

## SELF-CONCEPT, INTELLIGENCE AND NEED- ACHIEVEMENT AS PREDICTORS OF TRUANCY AMONG LEARNERS IN IDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF IBADAN, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

Truancy is one of the factors responsible for academic failure, high rate of school drop-out, academic under-achievement and juvenile delinquency among secondary school learners. This problem has generated an outcry among stake holders in the field of education in Nigeria. Many factors have been adduced by previous researchers to be responsible for truancy among students. But there is dearth of research on self-concept, intelligence and need-achievement as predictors of truancy among secondary school learners. Therefore, this study sought to investigate self-concept, intelligence and need-achievement as predictors of truancy among secondary school learners in Ido Local government area of Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select ten secondary school in Ido Local government area of Ibadan. Simple random sampling technique was used to select twenty students in each school making a total of 200 sample size that participated in the study. Four instruments were used to collect data: Need – achievement Scale (NAS), Intelligence Scale (IS), Self- concept Scale (SCS) and Truancy Scale (TS). Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Result indicated that learners' truancy is significantly correlated with the independent variables (self-concept, intelligence and need-achievement). There were significant correlations among the three independent variables when pulled together. Each independent variable made significant contribution to the predictor of learners' truancy with intelligence making the most significant contribution. It is therefore recommended that parents, teachers and Guidant and other stakeholders in the field of education should enlighten the students on the negative effect of truancy on academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Self- concept, intelligence, need –achievement, predictors, truancy

### Introduction

Attendance at school is necessary because educational institutions all over the world (either public or private) have been established on the premise that learners will attend classes regularly and teachers will impart knowledge to them and thereby bring about positive behavioural changes (Onoyase as cited in Eremie and Gideon, 2020). Truancy is a term used to denote 'the action of staying away from school without 'good reason' or 'absenteeism'. The term is used to refer to behaviour of school students who do not turn up at schools, despite leaving home with the intention of at-

tending schools. (Aqeel & Akhtar, 2017). Truancy is any intentional unauthorised or illegal absence from compulsory education. It is absence caused by students of their own free will and usually does not refer to legitimate excused absence (Onukwufor et al., 2016) Eremie and Gideon as cited in Eremie & Nwala, (2020), defined truancy as unapproved absence from school, usually without a parent's knowledge and can take different forms, ranging from repeated late arrivals to absence from a whole or several school day(s) (Ramberg et al., 2019)

Researchers have identified some factors that cause truancy. They include inability to do homework, illness, lack of social competence, physical health, low self-esteem, poor peer relationship, and low academic ability (Hopskins, Green & Burns, 2011; Maduabuchi, 2013 in Ermie & Gideon, 2020). Truancy is negatively associated with school performance (Ramberg et al., 2019). The unexcused or illegitimate student absence from school, also known as truancy has been identified to be a precursor to school dropout. Truancy has long-lasting associations with negative life outcomes, especially for non-violent crime and problem drinking. (Rocque et al., 2017). Children who do not attend school on a regular basis more often choose unproductive activities that lead to delinquency and affect the community as well as the individual (Cole in Childs & Grooms, 2018).

Self-concept, otherwise referred to as self-esteem, is defined as the overall evaluation of oneself, i.e., the extent to which one values and accolades the self. A person who is overly critical of himself or herself may have a more negative self-evaluation and thus lower self-esteem (Gopalan et al., 2018).

Huitt in Edobor (2017) defined self-concept as the totality of a complex, organized and dynamic system of learned beliefs, opinions and attitudes that every individual holds to be true about his or her personal existence. It is the intellectual aspect of self that is connected with one's self-image. It is the way a man sees him/herself as a different person from others and his environment. Students with positive self-concept have a tendency to perform preferably in scholastics exercise than their colleagues of negative self-concept. The researcher perceived that if a student creates negative self-concept, he sees the school as an odd place and this thus cause an alteration the way he behaves (Edobor, 2017).

The self-esteem of students has a significant impact on almost everything they do – on the way they engage in activities, deal with challenges, and interact with others. Self-esteem also can have a marked effect on academic performance. Low self-esteem can lessen the desire to learn in students, their ability to focus, and their willingness to take risks. Positive self-esteem, on the other hand, is one of the building blocks of school success; it provides a firm foundation for learning (*Dr. Ken Shore: The Student with Low Self-Esteem | Education World, n.d.*).

