



## **INFLUENCE OF TRUANCY ON SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN AKWANGA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF NASARAWA STATE**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the influence of truancy among senior secondary students in Akwanga local Government Area of Nasarawa state. Truancy occurs if a student is absent without an excuse from parent/guardian or school. Truancy is an antisocial behavior of students who stay away from school. Truants exhibit class disruptive behaviour such as truancy, absenteeism, tardiness, cutting classes that constitute an impediment to a meaningful teaching and learning process. The study find out the causes of truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, and Findout the solution to truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Findings indicate that truant students escape classes due to peer influence. The study recommends that Government and school authorities should tackle truancy among senior secondary school students of Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa state.

**Keywords:** impact, truancy, negative, academic performance

### **Introduction**

The school environment is organized to shape a student's learning behaviour. However, one of the problems associated with schooling is truancy which is a source of concern to the parents and the school authority. Truancy has been identified as a challenge among students in schools globally and in Nigeria in particular. Truancy is a student's deliberate irregular attendance at school. Also truancy is the failure of an absentee student to obtain permission from parents and school.

Fareo (2006) explained that truancy occurs if a student is absent without an excuse from parent/guardian or school. Truancy is an antisocial behavior of students who stay away from school. Truants exhibit class disruptive behaviour such as truancy, absenteeism, tardiness, cutting classes that constitute an impediment to a meaningful teaching and learning process. Disruptive

behaviour constitutes serious challenges facing the educational sector. Viega, (2008) defined school disruption as the transgression of school rules, troubling learning conditions, and teaching environment by truants. Hence, truancy has a negative influence on the students as it disrupts the classroom management during the teaching and learning process. The refusal of students to attend school regularly without excuse from parents and school is regarded as truancy. The characteristics of truants include laziness, lack of interest in academic work and being in the company of hoodlums. Stoll (1990) identified three types of truants to include students who are in school but absent from class, students who are neither in the class nor at school but at home and those who are neither in the school nor at home. Truancy emanates from the inter-play of factors traceable to the individual, family, school and the community.



Truancy among students includes lateness to school and class, leaving school before closing time, loitering, dodging lessons and absenteeism. However, absenteeism is a high rate of absence from school by students when regular attendance is needed. Students indulge in truancy as a means of escaping from an unpleasant situation that causes fear or avoiding school to gain freedom. The circumstances at home might include poor parent/child relationship due to lack of affection. In addition, parents' inability to inculcate good moral values negatively affects their children's academic achievement. The negative peer influence also contributes to an increase in truancy rate among students.

School engagement is seen as a preventive measure for students' poor performance in school. The extent to which students, parents and teachers actively engage in educational process predicts how likely the students will graduate (Burrus & Roberts 2012). School engagement also involves students' active attendance and participation in the school activities. Truants rather prefer to be with their peers unknown to their teachers, parents/guardians at the detriment of their studies.

Parental involvement in schooling enhances students' academic performance, positive attitude towards school, time spent on homework and regular school attendance behaviour. If parents however, abdicate their responsibility towards their children to their teachers, the students may become delinquent. Again, parents' inability to inculcate good moral values may also negatively affect their children's academic achievement. Truants see the time they leave home for school as a period of freedom. Cone (2012) observed that truants leave home but do not go to school or escape from school to engage in negative activities that caught their imagination and fancy. Uwakwe (1998) explained that truancy affects the school

social environment creating a climate of fear and inhibiting students' ability to learn. The entrenched truancy culture in the homes, school and society coupled with insensitive response to truancy by those in authority affects students' attitude to truancy. This is further aggravated by the scarcity of influenceive techniques to prevent truancy among students by counsellors and teachers. Emotional disposition of truants' show how they feel and perceive their environment. A student who is sad emotionally due to deprivation and rejection would easily vent his anger on peers at the slightest provocation. It would also be difficult for him to concentrate on his studies during the teaching and learning process. Students who are not emotionally stable are not courageous enough to express themselves among their peers. Osarenren (2005) observed that the emotional disposition of an individual plays a significant role in his relationship.

