systems (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem) influence a student's academic engagement, guiding the interpretation of challenges. Finally, the researcher believed that cultural values, family dynamics, and community norms shape these students' practices and decisions, as revealed in their narratives.

This study focused only on these three systems, namely, Microsystem, Mesosystem, and Chronosystem, because they directly relate to students' immediate experiences and behavioral adjustments. The Exosystem and Macrosystem were excluded since they involve broader societal influences beyond the scope of the study.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

In this study, I applied a qualitative descriptive research design. Qualitative descriptive research focuses on providing a clear, straightforward description of participants' experiences, perceptions, and events, with minimal interpretation by the researcher (Kim et al., 2023). This research design is appropriate when the purpose of the study is to answer questions related to what, how, and why a phenomenon occurs, particularly in educational and social contexts (Bradshaw et al., 2023). Moreover, qualitative descriptive research provided flexibility in data collection and enabled me to gather rich and meaningful responses that contributed to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Sandelowski, 2023).

2.2 Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in a public secondary school in Davao City, Philippines. The school is located in the Talomo District of Davao City and is considered a large school, with a total student population of 1,243. This location is ideal for the interview process because it provides access to a diverse range of Generation Alpha students from broken families who exhibit academic disengagement, such as decreased attendance and low grades. This allowed me to collect an abundance of important data, concepts, and unique viewpoints necessary for the research.

2.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

In this study, six (6) Generation Alpha students from broken families who engaged in academic absenteeism were selected for in-depth interviews. I utilized purposive sampling to select students who met the study's specific criteria to capture detailed narratives on the academic absenteeism among students from broken families. These students were identified as coming from broken families due to parental separation, divorce, or loss of a parent (Amato, 2021). Participants' identities were anonymized to ensure confidentiality, and all data were securely stored, accessible only to the researcher, and used solely for the study.

2.4 Data Gathering Technique

In this study, I used in-depth interviews as a data collection method. This qualitative data collection method involves a one-on-one, open-ended, and flexible interaction between the researcher and participants to explore their perceptions, experiences, and meanings in depth. According to Braun and Clarke (2023), in-depth interviews allow researchers to gather rich and detailed accounts from participants while providing opportunities to ask follow-up questions, clarify responses, and explore emerging insights during the conversation. Moreover, in-depth interviews are widely used in descriptive qualitative research because they enable participants to express their experiences in their own words, yielding comprehensive, straightforward descriptions that are valuable for understanding social phenomena (Ruslin et al., 2023; Doyle et al., 2024).

2.5 Data Analysis Technique

I utilized thematic analysis, developed by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, as the method of data analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic approach used to examine patterns of meaning across a dataset systematically. According to Braun and Clarke (2023), thematic analysis allows researchers to actively engage with qualitative data through a recursive and reflective process of coding and theme development, making it useful for understanding how participants make sense of their experiences. This method is appropriate for descriptive qualitative research because it supports the organization and interpretation of participants' accounts while remaining flexible across different research contexts. Following Braun and Clarke's approach, the analysis involved familiarizing myself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report.

2.6 Trustworthiness

In this study, I established trustworthiness in understanding the academic absenteeism of Generation Alpha students from broken families by applying Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. I ensured credibility by carefully gathering data from selected participants through in-depth interviews under my research adviser's guidance. Transferability was supported by presenting the findings in a way that may be useful for similar contexts in other schools or communities facing family-related challenges. To maintain dependability, I consistently followed data-collection procedures throughout all interviews to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data. Lastly, I achieved confirmability by allowing participants to review and validate the transcribed data, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected their experiences and minimizing potential bias.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Situations Faced by Students from Non-Intact Families Regarding Absenteeism and Academic Performance

As I listened during the interview, one participant hesitantly shared that keeping up with lessons was difficult due to frequent absences. The participant stated...