Studies have shown a correlation between absent students and lower self-esteem/self-concept. A more recent study from the United Kingdom which investigated the different reasons for school absenteeism indicated that there were many different factors impacting students' absenteeism and one of the key factors was self-esteem (Reid in Kvist & Carolina, 2020).

Tamunioiman in (Aremu et al., 2015) carried out a research on self-concept attributes, her findings revealed that a positive relationship exists between academic performance and psychological self-concept. It was found that self-concept was a potent predictor of truancy among secondary school students causes truancy. Okwakpam & Okwakpam in (Suleman et al., 2017) found that poor self-concept causes a student to exhibit truancy.

On this premise, it could be that lack of emotional intelligence may cause students to be truants. This may be due to their inability to understand their teachers,

friends and others involved in their education business. A lack of the individual's ability to understand his environment, people and have strong interpersonal skills may lead to them engaging in this form of behaviour. Emotional intelligence is an obvious phenomenon which may influence our day to day life. The way one thinks, feels, reacts and responds to stimuli all to a certain extent relate with emotional intelligence (Edobor, 2017).

According to Umana in Edobor (2017), individuals who have a good sense of understanding and intelligence tend to have an advantage over others than when they don't. Poor academic performances as a result of low intelligence levels leads to psychological and behavioural dysfunction, which are the actual causes of anti-social behaviour since this failure helps reduce the self-esteem of such students. Research has shown the labelling of and discrimination against low achievers in a school to be prevalent in high schools. Such students who were repeatedly brushed off immediately develop disinterestedness in academic work and run away from school (Ofori & Yankyerah, 2022). Reid in Ofori & Yankyerah (2022) attributes students' truancy to a number of interrelated factors common with low performing students. For instance, academically weak students rarely learn how to manage homework assignments, come to class with long lists of excuses, and have a difficult time with regular class work. Such low performers often have the perception that attendance does not make any difference and that being in school does not increase their chances of passing examinations or improving academically. Truancy, therefore, became a common characteristic of such non achievers in the school.

Low-achieving students usually experience feelings of shame and isolation because of their inability to succeed academically. Consequently, these students try to avoid their school work in an effort to hide their skill deficit (Ofori & Yankyerah, 2022).

Low intelligence was found as the other major cause for students to commit truancy since they found the lesson difficult to comprehend (Artango & Galletto, 2020).

Reid in Uche & Lovenda (2020), said that lack of career aspiration and poor academic performance leads to low self-esteem in students, finally causing them to be truants. The need for achievement can also be expressed as academic motivation. It is linked to behaviours that encourage students to learn and achieve academic achievement. However, a student's lack of school attendance can lead to inadequate behavioural patterns, low performance, superficial learning, school absenteeism, and even school dropout. Academic motivation plays an important role in students' regular attendance at school. Academic motivation is defined as a student's desire, effort, and persistence in achieving academic achievement. It refers to the drive required to complete academic tasks and activities, while a motivation is defined as a lack of self-determination towards target behaviour, which refers to both intrinsic and extrinsic lack of motivation. A motivation, or a lack of motivation, causes morale and dissatisfaction, as well as a reduction in cognitive productivity and emotional well-being (Ilter, 2021).

### **Statement of the problem**

Truancy is one of the factors responsible for academic failure, high rate of dropout, academic under-achievement and juvenile delinquency among the secondary schools students. This problem has generated concern and outcry on the parts of the stakeholders in the field of Education in Nigeria. In the light of the foregoing however,

this study investigated the concepts of self-concepts, intelligence and need achievement as determinants of truancy in Ido Local government area of Ibadan, Oyo State.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the relationship among the three independent variables (need achievement, intelligence and self- concept) on the learners' truancy?
2. What is the combined effect of the three independent variables (need achievement, intelligence and self -concept) on the learners' truancy?
3. What is the relative effect of each of the three independent variables (need achievement, intelligence and self-concept) on the learners' truancy?

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a survey research design. Such a design does not involve the manipulation of variables in the study. It neither adds nor subtracts from the existing fact. However, it is carefully observed and recorded information as it naturally occurred at the time the study was conducted.

