

# **PSYCHO-DEMOGRAPHIC PREVALENCE OF TRUANCY AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN IHIALA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE**

## **Abstract**

The study investigated the Psycho-demographic prevalence of truancy among adolescents in Ihiala local government area of Anambra State. The study employed a descriptive survey design. The sample of 300 students was used for the study using simple random sampling (balloting). Four research questions were answered while four hypotheses were tested in the study. The instrument for the study was a questionnaire tagged “Psycho-demographic prevalence of Truancy Questionnaire (PDPTQ)”. The data collected were analyzed with mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested with z-test. From the analysis, it was concluded that male exhibit truant behaviour than female students. Also, the finding of the study showed that fear significantly influence prevalence of truancy among adolescence students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Parents and guardians should collaborate with school authorities and teachers to monitor students in and out of school compound to reduce the incidence of truancy

**Key Words:** Adolescents, Fear, Gender, Prevalence of truancy

## **Introduction**

Education is the combination of ideas, goals and activities that influence and influence personal behaviour and attitudes. Therefore, schools are created as representatives of society to shape the habits, interests and thoughts of children and to transmit the leadership model, culture, values and traditions from one generation to the next. But some students don't seem to understand why they should go to school. They do this by skipping classes or avoiding certain classes and extracurricular activities. This voluntary absence from school and classroom is often called truancy. Hence, the term truant behaviour means "truancy" and students who always like to stay away from learning and avoid classes are called truants (Gossain, 2013). Chukwuka (2013) defines truancy as “absenteeism from school without a valid reason”. Adekunle (2015) further stated that truancy means deliberately leaving school without permission, leaving school without permission, and avoiding special school hours. According to Gabb (2015), a person leaves home but does not

go to school or escape from school or class to engage in other activities he/she enjoys. Gullant and Lemonie (2017) also believe that rejection is a behaviour of avoiding school due to other supports outside the school or home. Rejection is associated with serious juvenile delinquency, and this negative behaviour has the potential to negatively impact academic achievement. Therefore, it is true that cases where the student is absent from school without a specific reason and without the knowledge of the parents can be considered as truancy behaviour (Abayomi, 2012). When the child engages in behaviour such as truancy from school, he will not have time to focus on his lessons, which will negatively affect the child's learning. This will lead the child to neglect his goals and in this case such a child will not be able to focus on his studies and his work will remain silent. In the case of a child who always skips class, such a child will miss many lessons and will not know what the teacher is teaching. Therefore, this child will not achieve anything in his education and work. Therefore, truancy is a harbinger of many risky behaviours among young people, such as sexual behaviour, illegal drug use, alcohol consumption, smoking and other negative behaviours (James, 2018). It has been suggested that the unsupervised time young people spend skipping school leads them to initiate and continue negative behaviours. Rejection in childhood may also be associated with health and well-being effects later in life. If negative behaviour is not controlled, it can cause children to turn into violent criminals in later ages (Ela, 2012). Research shows that adults who skip school at a young age are more likely to experience marital or work instability and have poorer mental health than adults who did not skip school during their youth (Kario, 2012; Kento, 2017). Is there a widespread problem of student rejection in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State? Many publications show that the risk of school absenteeism is high among students. For example, Wisconsin (2010) reports that approximately 15,600 (or 1.6%) students in Wisconsin public schools are absent from school each day. Garry (2011) reported

that approximately 1 million students per day are absent in public schools in New York City, the nation's largest public school system, with an average of 62,000 students, or 10%, absent in the nation's second largest public school system. Goto school every day. Although there is no exact data on the number of students playing matches in Nigeria in a day. Chukwuka (2013) believes that students who skip school are running away from something or running towards something. Harsh teachers, bullying in school, bad academics such as boring and bad classes, bad school environment, conflict in school, lack of other presentations and location of the school can be the reason for students' truancy or truancy rate.

However, the traffic rate over time is slightly different between boys and girls. Attwood and Croll (2017) stated that as children get older, the likelihood of truancy increases. Research shows that girls are less likely than boys to go to school early, and that girls are more likely than boys to skip school as they get older. Absenteeism is higher among boys than girls, but girls are twice as likely to be absent from school without parental permission. While female truants claim to engage in more negative behavior than male truants, and male truants view school more negatively than female truants, the tendency for fathers to encourage truancy more has been evaluated in almost all studies. Evaluation (Baskerville, 2019). McIntosh (2020) agrees when she says girls are more likely to be late than boys. This may be because women need more time for body, face and makeup. Additionally, Pengpid and Peltzer (2019) found in their own research that gender has an impact on the behaviour of young people in secondary school. They say men are more likely than women to skip school at a young age.