Kanang apason ang kuan lesson. Kuan kanang imaintain ang attendance. Naa, usahay wala... maglisud ug apas sa lesson kay usahay makadungog ug bad negative complain. (Trying to catch up with lessons and maintain attendance is difficult. Sometimes I cannot keep up with the lessons because I hear negative comments.) (P1G-Lines 1-4)

This was supported by another participant, who spoke with frustration about the difficulties caused by absenteeism, saying...

Dili, kay maglisud naman ko ug kuan kanang dili ko maminaw sa nig first kuan palang explanation sa first klase... Ahhh ang kuan, science. Bugo kayo ug science ma'am uy. (I struggle because I cannot listen to the first explanation in class... Science is really difficult for me.) (P1G-Lines 5-7)

One participant described the lack of supervision at home that contributed to absenteeism. The participant shared...

Oo, kanang kuan, kanang walay mamadlong sa amoa ug mag absent me... naanad man gud me dugay mumata nya walay mamukaw sa amoa kay kame ra duha sa balay. (Yes, because no one scolds us when we are absent... we became used to waking up late because nobody wakes us up since only the two of us stay at home.) (P1G-Lines 9-11)

Another participant emphasized the struggles caused by financial difficulties and lack of school necessities, saying...

Usahay gani maam... gusto nako ba nga muiskwela nga naa koy tarung kaon. Mangita kog apps nga kuan mapangwartahan nko para kuan naa koy makaon ug pamasah. (Sometimes I really want to go to school with proper food. I look for ways to earn money so I can have food and transportation fares.) (P2G-Lines 15-17)

A participant also spoke emotionally about how family conflict affects concentration and academic performance. The participant shared...

Maka drain lang maam... naa ka sa klase mam nya usahay dili ka maka answer... gamay lang imuhang score sa mga quiz. Nya sige rakag hilak. (It is emotionally draining... when you are in class, sometimes you cannot answer, your quiz scores become low, and you just keep crying.) (P2G-Lines 20-22)

Another participant revealed experiences of trauma and emotional distress brought by conflict at home. The participant recalled...

Kuan maam maka trauma pud usahay maam kay syagitan kag kalit... usahay maam dugay ko muoli sa balay tungod ana nila kay sige ra silag away. (Sometimes it becomes traumatic because they suddenly shout at you... Sometimes I delay going home because they keep fighting.) (P2G-Lines 23-25)

One participant expressed how financial instability affects participation in school requirements, saying...

Naay ipa print dili pud nako kaya maam... dali kaayo ang panahon sa pagpasa sa project... muingun nalang ko na dili nalang ko mupasa. (There are printing requirements that I cannot afford... deadlines are too short, so sometimes I just decide not to submit.) (P5B-Lines 30-32)

Another participant shared the emotional impact of bullying and discrimination from classmates. The participant said...

Mga classmate nako kay sige man gud na silag panaway sa akoo... makawala man gud sya'g gana ug school. (My classmates keep mocking me... it really makes me lose motivation to go to school.) (P5B-Lines 10-11)

A participant further explained how family problems reduce students' motivation to continue schooling. The participant expressed...

Kuan maam family problem maam... makawala man gud s'yag motivation maam... ubang studyante dili na ginahan muiskwela. (Family problems really remove motivation... some students no longer want to go to school.) (P5B-Lines 33-35)

Another participant spoke in a reflective tone about the mental burden carried into the classroom, stating...

Mag away akong mama ug akong stepfather... mablanko pud akong isip pag naa ko sa iskwelahan. (My mother and stepfather fight, and my mind goes blank whenever I am in school.) (P6G-Lines 26-27)

Going back to the participant responses, I observed a strong pattern: students from non-intact families face interconnected academic, emotional, financial, and social challenges that contribute to absenteeism and declining academic performance. Many participants described struggling to catch up on lessons due to frequent absences, especially in difficult subjects such as Math and Science. Several students also emphasized the absence of parental supervision, financial hardship, and emotional distress caused by family conflict, which reduced their motivation and concentration in school. As I listened to their stories, I sensed feelings of exhaustion, sadness, and frustration in their voices, particularly when they described experiences of trauma, bullying, and lack of support at home. Despite these difficulties, many participants still demonstrated resilience by trying to catch up with lessons, seeking help from classmates and teachers, and holding onto their desire to finish school. Their experiences revealed that absenteeism among students from non-intact families is not simply a matter of unwillingness to attend school, but rather a complex issue deeply rooted in emotional struggles, unstable home environments, and economic challenges.

