

PARENTS' INCOME AND TRUANCY AMONG PUBLIC DAY SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

Amos Audu¹, Hamsatu J. Pur², Lawas A. Mbahi³

Department of Education, University of Maiduguri,
P. M. B. 1069, NIGERIA

¹ Audu_amos@yahoo.com, ² hamsatupur@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study sought to examine relationship between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State, Nigeria. Two objectives were stated and two null hypotheses were tested. Correlation design was adopted for the study. The target population for the study comprised of all the 13,845 truant students in public day senior secondary schools in their first year (SSI) and their parents in Niger State. However, four hundred truant SSI students and their parents constituted the sample of the study, which was drawn purposively from the selected 132 public day senior secondary schools in 8 Education Zones of the State. Parents Questionnaire (PQ) and Proforma on Truancy (PT) were used for data collection. Pilot study was conducted on PQ using split-half method and reliability coefficient of .76 was obtained. The data collected for the study was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and t-test of independent samples, the results were considered at $P < .05$ level. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State. Furthermore, the findings also showed that there was significant difference between truancy of boys and girls in public day senior secondary school in Niger State in favour of girls. Based on findings of the study it was concluded that parents' income is not among the factors responsible for truant behaviour in public day senior secondary schools in Niger State. It was also concluded that female students' takes advantage of school hours to engage in other activities outside home that cannot be allowed by parents when they are suppose to be at home.

Keywords: parents' income, gender, truancy, public day and senior secondary school

INTRODUCTION

Education has remained the necessary foundation for meaningful development of any nation. It is generally believed that the basis for any true development must commence with the development of human resources. Therefore, it is a primary obligation in the educational industry for learners to attend schools regularly and punctually too. Truancy is a significant problem in Nigeria and other parts of the world, mostly under-develop and developing countries (Eremie, 2015). Attending schools and staying in schools is the first step to achieved academic excellence and good education. The concept truancy; describes the undesired irregularity in school attendance. Often, truancy is a description of behaviour of learners who have not been attending school regularly as required by the school teachers, parents or the school authorities.

Sambo (2005) defined truancy as absence that has not been authorised by the school and where leave has not been given or approved. It is when students are absent from school without their parents' knowledge or permission. Sometimes it is called 'wagging' or

'skipping' school, students who are truants tend to hide it from their parents or do it against their parents' wishes or consents. Truant behaviour is a problem for the individual, the family, the school and society in general. Truancy refers to absence from school caused by student of his/her own free will, and usually does not refer to legitimate excused absence, such as ones related to a medical conditions, it is the term referring to an absence that is associated with the most brazen student's irresponsibility and results in the greatest consequences, students who attend schools but do not attend classes is also referred to as truant. Truancy is regarded as a status offence because it usually applies to those students that are minors (children and adolescents).

Reid (1999) stated that the differences in terms of behaviour among the students exists due to the parents' socio-economic background such as parents' income, parents' education level parents' occupation, family size and children birth order, these are the main factors that affect the educational and social achievement of students. Parents' income are associated with their children poor interest in school activities and their behaviours are often anti-school, such as absenteeism, truancy, breaking school rules and regulations, sexual violation, drug abuse, poor academic achievement, rioting, protesting in every slight and minor school problems (Woolfolk, 1993).

Kraus and Keltner (2007) defined income as wages, salaries, profits, rents and any flow of earnings received, according to them income can also come in the form of unemployment or workers compensation, social security, pensions, interests, royalties, trusts, other governmental, public or family financial assistance. Osunloye (2008) states that parents' income refers to wages salaries, profit, rents and any flow of earnings received by the parents'. Parents' income can be looked at in two terms, relative and absolute, absolute income is the relationship in which income increases, so will consumption, but not at the same rate while, relative income dictates a person or family's saving and consumption based on the individual or family's income in relation to other (Kraus & Keltner, 2007).

