



# *The Anambra Counsellor*

A PUBLICATION OF COUNSELLING ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (CASSON),

**ANAMBRA STATE CHAPTER**

**VOL. I No. 1 (Maiden Ed.)**

*January 2023*

# **MOTIVATION AND PEER GROUP AS CORRELATES OF STUDENTS' TRUANCY AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OKPE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF DELTA STATE.**

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## **Abstract**

*The study examined motivation and peer group factors as correlate of students' truancy in Okpe Local Government Area of Delta State Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Correlational research design was utilized. A sample of 450 students was drawn via proportional stratified sampling procedure and 5 Schools were drawn using simple random. Motivation Scale (MS), Peer Group scale (PGS) and truancy scale (TS) were utilized for collection of data. The reliability were established using cronbach alpha method of internal consistency which were obtained as motivation 0.768, peer-group 0.668, and truancy scale had 0.878. Linear and ANOVA coupled with regression were utilized to answer research questions and test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that motivation and peer-group relate significantly to students' truancy in Okpe Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. In the light of the discovery, recommendations were made including that guardians and educators ought to manage their kids/students in their selection of companions.*

**Key words:** Motivation, peer Group, truancy.

## **Introduction**

The school system was established as a tool for society to mold the interests, routines, and sense of discipline of the students. Hence regular school attendance is compulsory for students in order for them to be fully equipped academically so as to better their lives not only for themselves but the society at large. It is observed by the researcher that the majority of students from government schools are seen roaming the streets during school hours. Some students purposefully avoid the classroom when lessons are being taught, while others sneak out pretending to use the restroom. Parents who discovered that their sent-to-school children either do not show up at all or do so but do not enroll in classes have been disappointed by this.

Truancy is defined as any unauthorized absence from school that cannot be proven (Claes et al., 2009). It can take many different forms, from often arriving late to skipping one or more complete school days. Robin as cited by Odiase and Ekedama (2017), stated that truancy is any deliberate unlawful absence from obligatory schools. It is pertinent to note that it is truancy only when parents are not away of their children's absence from school. Truancy is the disappearance of a student from school without parental prior consent. The child leaves home and makes the impression that he is going to school, but instead, he engages in other activities. Ihedioha as cited by Amalu and Abang (2015) describes truancy as a conduct disorder and disruptive behavior problem at school which acts as an indication of independence and addiction problems endemic to every youngster.

The researcher has observed that truancy is a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the average student in Okpe Local Government Area of Delta state especially among those who attend public schools. Truancy hinders the realization of educational goals as it leads to poor academic performance of students and even drop out from school. In this study, the researcher is interested in looking at the relationship among school motivation, peer influence and truancy among senior secondary school students in Okpe Local Government Area of Delta State.

Motivation is one variable that might influence students truancy. Motivation allows learners to participate in learning activities and maintain their learning status Motivation is a state of mind that propels and sustains action in the direction of a goal. It is essential to learning and success in environments that are both unstructured and structured and span the lifecycle. For example, motivated students consistently engage in more activities, stick with them through to the end, achieve remarkable learning outcomes, and perform better on scholastic aptitude tests than their classmates (National Academics of Sciences Engineering and Medicine, 2018). Again motivation as seen by Odiase and Ekedama (2017), is a process that follows the needs, drives and goals of individual. It starts with a perception of lack in physiological and psychological state. This lack brings about agitation which makes the individual uneasy and reacts to ease the agitation. This action that is set up is the drive and it is purposive which is directed towards achieving a particular goal. The drive continues until the individual accomplishes the fancied objective. Students who have the drive to learn are more likely to remain in school than students who lack the drive to learn.

Academic motivation is a student's desire (as reflected in his or her approach, persistence, and level of interest) regarding academic subjects when the student's competence is judged against a standard of performance or excellence (Kevin McGrew 2008). Academic motivation is the aspiration and perseverance associated with achievement in academics of students. Academic motivation is improving success of students in their academic activities and to mitigate failures

in their academics and it is significantly affecting performance of students in the class rooms (K. Kandavel, Vasudevan 2022). 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. Academic motivation refers to the drive required to complete academic tasks and activities (Hanson et al., 2016).

Findings from the study conducted by Ilhan Iter (2021) showed that motivation acts as a potential source of risk that leads to absenteeism and indirectly reduces academic achievement through absenteeism. In other words, motivation was found to continue its effect on academic achievement by the mediation of absenteeism. This also shows that school absenteeism has a significant effect on explaining the relationship between motivation and academic achievement. The results provide a better understanding of the negative effects of motivation and absenteeism on the students' academic achievement. In another study conducted by Odiase and Ekedama (2017), it affirmed that motivation significantly relates to students' truancy. This means the degree of motivation a student gets, indicates his/her direction of truancy.