3.2 Mitigating Actions to Manage Academic Situations Related to Academic Absenteeism

During the interviews, several students shared practical and emotional strategies they used to cope with attendance difficulties stemming from family-related issues. One participant described how classmates serve as an important academic support system by helping him catch up on missed lessons. The participant said...

Akong klasmate maam si Sunjay. Usahay pasundugon ko niya ug pasulatan ko sa mga lesson nila. Unya kung naay quiz, usahay i-explain niya kung unsay giklasehan. (My classmate, Sunjay, helps me by letting me copy their lessons. When there is a quiz, he sometimes explains what was discussed in class.) (P1G-Lines 1-3)

This experience was echoed by another participant who shared that he regularly asks his classmates about lessons and assignments whenever he returns after being absent. The participant pointed out...

Kung absent ko run maam nya muiskwela ko ugma, mangutana ko ug unsay gibuhat nila para makaapas ko. (If I am absent today and return to school tomorrow, I ask what they did so I can catch up.) (P6G-Lines 1–2)

One student explained that digital communication, particularly through group chats, helps maintain connection with the class even during absences. The participant shared...

Usahay maam muchat ko sa gc... muexcuse ko... Muapas lang ko, musugot ra japon akong mga teacher basta muchat lang daw ko. (Sometimes I send a message in our group chat to explain my absence. My teachers still allow me to catch up as long as I inform them.) (P5B-Lines 1–3)

Another participant emphasized the role of teachers in providing academic opportunities to recover from missed work, saying...

Muduol ko sa teacher. Mangayo ko pang project para makabawi ko. (I approach my teacher and ask for a project so I can make up for what I missed.) (P4B-Lines 3–4)

This was reinforced by a participant who noted the effectiveness of remedial activities, stating...

Nagahatag ug remedial si teacher maam... nakatabang ang remedial sa akoo. (My teacher gives me remedial work, and it really helps me.) (P6G-Lines 3–4)

One participant highlighted how teachers' understanding and supportive interventions, including home visits, encouraged him to continue attending school. The participant emphasized...

Gihome visit ko ni maam para muskwela'g balik... ang natabang ni maam sa akoo kay paghatag ug dakong grado ug pagrespeto ug pagtabang sa akoo. (My teacher conducted a home visit to encourage me to return to school. She helped me by giving me better grades, respect, and support.) (P3B-Lines 1–4)

Students also discussed relying on family members and trusted adults for financial and emotional support. One participant shared how his grandmother helps provide meals and money when his parents are unavailable. The participant shared...

Akong lola ug paryente... usahay wala mey baon, gina pahiram me sakong lola ug ginapakaon me niya. (My grandmother and relatives helped us. Sometimes when we have no allowance, my grandmother lends us money and gives us food.) (P1G-Lines 8–11)

Another student spoke about the guidance he receives from his stepsister, saying...

Akoang stepsister maam... sya jud nag-ingon nga pagtarong jud ug iskswela... ginatabangan pud ko niya nga makaskwela'g tarong. (My stepsister always tells me to focus on school, and she helps me study properly.) (P6G-Lines 17–19)

Several participants revealed that they use self-motivation to persist despite family hardships. One participant expressed that education represents an opportunity to rebuild family relationships, saying...

I-motivate nako akong sarili maam... need jud nako ni... mao nani akong chance nga makuan pa nako akong pamilya. (I motivate myself because I need this. This may be my chance to restore my family.) (P2G-Lines 8–10)

Another student described deliberately setting aside family problems to concentrate on school, stating...

