

## SELF-ESTEEM AS CORRELATE OF TRUANT BEHAVIOURS AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate on self-esteem as correlate of truant behaviours among senior secondary schools in Katsina State. The study contained two research objectives and hypotheses. The target population consists of four thousand, one hundred and twenty-nine (4,129) while the total sample size is three hundred and fifty-one (351) Senior Secondary School (SSS II) students selected from Dustin-Ma Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State. Multistage sampling technique was used to select ten (10) Senior Secondary Schools on the bases of gender, which comprises of five (5) from Schools from each of the two LGA areas of the zone. The instruments used to collect data are Self-Esteem Questionnaires (SEQ) and Students' Truant Behaviours Questionnaires (STBQ) adapted for this study. The Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability. Therefore, the reliability co-efficient of the instruments are 0.84 and 0.80 respectively. Analysis of data was carried out using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that there is significant relationship between self-esteem and truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State. Also, there is significant difference in truant behaviours of secondary school students based on gender in Katsina State. The study concluded that, it is obviously shown that there is correlation between self-esteem and truant behaviours among senior secondary schools in Katsina State. It was recommended that teacher should be familiar with students' self-esteem for easy identification and elimination of truant behaviours in order to improve students' school attendant and academic performance.

**Keywords:** Self-esteem, Truant Behaviours, Senior Secondary School Students.

### Introduction

Education and learning go together, for students to learn and perform excellently, they must be sufficiently and psychologically healthy. A psychologically healthy individual is the person that has a positive perception of his/her total self. Psychologists postulated that all persons create their own reality through their perceptions of what they believe to be real (Obilor, 2011). The student's behaviours are contingent on how he/she perceives and interprets his/her experiences. Thus, from the perspective of the perceptual psychology, it is clear that to understand an individual's behaviours, we need to know how that individual perceives and interprets his/her experiences.

Self-esteem, according Mazuki (2018) is the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments. Self-esteem is a way of thinking, feeling, and acting that implies that you accept, respect, and believe in yourself. When you accept yourself, you are okay with both the good and not so good things about yourself. Having healthy self-esteem can influence your

motivation, your mental well-being, and your overall quality of life (Bada, 2021). However, having self-esteem that is either too high or too low can be problematic. Better understanding of what your unique level of self-esteem is, can help you strike a balance that is just right for you. Key elements of self-esteem include: Self-confidence, feelings of security, identity, sense of belonging and feeling of competence. Other terms often used interchangeably with self-esteem include self-worth, self-regard, and self-respect. Self-esteem tends to be lowest in childhood and increases during adolescence, as well as adulthood, eventually reaching a fairly stable and enduring level. This makes self-esteem similar to the stability of personality traits over time. Self-esteem impacts your decision-making process, your relationships, your emotional health, and your overall well-being. It also influences motivation, as people with a healthy, positive view of themselves understand their potential and may feel inspired to take on new challenges (Kendra, 2023).

Social Psychologists have converged around the notion that Self-esteem is a way of thinking, feeling, and acting that implies that you accept, respect, and believe in yourself (Bada, et al 2021). According to Olutola, et al (2018) self-esteem is a person's inner appreciation or assessment of him or herself in reflection of individual's overall subjective emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. Self-esteem is the value that individual place upon themselves. Individual levels of self-esteem are dependent on the way we evaluate ourselves. Bello, et al (2017); Bada et al (2021) buttressed that self-esteem is used to refer to the affective or emotional aspect of self and generally refers to how one feels about or how he values himself or herself. Self-esteem as encompasses beliefs about oneself, (e.g. "I am competent", "I am worthy"), as well as emotional states such as triumph, despair, pride and shame.