School engagement involves students' active involvement in classroom tasks and school activities. School engagement also implies the rate at which parents show keen interest in ensuring that their children attend school punctually to prevent being delinquent. In fact, parents who fail to assist their children in their school work would expect a very poor academic achievement. Furthermore, some parents' apathy towards their children's education increases the rate of truancy among students. It is obvious that some parents do not appreciate the value of education for their children because, for them education is not a priority. The construct of parental involvement is defined here in terms of the behaviour directed towards the education of their children.

Jegede, Ememe and Gami (2009) on the prevalence of deviant behaviour among senior public secondary school II students in Lagos State, Nigeria. The sample consisted of 100 teachers and 200 students drawn from



10 schools through stratified random sampling technique. Two questionnaires were used to collect data for the study. Three research questions were raised and tested in the study. The study showed that out of 28 indicated deviant behaviour, truancy ranked the highest with 24.1%. This result revealed that prevalence of truancy is the highest when compared to other deviant behaviour.

Truancy is a habitual engagement in unexcused absence from school is a type of behaviour displayed by students that have drawn the concern of parents, educators and society. Truancy has been strongly linked to greater discipline problem around the world, and it is associated with various negative health and socio-economic outcome. Research has shown that certain risk factors revolving around the student's behaviour, academic performance and school engagement are strongly predictive of truancy (Fadhii, Riyanti & Balkish 2014).

Again, Olley (2006) conducted a study 169 street youths in Ibadan, South West Nigeria who lacked parental supervision. The findings revealed that 47% of them had a history of truancy. Also, the Malaysia Global School Based Health Survey (GSHS) conducted a survey from February to April (2012) involving 28,933 students aged 12-17 years old. A two staged cluster sampling technique was used to select the schools and students with a response rate of 86.6%. The data were obtained using the GSHS questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that the prevalence of truancy was 30.8% and significantly higher among male than female (32.9% vs. 8.7%). It is therefore pertinent to reduce truancy rate among adolescents by using new influenceive strategy during intervention. Truancy is a basis for dropping out of the school system. Usually, the truants start by getting to school and classes late, hence the lateness leads to truancy. The Zambian Global School-based

Health Survey GSHS conducted a study in 2004. A total of 2527 participated. The data had 50.8% participants (58.1% male and 58.4% females) reported being truants in the past 30 days, while 42.2% were current drinkers and 62.8% reported having been bullied in the past 30 days. It is also possible that adolescents from poor households may be absent from school to work at home or elsewhere. The researchers further stated that in other studies, males had increased likelihood of being truants than females.

Academic performance as the demonstrated level of educational achievement as evidenced by grades, tests scores, and teacher evaluations. Academic performance is primarily outcome-based and measurable, is an observable indicator of what learners have mastered within the curriculum. Students' academic performance refers to the measureable academic achievement of learners, often evaluated through tests, assignments, classroom participation, and standardized assessments such as external examinations. It reflects how well students understand and apply the knowledge and skills taught in the classroom (Fadhii, Riyanti & Balkish 2014).

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is worrisome to note that students tend to face a lot of emotional and psychological problems arising from irregular school attendance, lack of personal and interpersonal skills to cope with school work. Truants have negative perception about schooling because it interferes with their freedom as they prefer to spend most of their time with friends. From our cultural perspective when a child fails to attend school, the parents are usually blamed. However, many students struggle with personal issues that relate to lack of personal, interpersonal and problem solving skills, which manifest as behavioural problems that could most likely result to truancy.



Truants suffer from deprivation, isolation, rejection and unassertiveness, which is due to their inability to cope with social, cognitive and problems-solving skills. Some of them are bullied hence they decide to be absent from school unknown to their parents and the school authority. In addition, some parents neither assist their children in the homework or assignment nor participate in the school programme. Such parents do not monitor the progress of their children thereby abdicate their responsibility to the school. Also, some students explained that they do not have writing materials such as textbooks, pencil, biros, school bags and sandals, hence prefer to be outside while the lessons are going on. Such students' cannot benefit from the various programmes that the school offers. In addition, the influences of truancy include low achievements criminal and delinquent activities. Truancy is also a clog in the wheel of progress during the teaching and learning, as the teacher has to contend with adequate class management.