Gina focus nako akong pag-iskwela run... gina biyaan lang nako ang issue sa balay. (I focus on my studies and temporarily leave behind the problems at home.) (P3B-Lines 5–6)

To cope emotionally, participants engaged in recreational activities such as dancing, basketball, music, online games, and socializing with friends. Several participants shared...

Kanang mag sayaw... mawala tanan... ang imong utok perme naa ra sa kakapoy sa sayaw. (I dance because it helps me forget everything. My mind becomes focused only on the activity.) (P1G-Lines 4–6)

Basketball lang me sakong classmate maam... para mawala ang problema sakong utok. (My classmates and I play basketball, so the problems in my mind will go away.) (P3B-Lines 6–7)

Mag limpyo ko sa balay ug magpa music... peaceful kaayo akong hunahuna. (I clean the house while listening to music because it makes my mind peaceful.) (P6G-Lines 13–15)

Reflecting on the participants' responses, I observed a shared pattern of resilience among students from non-intact families. Despite experiencing unstable family environments, financial hardship, and emotional distress, they actively seek ways to remain academically engaged. These strategies include relying on classmates for notes and explanations, communicating through online group chats, requesting make-up work and remedial activities from teachers, and drawing support from grandparents, siblings, and close friends. Students also strengthen their persistence through self-motivation and emotional coping activities such as dancing, sports, music, and social interaction. Throughout the interviews, I sensed a strong determination among participants to continue their education despite adversity. Their narratives revealed that academic survival is not based on a single intervention but on a network of supportive relationships, personal agency, and adaptive coping mechanisms that help them navigate attendance difficulties and stay connected to their educational goals.

3.3 Gains of Students from Non-intact Families after Applying the Strategies

As I listened during the interviews, one participant spoke with determination about the importance of self-discipline in overcoming habitual absenteeism. One participant shared...

Dili mag tinapulan. Dili magpa badlong. Kanang maningkamot... Kalaban jud nako perme kanang dugay mumata. (Do not be lazy. Do not wait to be scolded. Work hard... My biggest enemy is always waking up late.) (P1G-Lines 1-4)

This reflection was reinforced when the same participant admitted that distractions such as romantic relationships and excessive cellphone use contributed to missed classes. Another participant spoke with a strong sense of resilience, emphasizing that personal strength is necessary to rise above family struggles. The participant shared...

Kuan maam, ang gina kuan jud nako maam dapat maging strong ko maam. (What I always tell myself is that I need to be strong.) (P2G-Lines 20-21)

The participant further reflected that, despite her desire to stop studying in Grade 8 due to family problems, she persisted and felt proud that she was close to finishing Grade 10. Another participant, in a reflective tone, stated that family conflict deeply affects concentration and academic performance, saying...

Biskan mag iskwela kag tarung maam tapos naa kay family issue mugamay ra japon imong grado. (Even if you study hard, when you have family issues, your grades still become lower.) (P3B-Lines 1-2)

This statement highlights how emotional distress from parental conflict can interfere with memory, recitation, and classroom participation. Additionally, a participant spoke with pride and relief about realizing that academic success remains possible despite frequent absences. The participant shared...

Nalipay lang maam na kuan nalampasan nako akong problema... Matingala lang ko maam nga nabuhat nako bisan'g absent ko. (I am happy that I was able to overcome my problem... I was surprised that I was able to do it despite my absences.) (P4B-Lines 1-2)

This insight reflects a sense of accomplishment and recognition that perseverance and seeking help from classmates can lead to progress. Further, another participant spoke in a calm but empowered voice, emphasizing the development of confidence despite bullying and family issues, as she said...