Truant behaviour means staying away from school without permission from parents and school by students. A student who absents himself/herself from school without permission from school and home is a truant. Fowowe (2011) observed that irregular school attendance is interchangeably used with truancy which occurs when students fail to attend school without permission from school. Truancy may refer to behavior of students who attend school but do not go to classes. Truant behaviour is another factor that affects students' academic performance in secondary schools. Truant may be referred to students who attend school but do not go to classes. Regular school attendance is an important variable in academic performance. It is the desire of every parent that their children succeed in school. The child's attitude toward school can take a number of forms; negative or positive (Onukwufor, et al 2015). The child's ability to be regular or irregular in school attendance will depend heavily upon how motivated the child is. The child's motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic depending on what is motivating the child. According to Grolnick and Farkas (2002), internal motivation is self-regulated. The child needs autonomy, competence, and relation to other important individuals to activate this internal motivation. For the child to be autonomous there is the need for positive self-experience, self-esteem that gives the feeling that one can initiate one's own action. On the other hand, competence is the feeling of being effective in interacting with one's environment. The need for one to feel connected to significant others are a crucial factor in motivating the child intrinsically (Grolnick & Farkas, 2002). In all of these, if truancy is dealt with on the part of students, good or expected school attendance will be progress and academic performance will be enhanced.

Researchers identified the causes of truant behaviour among students as multifaceted Ibrahim (2021); Jimoh (2023); Ugan (2018); Feniger et al. (2019); Okwakpam and Okwakpam (2012), these include low academic ability, broken homes, drug abuse, peer pressure, parents' socio-economic status, poor school climate, family (low economic status, nonchalant attitude of parents); individual (personal reasons, truant

behaviour, low grades in school, bad peer influence); school (ineffective attendance policies, poor record keeping and poor relationship with teachers); communities (lack of support for school, high crime rate). According to Tali and Ahande (2024); Musa (2014) peer group factors, socio economic background of the students, poor academic performance of students are contributory factors of truant behaviour in secondary schools. Onukwufor, et al (2015) result of the study revealed that, the truants reported poorer relations with teachers, a tendency of disbelieving in the value of schooling and more frequent involvement in truant behaviours. Ugan (2018), found among other things: that the student, the family, the school and the community in one way or the other causes truancy and that they could equally help to reduce it in secondary school.

In addition, the study of Fareo (2013) revealed that gender has contributory factors of truant behaviour in secondary schools students. Also, Feniger et al. (2019) discovered in their study that, truants repeat classes as a result of their absence from school and that even when they do not repeat; they do not feel better because they believe they are under qualified or accomplished for such a class which affects their self-esteem. In addition, Tali & Ahande (2024) suggest that truant behaviours indicating high control of self and low freedom which may reduce academic self-esteem. In contrast to being sensitive to student's changes and progress, increasing academic self-esteem is associated with being involved in activities and having mild disciplinary patterns. It is on this note that, the study investigates self-esteem as correlate of truant behaviours among senior secondary schools in Katsina state.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Truant behaviour is an individual's response or reaction that is manifested in the decision to leave lessons during school hours and be absent from teaching sessions and the learning process at school. Globally, truancy is regarded as cankerworm that has caused set back and deficiency for attainment of viable educational pursuit by secondary school students. Truant behaviours are what students exhibited that deviate them from the social norms of the school. It has caused serious problems to the smooth running of the school system, the progress of the students and also the overall education programme (Musa, 2014). The symptoms of truant behaviours among high school students are playing at Play Station or internet cafe, staring in a food vendor, dogging, hanging out and gathering with their playmates that do truancy during class (Sariyasni, 2019). This behaviour caused failure in academic learning for the student, because he/she cannot complete the subject matter at that time of learning period.

Truant behaviour negatively affects educational achievement of secondary school students. Thus, high truancy rates affect the general achievement in school, slowing the rate of instruction, which harms all the students, as it could also be an early warning for educational failure (Boga 2013). Therefore, this behaviour is attributed to beliefs about oneself and further contributes to higher rates of dropout among secondary school students, and more likely to hard drug pusher. Therefore, it is against this background that, the researcher intended to investigate self-esteem as correlate of truant behaviours among senior secondary schools in Katsina State

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to examine the self-esteem as correlate of truant behaviours among senior secondary schools in Katsina state. Specifically, the present study was:

1. To ascertain the level of self-esteem among secondary school students in Katsina State
2. To determine the prevalence of truant behaviours among secondary school students based on

gender in Katsina State.

### Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study stated above, the following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the level of self-esteem among secondary school students in Katsina State?
2. What is the prevalence of truant behaviours among secondary school students based on gender in Katsina State?

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated based on the objective of the study stated above and tested in the study:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in truant behaviours of secondary school students based on gender in Katsina State.

### Methodology

This study utilized a correlational research design because it was used to analyze the degree of which two or more attributes or measurements on the same group of elements shows a tendency to vary together. This study was conducted in Dutsin-Ma Zonal Education Quality Assurance Katsina State with three hundred and fifty-one (351) Senior Secondary School (SSS II) students (respondents) selected was used as sample for the study. The sample size estimation is in line with recommendations offered at a confidence level of 95% and a Margin Error of 5.0% (Research Advisor, 2006).

The target population consist of four thousand, one hundred and twenty-nine (4,129) Senior Secondary School (SSS II) students from Dutsin-Ma and Kurfi Local Governments Area (LGA) of Katsina State, that were selected using random sampling techniques because it was not possible to cover all because of the large number, location and other problems inherent in data collection.

A multistage sampling technique was adopted to select the participants for the study. The participants were selected in four stages. At the first stage, a stratified sampling technique was used to select the schools based on Local Government Area from Dutsin-Ma ZEQA. At the second stage, purposive sampling technique was used to select ten (10) Senior Secondary Schools on the bases of gender, which comprises of five (5) from each LGA. At the third stage, proportionate sampling technique was used to find the number of percentages to the given population of students from each school. At the final stage, simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents for each selected school.

Data were collected using two research instruments and they are questionnaire. The study used questionnaire that was adapted for this study. These are Self-Esteem Questionnaires (SEQ) and Students' Truant Behaviours Questionnaires (STBQ) adapted from Sorensen (2005) and Jimoh (2023) respectively. This adapted the Likert four-point rating format of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) respectively. Positive items would be scored simply as Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed, Strongly Disagreed with 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively, while negative items were scored in reverse order as 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The face and content validity of the instruments, the instruments were validated by three research experts from Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Federal University

Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State. Test-re-test reliability of the instrument was done, using Cronbach Alpha. The correlation coefficient of the questionnaire was obtained: SEQ and STBQ are 0.84 and 0.80 respectively. The research questions were tested using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics; simple tabular form, frequency counts and percentage for answering research questions while inferential statistics was used to analyse hypotheses

## Results

The data used in this study was obtained from three hundred and fifty-one (351) Senior Secondary School (SSS II) students were retrieved for data analysis.

### Answering of Research Questions

#### Research Question One:

What is the level of self-esteem among secondary school students in Katsina State?

**Table 1: Frequencies and Percentage on Level of Self-Esteem among Secondary School Students in Katsina State**

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Decision
Self-Esteem	High	242	69	High
	Low	109	31	
	Total	351	100	

The analysis in Table 1 revealed that out of 351 respondents, 242(69%) had high level of self-esteem while 109(31%) had low level of self-esteem. This implies that there was a high level of self-esteem among secondary school students in Katsina State.

#### Research Question Two:

What is the prevalence of truant behaviours among secondary school students based on gender in Katsina State?

**Table 2: Frequencies and Percentage on Level of Truant Behaviours among Secondary School Students in Katsina State**

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Decision
Truant Behaviours	High	132	31	Low
	Low	219	69	
	Total	351	100	

The analysis in Table 2 revealed that out of 351 respondents, 132(31%) are experiencing high level of truant behaviours while 219 (69%) are experiencing low level of truant behaviours. This implies that there was a low level of truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State.

## Hypotheses Testing

#### Hypothesis One:

There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State?

**Table 3: r-value of Self-Esteem and Truant Behaviours among Secondary School Students**

Variable	Correlation, Sig. & N.	Self-Esteem	Truant Behaviours
Self-Esteem	Pearson Correlation	1	0.632
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	351	351
Truant Behaviours	Pearson Correlation	0.632	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	351	351

**Note: \* mean significant at 0.05 alpha level of Significance**

Table 3 indicated the relationship between self-esteem and truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State. The data revealed that the r. value is .632 and the p. value .004 which is less than .05 alpha level. The hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State is thereby rejected. It implies that, there is significant relationship between self-esteem and truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State.