Ilhan Iter (2021) examined whether school absenteeism has a mediating effect on the relationship between a motivation and academic achievement. The study sample consisted of 350 middle-school students in Turkey. A path analysis was created to test the relationships between the study variables. Results showed that a motivation had both a direct and indirect effect on students' academic achievement. Absenteeism had a partial mediating effect on the relationship between a motivation and academic achievement.

Kouros, Shahrzad, Hamzeh (2011) examined the correlation between academic motivation and academic achievement among Tehran University students. It is a cross-sectional correlation study, 252 Tehran University students were required to fill the academic motivation questionnaire. Criterion for academic achievement was a mark which students themselves reported. Data were analyzed through using SPSS16 by means of Pearson Correlation coefficient. Data analysis indicated positive and significant correlation between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement. This implies that students' academic achievement requires coordination and interaction between different aspects of motivation.

Peer influence is another variable that might result to truancy among students. The transition from primary school; to secondary school is the stage where students make new friends and form identity among their friends as they are almost independent from home and it is this stage that they believe in their friends and thereby influenced by them. Peer influence is when **you choose to do something you wouldn't otherwise do**, because you want to feel accepted and

valued by your friends. It isn't just or always about doing something against your will (raisingchildren.net 2021).

Olusegun 2019 examined the impact of school absenteeism, parental factors and peer influence on the academic performance of junior secondary school basic science and technology students in Ibadan metropolis. Five research questions guided this study. The study is a survey with a population of 143,692 junior, secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis from where 800 students were selected using simple random sampling technique. Three instruments used are: "Students Attendance Record" (SAR) obtained from the school register. "Parental Factor and Peer Influence Questionnaire (PFPIQ),  $r=0.82$  and "Students Achievement Test" (SAT)  $r=0.79$ . Data collected was subjected to descriptive analysis of frequency counts, percentages and mean and inferential statistics using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed a significant relationship between absenteeism and students achievement ( $r=.284^*$ ,  $N=1091$ ,  $p<.05$ ). There was a positive significant relationship between peer influence and students achievement ( $r = .247^*$ ,  $n = 1091$ ,  $p<.05$ ), absenteeism from school, lack of positive support from parents and peer influence affects students' academic performance. Therefore, parents should support their children and monitor their activities while strong ties should exist between the school and the home to prevent absenteeism and negative peer influence.

Obiniu and Ozuri (2018) examined the influence of home background, peer group pressure and truancy among secondary school adolescent students of Delta State. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated to serve as a guide to the study. Correlational survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study consists of all students in all public secondary schools in the area of the study. A sample of 266 students were used for the study using the simple random sampling technique. A 4 point scale questionnaire designed by the researcher was used for data collection. Cronbach Alpha reliability was used to establish the reliability of the instrument with an  $r$ -value of 0.78. The statistical tools for answering the research questions and for testing the hypotheses were the Pearson  $r$ , coefficient of determination and the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA. Also, there is a significant relationship between peer pressure and truancy among secondary school students. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that parents should learn to be close to their wards and as well take note of the friends that they associate with as this will help to reduce the level of peer influence on the development of truant behaviours among students, Teachers and parents should help in proper monitoring of student activities so as to help students to maximize their potentials to the fullest and to be well adjusted in all ramification of lives.

The aim is to investigate the relationship among motivation and peer influence on students' truancy in Okpe Local Government Area of Delta State. This study was guided by the following research questions and hypotheses

- To what extent does motivation relate with students' truancy?
- To what extent does peer-group relate with students' truancy?
- Motivation does not significantly relate to students' truancy.
- Peer-group does not significantly relate to students' truancy.

## **Method**

The research design is correlational. The population comprises of all SS1 AND 11 students in the sixteen Government owned schools in Okpe Local Government Area. There were 2,195, (Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education, Okpe Local Government Area Orerokpe, Delta State 2023). A sample of 450 SSI and SS2 students were utilized. Using multi-stage sample technique, 5 schools out of the 16 government schools in Okpe were drawn via simple random sampling technique via balloting without replacement. This is because the schools possess the same characteristics of being government schools. Thereafter, proportional stratified random sampling was used to draw 450 SS1 and SS2 students. This is because the different schools were stratified and a proportion of 75% of the students in each school were used. One instrument with two subsections was used for this study. The two sub-scales are students motivation scale constructed by the researcher and peer pressure scales (PPS) adapted from national Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2005). The questionnaire was made up of four point scale which required the students to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the items. Two copies of the instrument were validated by two experts in measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined by Cronbach Alpha method of internal consistency. The reliability coefficient was obtained as 0.768 for students motivation scale (SMS), 0.668 for peer pressure and 0.821 for truancy. The coefficient values obtained are high enough to guarantee the use of instrument as a reliable one. Linear regression and Analysis of variance associated with regression were utilized to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses.