To become confident, ma'am... bisan nay bully diri ma'am ako nalang pasagdaan. (To become confident... even if there are bullies here, I just ignore them.) (P5B-Lines 1-3)

This suggests that emotional maturity and confidence are important lessons learned through difficult family experiences. Moreover, one participant, with a tone of realization, shared that absenteeism leads to missed opportunities and lower academic performance. Specifically, the participant stated:

Ang na learn nako maam kay dili dapat mag sigeg absent... para dili mamiss ang mga activity sa iskwelahan, ang mga quiz. (What I learned is that I should not keep being absent... so I will not miss school activities and quizzes.) (P6G-Lines 1-2)

The participant added that earning a high Math score was a turning point that strengthened her motivation to attend school regularly. Moreover, several participants, in thoughtful voices, emphasized that understanding, love, and open communication are essential to helping students continue their education. P6G explained:

Tagaan pud nilag... paghigugma maam para mafeel pud nila nga naa pud naga love sa ilaha. (They should give students even a small amount of love so they can feel that someone cares for them.) (P6G-Lines 21-22)

Similarly, two of the participants stressed that teachers should listen to students' stories, understand their struggles, and communicate with parents when absenteeism becomes frequent.

Going back to the participant responses, I observed a clear consensus that student absenteeism during family transitions is a powerful source of personal insight rather than merely a behavioral issue. Through their experiences, students learned the value of discipline, resilience, emotional strength, and confidence. They recognized that family problems can negatively affect concentration, motivation, and attendance. Yet, they also discovered that persistence and support from teachers, classmates, and family can help them continue their studies.

Throughout the interviews, I sensed a profound realization among participants that education remains their most reliable pathway toward a better future. Their stories revealed that absenteeism is not simply the result of laziness but often a coping response to emotional burdens, financial difficulties, and household conflict. Listening to their accounts, I was struck by how these young individuals transformed adversity into lessons about responsibility, self-belief, and the importance of seeking understanding rather than judgment.