#### *Population of the Study*

The population of the study comprises all the JSS students in Ido Local Government Area of Ibadan Oyo State.

#### *Sample and Sampling Technique.*

Simple random sampling technique was used to select ten secondary schools in Ido local government area of Ibadan. In each of randomly selected schools, participants were selected through simple random technique. Twenty students were selected in each school. On the whole, a total number of two hundred students were used for the study. However, the students consist of male and female students.

#### *Research Instruments*

The need achievement scale developed by Carmen & John (2008) was adopted to be used as measure of need achievement questionnaire. It is a thirteen item scale with responses based on a four point Likert scale. The items of the scale read as follows: 1. It is important for me to do better than other students 2- Fear of performing poorly in this class is often what motivates me 3 I always wish to learn as much as possible from the lessons in the class. As indicated by (Musola et al., n.d) the instrument has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.85 and internal consistency of 0.74 was obtained. The intelligence scale constructed by Yosi and Dryer (2007) was another instrument adopted to measure of intelligence. It is a twenty item scale with responses based on a four point Likert scale. The scale had high internal consistency of 0.79 with Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.84 to 0.95 and mean value of 0.89. The self -esteem scale constructed by Rosenberg (1994) is another instrument used in the study. It is 10-item Likert scale with items based on a four points scale from strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree and disagree. According to him the scoring for some items need to be reversed so that in each case then scores go from less to more self-esteem and yielded internal consistency of 0.77 and Cronbach's alpha of 0.78.

The truancy scales constructed by Animashaun (2007) was another instrument used in the study. It was adapted to measure of truancy. It is a fifteen item

scale with responses based on the four liken scale points. The scale had high internal consistency of 0.72 with Cronbach's alpha. 0.85.

#### *Procedures of administration*

The instruments were administered on the subjects on the day approved by the school authority for the exercise. The researcher was assisted by the teachers in administration and collection of data. In each of the selected school, the administration and collection of instrument were done on the same day of administration. On the whole, data collection lasted for three weeks, Two hundred and fifty Questionnaires were distributed but only two hundred were selected for analysis.

#### *Method of data analysis*

The data obtained were analyzed using multiple regression analysis.

### **Results**

This chapter presents the results and summary of findings. The study investigated into self -concept, intelligence and need -achievement as determinants of truancy in learners in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Three research questions were raised and answered. The data were analyzed using multiple regression statistical method. The results are presented below:

**Research question one:** what is the relationship among the three independent variables (need achievement, intelligence and self- concept) on the learners' truancy?

**Table1:** Descriptive statistics and Inter-correlations among the variables

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Learners' truancy	Need achievement		
Learners' truancy	200	38.56	19.57	1.00			
Need achievement	200	32.00	17.52	.989	1.00		
Intelligence	200	49.90	29.49	.992	.986	1.00	
Self-concept	200	26.14	13.95	.892	.906	.916	1.00

Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed). Table 1 contains descriptive statistics and inter-correlations among the study variables. As shown in the table 1, learners' truancy is significantly correlated with: (1) need achievement ( $r = .989$ ;  $p < .05$ ); (2) intelligence ( $r = .992$ ;  $p < .05$ ); and (3) self -concept ( $r = .892$ ;  $p < .05$ ). There were also significant correlations among the three independent variables.

**Research question two:** What is the combined effect of the three independent variables (need achievement, intelligence and self -concept) on the learners' truancy?

Multiple R(adjusted)=.995 Multiple R2(adjusted)=.991 Standard error of estimate=1 .89223				
<b>Analysis of variance</b>				
	Sum of square	DF	Mean square	F
Regression	(SS)	3	25182.498	7033.149
Residual	75547.49	196	3.581	
Total	701.79	199		

The table above shows that the independent variables (emotional intelligence, self- efficacy and teachers’ motivation) when pulled together have significant effects on the learners’ truancy. The value of R (adjusted) = .995 and R<sup>2</sup> (adjusted) = .991. The analysis of variance performed on the multiple regressions yielded an F- ratio value of 7033.149 and was found to be significant at 0.05 level.