### **Hypothesis Two:**

There is no significant difference in truant behaviours of secondary school students based on gender in Katsina State

**Table 4: t-test Analysis on Truant Behaviours of Students based on Gender**

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Standard Error	t <sub>tal</sub>	t <sub>tab</sub>	P-value	Remarks
<b>Truant Behaviour</b>	Male	160	61.523	7.843	349	0.85	3.51	1.96	0.001	Reject Ho
	Female	191	64.512	8.031						

The results in Table 4 showed that the calculated t-value of 3.51 was less than the critical t-value of 1.96 when tested at 0.05 level of significance with 349 degree of freedom. This shows that the result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference on truant behaviours of students based on gender is thereby rejected. This implies that, there is significant difference on truant behaviours of students based on gender.

### **Discussion**

Based on the research questions and hypotheses, the findings from the analysis of the data were discussed below:

The result of research question one states that, what is the level of self-esteem among secondary school students in Katsina State. The study revealed that there was a high level of self-esteem among secondary school students in Katsina State. The finding of this study is in support with the findings of Fakolade, and Oloruntoba, (2017) which revealed that self-esteem was high among learners with high ability learning outcomes. In addition, the findings of this study corroborate with the findings of Bada, et al (2021) study that revealed that there was a high level self-esteem based on gender among senior secondary school students. In the study Anyanwu and Emesi (2020) revealed that students' high self-esteem recorded a medium positive relationship with students' academic self-esteem.



The result of research question two states that, what is the prevalence of truant behaviours among secondary school students based on gender in Katsina State. There was a low level of truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State. The finding of this study is in support with the findings of Tali and Ahande (2024) that suggest that parental behaviours indicating high control and low freedom may reduce academic self-esteem and truant behaviour. In contrary, the finding of this study contradicts with the finding of Okwakpam and Okwakpam (2012) whose result of the study revealed: that, the student's level of truancy is high due to student's family background which contributes greatly to the deviant behaviour.

The result of hypothesis one states that, there is significant relationship between self-esteem and truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State. The finding of this study is in support with the findings of Onukwufor, et al (2015) result of the study which revealed: that, there was a positive correlation between students' attitude to school, self-control and truant behaviour. In addition, the finding of this study is corroborating with the findings of Tali and Ahande (2024) which suggest that truant behaviours indicating high control of self may reduce academic self-esteem. In contrary, the finding of this study contradicts with the finding of Onukwufor, et al (2015) result of the study revealed: that, there was a weak negative correlation between self-esteem and truant behaviour.

The result of hypothesis two states that, there is significant difference in truant behaviours of secondary school students based on gender in Katsina State. The finding of this study is in support with the findings of Oluremi (2013), who found a substantial difference in the manifestation of truancy behaviour among male and female secondary school students in his study. In addition, the findings of this study corroborate with the findings of Suhid and Aroff (2012), who stated that there are reported incidences of truancy among school students by genders, races, and religions. In contrary, the finding of this study contradicts with the finding of Fareo (2013) that, there was not a significant difference between male and female truants. In addendum, Oladejo, et al (2018), it revealed that, there is no significant difference between male and female students in their level of indulgence in truancy.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study has obviously shown that there is correlation between self-esteem and truant behaviours among senior secondary schools in Katsina state. The study revealed that there was a high level of self-esteem among secondary school students in Katsina State and there was a low level of truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State. The researcher concluded that, there is significant relationship between self-esteem and truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State, also there is significant difference based on gender in truant behaviours among secondary school students in Katsina State

### **Recommendations**

After the careful observation of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. That educational psychologists and school counsellors should be trained on how to encourage students to develop high self-esteem by making the students believe in their abilities to succeed.
2. Teacher should be familiar with students' self-esteem for easy identification and elimination of truant behaviours in order to improve students' school attendant and academic performance.
3. Teachers and parents should give both sexes (male and female students) equal opportunities to work independently and improve themselves toward a particular task and avoid giving preference to one sex over another which could affect their self-worth in learning.

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