3.4 Modified Paradigm

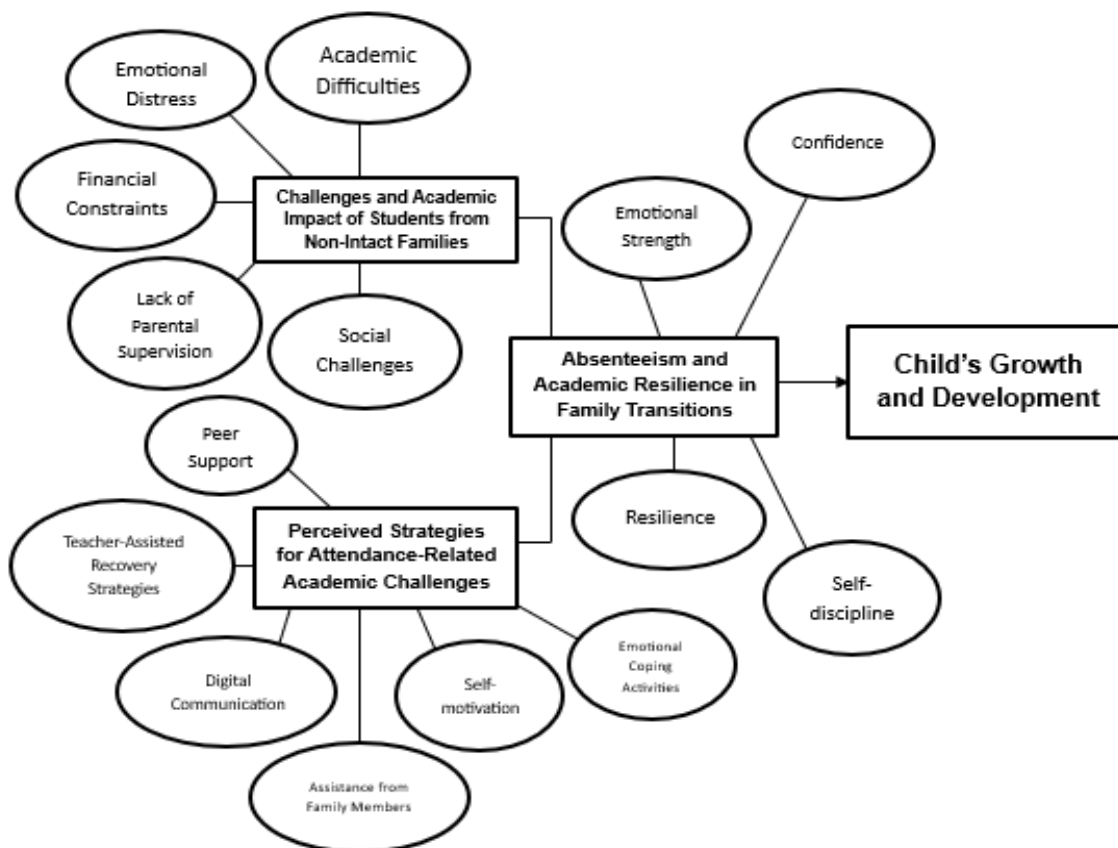


Figure 2. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Three Systems)

3.5 Summary of Findings

1. Students from non-intact families experience interconnected academic difficulties, emotional distress, financial constraints, lack of parental supervision, and social challenges such as bullying and family conflict, which

together lead to frequent absenteeism, difficulty catching up with lessons, reduced motivation and concentration, and declining academic performance.

2. Students from non-intact families manage attendance-related academic challenges through a combination of peer support for notes and lesson explanations, teacher-assisted recovery strategies such as remedial work and make-up projects, digital communication via group chats, assistance from family members and trusted adults, strong self-motivation to persist in schooling despite hardships, and emotional coping activities like sports, music, dancing, cleaning, and social interaction that help them regulate stress and remain academically engaged.
3. The participants gained valuable learnings from the absenteeism of students from family transitions reveal that absenteeism often becomes leeway a to emotional distress, family conflict, and social and financial difficulties, yet through these experiences students develop self-discipline, resilience, emotional strength, and confidence while also recognizing that supportive relationships with teachers, peers, and family and consistent engagement in school are essential in sustaining motivation, improving attendance, and achieving academic success despite adversity.

4. DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Situations and Academic Impact of Students from Non-Intact Families

My study shows that students from non-intact families experience interconnected academic difficulties, emotional distress, financial constraints, lack of parental supervision, and social challenges such as bullying and family conflict, which together lead to frequent absenteeism, difficulty catching up with lessons, reduced motivation and concentration, and declining academic performance.

My finding aligns with Wang and Sheikh-Khalil (2022), who emphasized that adolescents from disrupted or single-parent family structures are more likely to experience weakened academic engagement due to reduced parental monitoring and increased emotional strain. Their study highlights that family instability significantly predicts school disengagement, including absenteeism and lower academic performance, particularly when emotional support systems are limited. Similarly, my claim affirms the findings of OECD (2023), which reported that students facing socioeconomic and family structure disadvantages are more vulnerable to chronic absenteeism, reduced learning continuity, and lower academic achievement due to overlapping financial hardship, limited home support, and psychosocial stressors. These studies underscore that academic difficulties among students are rarely isolated but instead result from interconnected family, emotional, and socioeconomic conditions that shape school participation and performance.

However, my findings contradict the study of Zeynep Erkan et al. (2023), which reported that adolescents from non-intact families were still able to demonstrate psychological resilience, emotional adjustment, and positive coping mechanisms despite family disruptions. Similarly, Peduca et al. (2023) found that students from broken families could develop independence, perseverance, and determination that helped them remain academically motivated despite emotional and financial challenges. In contrast, the present study revealed that students from non-intact families experienced interconnected academic, emotional, financial, and social difficulties that contributed to absenteeism, reduced motivation, poor concentration, and declining academic performance.

4.2 Mitigating Actions for Attendance-Related Academic Challenges

My finding reveals that students from non-intact families manage attendance-related academic challenges through a combination of peer support for notes and lesson explanations, teacher-assisted recovery strategies such as remedial work and make-up projects, digital communication via group chats, assistance from family members and trusted adults, strong self-motivation to persist in schooling despite hardships, and emotional coping activities like sports, music, dancing, cleaning, and social interaction that help them regulate stress and remain academically engaged.