In the case of Akwanga local Government Area of Nasarawa State, some students attend school two times a week as they engage in street trading, motor- Park touting and graduate to street urchins in order to support their families financially. Truancy among students contributes to low grades in their examinations. Truants engage in manual jobs such as cleaners, guards, gardeners, drivers in order to meet their financial needs.

Other psychological and emotional problems could be lack of parental love, care, poverty, rejection and unassertiveness among peers. The truants also experience mental and physical stress as they are regarded as low achievers. They lack encouragement from family members, peers and their teachers. Furthermore, the absence of peace may affect the society as the truants indulge in different vices such as bullying, juvenile delinquency, hooliganism, alcoholism, armed robbery and

sexual abuse. Truants have serious problems in the school with regards to participation in school activities in that they are always in the wrong place at the wrong time.

### **Objective of the Study**

The study sought the following objectives:

1. Findout the causes of truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.
2. Findout the solution to truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.
3. Examine the influence of truancy among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions guided the study.

1. What are the causes of truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
2. What are the positive solutions to truancy behaviour of senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
3. What is the influence of truancy among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey design. This design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect information from respondents in order to describe their attitudes, opinions, and perceptions regarding truancy. The survey design also helps the researcher to gather data from a relatively large number of truant students in Akawanga Local Government



Area and analyze how it affects their academic performance. The study was conducted in Akwanga Local Government Area, which is located in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The area consists of several communities with different cultural, religious, and social backgrounds. The people in the area engage in various economic activities such as farming, trading, and civil service. Akwanga Local Government Area has several economic activities.

The target population of this study comprised of all male and female of public Senior Secondary School Two students (SS II) in the study area. The reason for the choice of SS II students was that they were in the semi-terminal class, thus, they were not involved in any external examination such as WASSCE or the NECO SSCE. The intervention will have a positive impact on the participants' performance in these external examinations.

Due to the large population of truant students in Akwanga Local Government Area, it may not be possible to study the entire population. Therefore, a sample of respondents was selected to represent the population. For the purpose of this study, samples of hundred (100) respondents were selected from different schools within Akwanga Local Government Area. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. This method gives every member of the population an equal chance of being selected for the study. It also helps to reduce bias and

ensures that the sample represents the entire population.

The main instrument used for collecting data in this study was structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consists two sections. Section 'A' contained questions related to the personal information of the respondents such as age, gender, and marital status. Section B contained questions related to truancy and causes of truancy, attitudes toward truancy. The questionnaire include only closed-ended. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, the research instrument was reviewed by experts in counseling, and educational test and measurement unit. Their suggestions and corrections was incorporated to improve the quality and clarity of the questionnaire before it is administered to the respondents.

To ensure reliability, the questionnaire was tested through a pilot study involving a small number of respondents who are not part of the main sample. The responses obtained were analyzed to determine whether the questions are clear and consistent. Necessary adjustments were made before the final administration of the questionnaire. The data collected from the respondents was analyzed using descriptive statistics by mean and standard deviation to answer three research questions.

## **Result**

### **Research Question 1:**

What are the causes of truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

**Table: 1 Descriptive Statistics on causes of truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State**

| S/N                   | Statement/Question                                                           | SA  | A  | D  | SD | Total | Mean | Stand. D | Decision |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|----|----|-------|------|----------|----------|
| 1                     | I stay away from school regularly                                            | 124 | 78 | 40 | 23 | 265   | 2.6  | 44.84    | Accepted |
| 2                     | Being a truant helps me to escape from home and school to be with my friends | 136 | 81 | 38 | 20 | 275   | 2.7  | 51.62    | Accepted |
| 3                     | I regularly misses lessons in school                                         | 140 | 78 | 40 | 19 | 277   | 2.7  | 53.11    | Accepted |
| 4                     | My did not care weather I went to school every day                           | 80  | 57 | 68 | 27 | 232   | 2.3  | 22.70    | Rejected |
| <b>Aggregate mean</b> |                                                                              |     |    |    |    |       | 2.0  |          |          |

**Source: Field Work 2026**

The results of respondents on the causes of truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State is presented in table 1 the respondents items 1, 2, and 3 indicates accepted responses towards causes of truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, because all the items mean scores were above the decision mean of 2.5. While item 4 indicate rejected response with mean score below mean decision of 2.5 Therefore, we

can say that, the following items are the causes of truant behavior among senior secondary school students of Akwanga LGA of Nasarawa State: I stay away from school regularly, Being a truant helps me to escape from home and school to be with my friends, and I regularly misses lessons in school.