Fear may also prevent students from truancy. Sometimes there is no need to be afraid, but problems at school or at home may cause the child to be afraid of going to school. At school,

children may be subject to bullying, ridicule or physical threats from other children, may experience fear of ridicule, punishment or criticism from teachers or others, may experience difficulties with school work such as dyslexia (difficulty reading and speaking) or dyscalculia (difficulty understanding). math and mathematics), anxiety or fear of harm, such as fear of a school shooting. Students have different reasons for not going to school if they are dissatisfied with school or angry about going to school. Anxiety is a contributing factor to this behavior, which is sometimes referred to as school phobia. Research shows that adults who skip school at a young age are more likely to experience marital or work instability and mental health problems than adults who skip school at a young age (Azizi Yahya, 2010). Meanwhile, other researchers are concerned about the impact of absenteeism. In view of the above research, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the psychodemographic prevalence of truancy among youths in Ihiala Local Government of Anambra State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Schools are designed to act as representatives of society to form the habits, interests, thoughts and feelings of children and to transmit behavioural patterns of traditions, culture, customs and traditions from one generation to the next. However, some students do not go to school. Many of our young people are now skipping school and often parents think they will go to school. Once they leave school, they are free to engage in many types of juvenile delinquency, such as fighting, drug use, and other bad behaviour. The situation in our school is quite worrying.

The school has been offering higher education for many years. These issues impact instruction, administration, and overall student performance. It also affects learning in internal and external examinations. After leaving school without permission, students appear in unpopular places, streets and workplaces and engage in bullying, fighting, rape,

harassment, cultism, etc. behaviours that affect teaching and learning and reduce student learning. Neither teachers nor students are satisfied with the learning environment anymore. It is the concern that the researcher intended to work on the psycho-demographic prevalence of truancy behaviour among adolescence in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State.

### **Aim and Objectives of the study**

The aim of the study is to examine Psycho-demographic prevalence of truancy among adolescents in Ihiala local government area of Anambra State. Specifically this study intends to;

1. Investigate the extent gender influences prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State.
2. Determine the extent fear influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide this study

1. To what extent does gender influences prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State.
2. To what extent does fear influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State.

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses formulated and testable at 0.05 alpha level of significance guided the study:

1. Gender does not significantly influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State.
2. Fear does not significantly influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents'

students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State

## Methodology

The study employed descriptive survey research design. The area of study is Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State. The population of the study consist of the total number of public secondary schools in the area is (17) with an estimated population of 10,819 students with the sample size of 300 students from 10 selected schools in the local government area. 30 students will be selected from each of the school. The researcher will randomly and independently select the participants for the study using the simple random sampling (balloting). Self-constructed instrument titled; “Psycho-demographic prevalence of Truancy Questionnaire (PDPTQ)” was be used, comprises in a 4-point Likert scale format was used as instrument for collecting data from the respondents. “The instrument was validated and has high face, content and constructs validity and is suitable for the study. The reliability coefficient of the entire instrument was determined and found to be 0.82 using Pearson product moment. Data analysis was carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics using SPSS version 23 and presented on a single table for both research questions and hypotheses. It was tested at 0.05 alpha level”. [18]

## Results

**Research Question 1:** To what extent does gender influences prevalence of truancy among adolescents’ students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State

**Hypotheses 1:** Gender does not significantly influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents’ students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State.

**Table 1: Z-test summary of gender prevalence on truancy among students**

Categories	N	Mean	SD	z-value	2-tailed value	Remarks
Female	150	3.00	.65	-703	.482	significant
Male	150	3.02	.35			

$p > 0.05$

The result of z-test of differences on gender in Table 1 compared the mean level of female of 3.00 with that of male students of 3.02. This test yielded z-value of -703, which

was found to be significant at a 2-tailed value of .492. Since this significant value is greater than 0.05 that was used in testing the hypothesis; the test is considered not significant. Since the mean for male (3.02) is higher than that of female (3.00), it means, male prevalence of truancy is higher than that of female in Ihiala local government area of Anambra state.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent does fear influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State

**Hypotheses 2:** Fear does not significantly influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State

**Table 2: Z-test summary of fear prevalence on truancy among students**

Categories	N	Mean	SD	z-value	2-tailed value	Remarks
Truancy	122	2.28	.70	2.720	.007	Significant
Fear	178	2.16	.35			

P > 0.05

The result of z-test of differences in Table 2 compared the mean level of truancy is 2.28 with that of fear is 2.16. This test produced a z-value of 2.720, which was found to be significant at a 2-tailed value of 0.007. Since this significant value is greater than 0.05 that was used in testing the hypothesis, the test is considered not significant. Since the mean for fear (2.28) is higher than that of truancy (2.16), it means that there is high prevalence of truancy among students due to fear in Ihiala local government area of Anambra state.

The results obtained after data analysis are summarized below:

1. The finding of the study revealed that there is higher prevalence of truancy in male than female among adolescents' students in Ihiala local government area of Anambra state.