## **Results**

**Table 1: Linear Regression of the relationship between motivation and students' truancy and analysis of variance on motivation and students' truancy**

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	SE	B	Beta	N
Constant					51.031		
Motivation	.215	.046	.044	5.519	-.328	-.215	450
(ANOVA)							
	SS	df	MS	F-cal	Sig	Result	
Regression	660.727	1	660.727	21.694	.000	Significant	
						(p<0.05)	
Residual	13644.437	448	30.456				
Total	14305.164	449					

Result in Table 1 shows that (R) as 0.215, (R<sup>2</sup>) as 0.046, (Adj. R<sup>2</sup>) as 0.044, SE as 5.519. Based on the R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.046 it indicates that 4.6% of the variation in students'

truancy was as a result of their motivation. The calculated F-value as 21.694 with 1 and degrees of freedom and 448. While the significant value 0.000. F (1,448) 21.694, (p<0.05). This implies that motivation significantly relates to students' truancy.

Table 2 Linear Regression of the relationship between peer group and students' truancy

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	SE	B	Beta	N
Constant					34.925		
Peer group	0.150	0.023	0.020	5.586	0.270	0.150	450
(ANOVA)							
	SS	df	MS	F-cal	Sig	Result	
Regression	323.591	1	323.591	10.369	0.001	Significant	
						(p>0.05)	
Residual	13981.574	448	31.209				
Total	14305.164	449					

Result from Table reveals that (R) obtained as 0.150, the (R<sup>2</sup>) as 0.023, the (Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>)

as 0.020, SE as 5.586. Based on the R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.023 it indicates that only 2.3% of the variation in students' truancy was as a result of their peer-group. The calculated F-value obtained as 10.369 at 1 and degree of freedom 448. While the significant value 0.001. F (1,448) 10.369, (p>0.05). This implies that peer-group significantly relate to students' truancy.

## Discussion of Results

The result showed that motivation significantly relates to students' truancy. This means the degree of motivation a student gets, indicates his/her direction of truancy. The findings are in agreement with some previous studies. Oriahi (2009)

researched influence of motivation on student's scholastic execution in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State. The resultsshowed that students' motivation has high positive correlation in their academic performance. This work is similar to this present work in that students' motivation reduces truancy and this in turn improves their academic-performance. In the same vein, Eberendu and Okere (2015) researched on motivation to employees retention in federal medical centre Owerri the result also showed that motivation enhances performance. However, the study used employees retention which is dissimilar to this present study in terms of dependent variable which is truancy.

The outcome indicated that peer group significantly relates to students' truancy. This means that the choice of friends chosen by students can either encourage them to take their studies earnestly or discourage them from being studious. This study is alike to some previous work. Titilayo (2013) researched on nonattendance & malingering: peer factor on academic- performance of students in Ogun State. The result showed that peer- group factors contribute to nonattendance & malingering. Moreso, Komakech and Osuu (2014) carried a research on students; absenteeism. A silent killer of universal secondary education (USE) in Uganda. The study showed that peer-group influence causes students absenteeism in Uganda. However, the researcher did not review any dissimilar study to this present result.

## **Conclusion**

The study showed that motivation relates to students' truancy. By implication, students are less likely to involve in truancy if they are motivated to learn by their parents, teachers and significant others in their lives.

Moreso, the study also affirmed that peer-group relates to students' truancy. This implies that the choice of friends chosen by the students can positively or negatively affect them.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. It is prescribed that guardians ought to arouse their youngsters to learn by giving all the fundamental learning materials to learn in schools.
2. The school and government should provide good conducive environment for their students.
3. Government of Delta state should organize workshop, seminars that will orient students on the need to keep friends that will positively influence them.
4. The state ministry of education should include moral education in the curriculum and also ensure its full implementation as this will enable the students to be in the right frame of mind and also put up positive disposition toward being a truant.
5. Parents should occasionally check their children in school and also their



notes always when they return from school. They should also have the contacts of at least two teachers in the children school as to be abreast with their children's moral and academic well being in school.

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