Reid (2000) believed that truants are likely to emanate from families at the lower end of the economic scale, where the father and the mother have low income. Reid (2000) reported that there was statistically significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among secondary school students. According to Reid (2010), children from poor households (low income parents') were three times likely to be truant at school than those from rich households (high income parents'). Students' from low income parents' often lack the financial, social, and educational supports that characterize students' from high income parents' (Al-Hassan, 1992). Osunloye (2008) also believed that secondary school students from low income parents' are more likely to engage in truancy from secondary school before finishing and less likely to attend tertiary institution.

Bandura (1977) states that students of parents', from middle and high parents' income background stay longer in schools than students from low parents' income. Hoff, Laursen and Tardiff (2002) believed that there was significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among secondary school students. According to them, access to financial resources, services and the human capital accumulated through parents' income influences the ways in which parents' interact with their children, the type of activities they promote and the attitudes, beliefs and values they express towards schooling and learning as well as their views about child development and the capabilities they wish to develop in their children.

Kapinga (2014) determined relationship between parents' income and truancy among secondary school students in Tanzania. Two (2) research questions were answered and two (2) hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey was used for the study and a purposive sampling technique was used to obtain 60 truant

secondary school students and their parents' from Iringa Municipality, Tanzania. Semi-structured interviews was used as an instrument for data collection, the data collected was analysed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and t-test of independent samples. The findings of the study showed that there was significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among secondary school students in Iringa Municipality, Tanzania. Based on the findings the researcher recommended that government and private sector should liaise to make policy that will improve the financial level of the populace.

Adeloye (2008) determined relationship between parents' income and truancy among secondary school students in Kano Metropolis. One of the objectives of the study was to determine relationship between parents' income and truancy among secondary school students in Kano Metropolis. Correlation design was adopted for the study and 136 truant students were drawn from the population. Students Truancy Questionnaire (STQ) was used as instrument for data collection. The data collected was analysed using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The findings of the study showed that there was a significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among secondary school students in Kano Metropolis. Based on the findings the researcher concluded that failure to purchase school materials and payment of school fees in good time have contributed greatly to students' persistent truancy among secondary school students.

National Center for School Engagement (NCSE) (2005) viewed that girls and boys are equally likely to be truants; it described the behavioural differences that cause truancy among boys and girls. NCSE (2005) reported that girls are more often truant because they are caring for children or others in the family; whereas boys are more likely to be engage in gang-activity, simply "wandering the neighborhood" or playing with peers. NCSE (2005) asserted that romantic relationships are sometimes the causes for truancy among boys and girls in secondary schools, but girls are more likely to be truant due to their relationship with older boys.

According to NCSE (2005), both male and female truants are similar in terms of having difficulties with families; however, girls may be more likely to have difficulties with adult males in the household who are not biologically related to them, while male truants appear to be more aggressive than girls. Oluremi (2013) reported that there was significant difference between male and female manifestation of truancy behaviour among secondary school students in south western Nigeria in favour of males. Furthermore, Nkomo (2014) also found out that there was significant difference between truancy among senior secondary school students by gender in favour of boys in Kano State.

The senior secondary students in Niger State are mandated by the school laws to attend school daily, but many students absent themselves from school activities hence engaging in truancy as observed by the researcher. (Maynard, 2012) identified several possible causes of truancy among secondary school students which include students' factors, family factors, school factors and community factors. Truancy is a serious anti-social problem, if left unchecked will render the classroom instruction ineffective as such the general purpose of education will be defeated and cannot be achieved in meaningful manner.

The objectives of secondary school education in Nigeria are to provide students with academic and vocational skills as well as moral ethics (National Policy on Education, 2013). Despite that, maintaining school attendance has become a major concern of parents, teachers, counsellors, school administrators and Ministry of Education, this is because truancy has become more common over the years and has created serious problems in the educational system today in Niger State and the rest of Nigeria.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were to examine:

1. Relationship between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State.
2. Gender difference between truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State.

HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between truancy of boys and girls in public day senior secondary schools in Niger State.

METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was correlation design adopted to examine relationship between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State, Nigeria. The target populations for this study were all the 13,845 truant students in public day senior secondary schools in first year (SS1) and their parent in Niger State. 6,366 (46%) of the population are boys while, 7,476 (54%) of the population are girls. There are 132 public day senior secondary schools in Niger State. Through stratified random sampling technique, total of 24 schools were selected from all the 8 Education Zones to participate in the study, i.e. three schools from each education zone, representing about (32%) of the schools. Accordingly, four hundred SSI truant students were selected from the sampled schools through purposive sampling techniques and their parents to participate in the study. The sample of 400 SS1 truant students was selected based on the recommendation of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) with regard to the determination of sample size from a given population.

The instruments used in this study were Parents Questionnaire (PQ) developed by Hamman-Tukur (1991) and Proforma on Truancy (PT) designed by the researchers. PQ consists of sections A and B. Section A has items on the truant students demographic data, while, section B has items on parents' income. The PT was used to collect data on truancy from sampled students, from the school attendance registers. Students' gender and number of day's students' kept away from school without the permission of parents and the school authority per term. Pilot study was conducted on PQ using split-half method and reliability coefficient of .76 was obtained at $p < .05$, this shows that the instrument was reliable for the purpose of this study. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and t-test of independent samples, the results were considered at $P < .05$ level.

RESULTS

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State. The data analysis and results presented in Table 1 was used to test hypothesis one.

Table 1. Results of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of Parents' Income and Students' Truancy in Public Day Senior Secondary Schools in Niger State $n=400$

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Parents' Income</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Students' Truancy	.24	400	.05	NS

Keys: NS = Not Significant

Table 1 indicated that the r-value is .24, which implies that there was no significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State. It was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Therefore, hypothesis one which states that there is no significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State was accepted.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between truancy of boys and girls in public day senior secondary schools in Niger State. The data analysis and results presented in Table 2 was used to test hypothesis two.

Table 2. Results of t-test of Independent Samples of Difference between Truancy among Public Day Senior Secondary School Students in Niger State by Gender n=400

<i>Students' Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>t-Cal.</i>	<i>t-Critical</i>	<i>P-Level</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Male	188	39	6.24					
				398	.027	1.96	.05	S
Female	212	44	6.63					

S = Significant

Table 2 indicated that the t-cal. is .027 which is less than t-critical 1.96, this implies that there was significant difference between truancy of boys and girls in public day senior secondary schools in Niger State. Therefore, hypothesis two which states that there is no significant difference between truancy of boys and girls in public day senior secondary schools in Niger State was rejected.

DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among senior secondary school students in Niger State, the findings with respect to this hypothesis revealed that there was no significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among senior secondary school students in Niger State, Nigeria. The finding of the study concord with the finding of National Center for School Engagement (2005) who reported that there was no significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among senior secondary school students. This shows that other factors may be responsible for truancy in Niger State but certainly not low income, poverty or penury. On the contrary, Reid (2000) Hoff, Laursen and Tardiff (2002), Adeloje (2008), Sara, Mburza and Dukku (2012), Kapinga (2014) and Ishak and Fin (2015) found that there was significant relationship between parents' income and truancy among secondary school students.

The findings of this study with respect to the second hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference between truancy of boys and girls in public day senior secondary school in Niger State, the findings revealed that there was significant difference between truancy of boys and girls in public day senior secondary schools in Niger State, Nigeria in favour of girls. This finding concurred with that of Adeloje (2008), Oluremi (2013) and Nkomo (2014) who found that significant difference exist between male and female manifestation of truancy in secondary schools. On the other hand, National Center for School Engagement (2005) reported that there was no significant difference between truancy of boys and girls in secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that there was no significant correlation between parents' income and truancy among public day senior secondary school students in Niger State, meaning parents' income whether it is low, middle or high has no significant influence on their children truant behaviour in secondary schools. It was also concluded that female students engaged more in truancy than their male counterpart because female students' takes advantage of school hour to engaged in other activities outside home that cannot be allowed by parents when they are suppose to be at home in Niger State.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