My findings support the study of Garcia and Reyes (2023), which emphasized that adolescents from fragmented family structures often rely heavily on peer networks and teacher scaffolding to compensate for academic disruptions caused by absenteeism. The study further highlighted that peer collaboration and teacher-guided recovery interventions significantly improve learners' academic continuity and reduce the long-term effects of missed instructional time. Similarly, I affirm the findings of Lopez et al. (2024), which revealed that students experiencing family transitions increasingly utilize digital communication platforms and informal support systems to maintain academic engagement. Their study also underscored the importance of emotional coping activities, such as recreational engagement and creative expression, in strengthening students' psychological resilience and sustaining motivation to continue schooling despite personal and familial challenges.

However, my findings contradict the study of Kearney et al. (2023), which reported that school absenteeism problems are often persistent and multidimensional, meaning that even when students are provided with social support, teacher interventions, and coping resources, attendance difficulties may continue due to underlying emotional distress, anxiety, or school disengagement. In contrast, the present study revealed that students from non-intact families managed attendance-related academic challenges through peer support, teacher-assisted recovery strategies, digital communication, family assistance, strong self-motivation, and emotional coping activities, helping them remain engaged in schooling despite adversities.

4.3 Absenteeism and Academic Resilience in Family Transitions

My findings indicate that participants gained valuable insights from students' absenteeism due to family transitions, revealing that absenteeism often leads to emotional distress, family conflict, and social and financial difficulties. Yet, through these experiences, students develop self-discipline, resilience, emotional strength, and confidence, while also recognizing that supportive relationships with teachers, peers, and family, and consistent engagement in school are essential for sustaining motivation, improving attendance, and achieving academic success despite adversity.

My findings align with Li and Chen (2023), who found that students experiencing family disruption often use school absenteeism as an emotional coping strategy in response to stressors such as parental conflict, financial instability, and psychological distress. Their study further emphasized that recovery and improved attendance are strongly linked to the development of emotional resilience and structured school support systems that encourage re-engagement. Similarly, I affirm the finding of García and Ramos (2024), which revealed that students facing adverse family transitions who receive consistent support from teachers, peers, and family members demonstrate higher levels of academic resilience, self-regulation, and motivation to return to school. Their study highlighted that meaningful school relationships serve as protective factors, helping students rebuild confidence and sustain attendance despite ongoing personal challenges.

However, my findings contradict the study of Keppens (2023), which reported that school absenteeism is consistently associated with negative academic outcomes such as learning loss, reduced achievement, and weakened school engagement, suggesting that missed school time generally leads to declining performance rather than positive developmental gains. In contrast, the present study revealed that students experiencing absenteeism due to family transitions were still able to gain valuable insights, including self-discipline, resilience, emotional strength, and confidence, while also recognizing the importance of supportive relationships and consistent school engagement in sustaining motivation and improving attendance despite adversity.

4.4 Implications for Practice

School administrators may strengthen school-based intervention programs that promote emotional resilience and structured support systems for Generation Alpha students from broken families who experience academic absenteeism. These initiatives may include teacher training on psychosocial support, mentoring programs, and peer-assisted learning strategies that help students rebuild confidence and re-engage in school. Such programs may also be implemented to enhance teachers' capacity to provide consistent academic encouragement, foster positive school relationships, and sustain students' motivation and attendance despite family-related challenges.

4.5 Future Direction

Future researchers may use a quantitative design to examine the relationships among family instability, ecological support systems, and academic engagement across a larger population of Generation Alpha students from broken families. Regression analysis can determine the influence of factors such as family instability, school support, and peer relationships on absenteeism and school persistence. In contrast, mediation analysis can examine how ecological support systems influence academic engagement via emotional resilience or coping strategies. Exploratory factor analysis may identify key dimensions of student experiences, such as emotional burden, peer reliance, adult support, and self-regulatory coping, providing more generalizable evidence to strengthen educational interventions within the Philippines educational setting.

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