**Research question three:** what is the relative effect of each of the three independent variables (need achievement, intelligence and self- concept) on the learners’ truancy?

**Table 3:** relative contribution of independent variables to the prediction

	Unstandard-ized coeffi- cients	Standard- ized coeffi- cients		T	P
Model	B	Standard error	Beta	16.933	P<0.05
Constant	5.538	.327		9.234	P<0.05
Need achieve- ment	.422	.046	.377	9.234	P<0.05
Intelligence	.482	.029	.726	16.799	P<0.05
Self- concept	.172	.026	.115	6.695	P<0.05

The table, f the independent variables made a significant contribution to the prediction of learners’ truancy. In term of magnitude of contribution, intelligence made the most significant contribution (Beta= .726; t 16.799; P<O.05) to the prediction. Other variables made significant contributions in the following order: Need achievement (Beta= .377; t= 9.234; P<O.05) and self- concept (Beta= .115; t= 6.695; P<O.05).

## Discussion of findings

The result of the first research question revealed that there was significant relationship among need achievement and the three independent variables (need-achievement, intelligence and self- concept). This is in line with findings of some researchers who affirmed that unexcused or illegitimate student absence from school, also known as truancy has been identified to be a precursor to school drop-out. Truancy has long-lasting associations with negative life outcomes, especially for non-violent crime and problem drinking (Rocque et al., 2017). Children who do not attend school on a regular basis more often choose unproductive activities that lead to delinquency and affect the community as well as the individual (Cole in Childs & Grooms, 2018).

The result of the second research question revealed that the three independent variables (need achievement, intelligence and self –concept) have combined effect on the learners' truancy. This is consistent with findings of Reid in Kvist & Carolina, (2020) shows a correlation between absent students and lower self-concept. This is also in line with Reid in Ofori & Yankyerah (2022) who attribute students' truancy to a number of interrelated factors common with low performing students. For instance, academically weak students rarely learn how to manage homework assignments, come to class with long lists of excuses, and have a difficult time with regular class work. Researchers have identified some factors that cause truancy. They include inability to do homework, illness, lack of social competence, physical health, low self-esteem, poor peer relationship, and low academic ability (Hopskins, Green & Burns, 2011; Maduabuchi, 2013 in Ermie & Gideon, 2020).

The result of the third research question revealed that each of the three independent variables (need-achievement, intelligence and self- concept) has a relative effect on the learners' truancy. In terms of the magnitude of contribution, intelligence made the most significant contribution to the prediction. This is in line with the submission Ofori & Yankyerah, (2022) who says that Low-achieving students usually experience feelings of shame and isolation because of their inability to succeed academically. Consequently, these students try to avoid their school work in an effort to hide their skill deficit. Ofori & Yankyerah, (2022) further corroborate the finding by saying that Low-achieving students usually experience feelings of shame and isolation because of their inability to succeed academically. Consequently, these students try to avoid their school work in an effort to hide their skill deficit.

## Recommendations

1. The students are to be trained on the need to plan a reasonable and achievable goals and objective needs for themselves which are to be achieved at a given period of time in the school. This would help the students to work towards the accomplishment of these goals and needs in the school and to curb the habit of being truant.
2. The parents also need to be trained on the need to monitor frequently the students' attendance and to be involved significantly in the success of their wards in the school. This will help in knowing the students' attendance record in the school and reduce truancy behaviour in the students.
3. The students need to be educated on the need for them to improve on the level of their self-concept, since the findings of this study has shown that students' level of self-concept has a great impact in their achievement and truancy behaviour in the school.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, persistent poor performance of Nigerian secondary school students due to the bad attitude to schooling and truancy behaviour should not continue indefinitely. There is hope that with the improvement of need achievement, intelligence and self-concept, the situation can be changed for better. The study discovered that need-achievement, intelligence and self-concept influence significantly the learners' truancy behaviour in the school. In other words, students with higher need-achievement, self-concept and intelligence improve in the attendance record and tend to shun truancy behaviour in the school than those with lower level of need-achievement, self-concept and intelligence. It follows that need achievement, intelligence and self-concept have a great influence on the truancy behaviour. It is important to improve these factors in order to eradicate the persistent occurrence of poor report of learners' truancy behaviour.

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