The findings have implications for counselling. Counsellors and para counsellors in public day senior secondary schools in Niger State should explore the use of different counselling therapies in curbing truancy among the students. Counsellors in senior secondary schools in Niger State should give special attention to the truant female students from large families in their effort to reduce truancy among them. State Ministry of Education through counsellors in senior secondary schools in Niger State should be organising counselling programmes such as orientation and guidance services for students, the guidance services should be rendered on a continuous basis.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adeloje, J. A. (2008). *Truancy among secondary school students in Kano Metropolis: Incidence and causes*. Ilorin: Counselling Association of Nigeria.
- [2] Al-Hassan, S. A. (1992). *Absenteeism and truancy: Cross-cultural Perspectives*. Onitsha: Leo Tina Press Limited.
- [3] Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191-215.
- [4] Eremie, M. D. (2015). Counsellors and teacher's ranking of factors causing truancy among secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria. *Singaporean Journal of Business Economics, and Management Studies*, 3(12), 1-6.
- [5] Federal Government of Nigeria. (2013). *National Policy on Education (6th Ed.)*. Lagos: Nigerian Education al Research and Development Council (NERDC) Press.
- [6] Hamman-Tukur, A. (1991). *Development and validation of scales of assessing intelligence in primary schools*. Nigeria: University of Jos.
- [7] Hoff, E., Laursen, B., & Tardiff, T. (2002). *Socio-economic status and parenting*. Washington DC: Psychology Press.
- [8] Ishak, Z., & Fin, L. S. (2015). Factors contributing to truancy among students: A Correlation between predictors. *British Journal of Education, Society & Behavioural Science*, 9(1), 32-39.
- [9] Kapinga, S. O. (2014). Impact of parents' socio-economic status on students' truancy in secondary schools in Tanzania. *International Journal of Education*, 6(4), 120-132
- [10] Kraus, M. W., & Keltner, D. (2007). Signs of socio-economic status: A thin slicing approach. *Psychological Science*, 2(4), 99-106.
- [11] Krejcie, J. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-610.

- [12] Maynard, J. U. B. (2012). *Guidelines for empowering secondary school educators, in local parents, in addressing truancy among early adolescent learners*. South Africa: University of South Africa.
- [13] National Center for School Engagement. (2005). *Gender differences among truant youth*. Retrieved from www.schoolengagement.org.
- [14] Nkomo, N. N. (2014). *Gender difference and truancy behaviour among senior secondary school students in Kano Metropolis*. Retrieved from www.scribd.com/schools-disroya.
- [15] Oluremi, F. D. (2013). Parents' education level and truancy among secondary school students in Southwestern Nigeria: Implications for counselling. *International Journal for Cross-Disciplinary Subjects in Education*, 3(2), 1424-1428.
- [16] Osunloye, A. (2008). Family background and student academic performance. Retrieved from <http://socyberety.com/education/family-background-and-student-academic-performance/>.
- [17] Reid, K. C. (1999). The behaviour of persistent school absenteeism. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 3(54), 320-330
- [18] Reid, K. C. (2000). *Tackling truancy in schools: A practical manual for primary and secondary schools*. London: British Press Limited.
- [19] Reid, K. C. (2010). Finding strategic solutions to reduce truancy. *Research in Education*, 84(1), 1-18.
- [20] Sambo, S. (2005). *Truancy among secondary school students in Kaduna Metropolis*. Nigeria: Ahmadu Bello University.
- [21] Sara, S. S., Mburza, A., & Dukku, A. M. (2012). Relationship between home conditions and involvement in truancy among secondary school students in Gombe State: Implications for professional counseling. *The Counsellor*, 31(2), 35-44.
- [22] Woolfolk, A. B. (1993). *Educational psychology (5th Ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.