**Research Question: 2**

What are the positive solutions to truancy behaviour of senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

**Table: 2 Descriptive Statistics on solutions to truancy behaviour of senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State**

| S/N                   | Statement/Question                                                     | SA  | A  | D  | SD | Total | Mean | Stand. D | Decision |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|----|----|-------|------|----------|----------|
| 1                     | In my school, teachers care about students that have truancy behaviour | 156 | 84 | 42 | 12 | 294   | 2.9  | 62.43    | Accepted |
| 2                     | Our teachers advise us to attend classes                               | 96  | 99 | 34 | 26 | 255   | 2.5  | 39.13    | Accepted |
| 3                     | Parental supervision will boost my school attendance                   | 116 | 90 | 48 | 17 | 271   | 2.7  | 43.93    | Accepted |
| 4                     | Government provision of learning materials                             | 160 | 48 | 52 | 18 | 278   | 2.7  | 62.21    | Accepted |
| <b>Aggregate mean</b> |                                                                        |     |    |    |    |       | 2.1  |          |          |

**Source: Field Work 2026**



The results of respondents on solutions to truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State is presented in table 2 the respondents items 1, 2, 3, and 4 indicates Positive responses towards solutions to truant behaviour among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State because all the items mean scores were above

the decision mean of 2.50. Therefore, we can say that, all the items in the table are the solutions of truant behavior among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa state.

### Research Question: 3

What are the influence of truancy among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

**Table: 3 Descriptive Statistics on influence of truancy among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.**

| S/N                   | Statement/Question                                                              | SA  | A  | D  | SD | Total | Mean | Stand. D | Decision |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|----|----|-------|------|----------|----------|
| 1                     | My classmates always perform well during exams                                  | 124 | 78 | 40 | 23 | 265   | 2.6  | 44.84    | Accepted |
| 2                     | I does not have lesson notes in all our subject                                 | 136 | 81 | 38 | 20 | 275   | 2.7  | 51.62    | Accepted |
| 3                     | Every exams my performance is below expectations due my absenteeism from school | 140 | 78 | 40 | 19 | 277   | 2.7  | 53.11    | Accepted |
| 4                     | I almost cannot write anything during exams                                     | 80  | 57 | 68 | 27 | 232   | 2.3  | 22.70    | Rejected |
| <b>Aggregate mean</b> |                                                                                 |     |    |    |    |       | 2.0  |          |          |

**Source: Field Work 2026**

The results of respondents on influences of truancy among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State is presented in table 3 the respondents items 1,2, and 3, indicates Positive responses towards influences of truancy among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Because the items mean scores were above the decision mean of 2.5. Then item 4 indicate negative response. Therefore we can say that, the following items are the influences of truancy among senior secondary school students of Akwanga local Government Area of Nasarawa state: un-able to write exams, low performance, and lack of complete note

### Discussion

The findings of research question 1 revealed that, truancy occurred as result of the following items: I stay away from school regularly, being a truant helps me to escape from home and school to be with my friends, and I regularly miss lessons in school. The findings of this research revealed that truancy occurred as a result of parental negligence towards their children. The finding is in line with Olley (2006), and Jegede and Ememe, (2009). Also the findings of research question two on solutions to truant behavior among senior secondary school students of Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa state revealed that the teachers advise, parental supervision, and government concern are the solutions to truant behavior among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa state. Unable to pass examinations, lack of complete note



book, unable to comprehend lesson note the findings is in line with Katsiyannis, Barret, Ju and Wie, (2010)

Lastly, the finding of research question three on influences of truancy among senior secondary school students in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State revealed that, truancy has the following influences: unable to write exams, low performance, and lack of complete note

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes the following:

1. Truancy occurred as a result parental negligence
2. Parents should observe the attitude of their children regularly
3. Truancy influence students negatively to abandon school activities

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been made:

4. Government and school authorities should tackle truancy among senior secondary school students of Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa state.
5. Government should provide necessary learning equipment in school
6. Parents and students should put more emphasis in learning

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