2. The finding of the study showed that fear significantly influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State

### **Discussion**

The finding of the study revealed that there is higher prevalence of truancy in male than female among adolescence students in Ihiala local government area of Anambra state. this present study is in agreement with the previews study by Malcolm (2021) who pointed that the number of learners in secondary schools admitting truancy was almost equal for boys and girls, the variation that exists in truancy levels of males and females is slight. Thought is slightly higher in boys than girls.

The finding of the study showed that fear significantly influence prevalence of truancy among adolescence students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State. In agreement with this study by Reids (1999) who reported that "At school, children may have truancy after experiencing Bullying, teasing or threats of physical harm from other children, fear of criticism, punishment or ridicule from a teacher or other school staff, earning difficulties, such as dyslexia (difficulty with reading and language) or dyscalculia (difficulty understanding math and numbers), Worry or intense fear about catastrophic events, such as fear of a school shooting".

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that male exhibit truant behaviour than female students. The finding of the study showed that fear significantly influence prevalence of truancy among adolescents' students in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State

### **Recommendation**

The following recommendations where made base on the findings of the study.

1. Parents and guardians should collaborate with school authorities and teachers to monitor students in and out of school compound to reduce the incidence of truancy.
2. Parents should be interested in the peer group or friends their child move with or keep and watch their activities with keen interest.

3. Teacher, Parents and the school principals should endeavour to be steadfast and be concerned with the task of making students to be responsible and discipline right from the youth, so that the nations expectation on them as future leaders may be attained.
4. The school authorities should put in place negative sanctions or punishments such as internal suspension with hard labour to truant students to serve as a deterrent to others.
5. Guidance and counselling coordinators in second cycle schools should do well to meet truant students from time to time and counsel them on the need to be punctual in class and to participate in teaching and learning
6. School administrators and teachers should check lateness and absenteeism among secondary school students. Student with high record of attendance should openly be rewarded in order to motivate students with the poor attendance records
7. The Ministry of Education and State Secondary Education Board should develop guidelines for the formulation of effective attendance policies in secondary schools to check truancy behaviour among students.

#### **REFERENCES**

1. Adekunle, E. S. (2015): Truancy: First Step to Teenage Problems. Washington: Justice  
Justice  
a. Bulletin.
2. Azizi Yahya, (2010) "Examination Leakages: Causes, Effects and Remedies". A Seminar  
Seminar  
a. Paper. 5 June (unedited), Cambridge.
3. Abayomi, M. O. (2012) Causes of Absenteeism from the Schools at Secondary Level.  
a. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*.2, (2), 291-298.
4. Attwood, A. C. & Croll, H. V. (2017) A comparison of teachers and pupils view on truancy  
truancy  
a. in Nigerian secondary schools. *The Nigeria Journal of Guidance and counseling*. 3  
b. No ( 1 ) 17-23.

5. Baskerville, V. (2019) *Disciple in Schools in Peretomode*, Introduction to Educational
  - a. Administration, Planning and Supervision. Lagos: *Joja Press Limited*.
6. Chukwuka, C. O. (2013): *Research in education* (7th edition). Toronto: Ally and Bacon.
7. Ela, U. (2012) Assistance for school administrator concerned about student truancy. *ERIC*
  - a. *DIGEST 1992-1998*
8. Garry, E. M. (2011) *Applied Behaviour Analysis in the Classroom*. Boston: Allyn & Bason.
9. Gabbs L, (1994) *Research Methods for Business and Social Studies Morogoro: Mzumbe*
  - a. Book Project.
10. Gosain, N. C. (2013) Excerpt from Personal Communication. U.S. Department of Education:
  - a. Wombs Joined Together. Canada. A Wiseman Org.
11. Gullant, I. &Lemonie, S. (2017) *Schools and persistent absentees* Oxford: Pergamou Press.
12. James, N. (2018) Psycho social determinates of truant behaviouramong secondary school
  - a. students. *Ife Psychologia: An international Journal*13(1) 188-1999.
13. Kento, I. F. (2017)*The adolescent and you* Lagos Mobolak Publishing Co.
14. McIntosh, J. E. (2000), Causes and Levels of Truancy among Secondary School Students: A
  - a. case study of Anambra State, Nigeria. *Problems of Education in 21st Century*, 45.
15. Pengpid, M & Peltzer, U. O. (2019) Truancy in Secondary School Pupils: Prevalence,
  - a. trajectories and Pupil Perspectives, *Research Paper in Education*, Vol. 21(4), 467-484.
  - b. 484.
16. Reids O. Y.(1999) Assessment of Truancy and Dropout among Primary School Pupils; A

- a. case study of Rufiji District in Cost Region. A thesis for Masters at University of
  - b. Dar es Salaam.
17. Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau (2000) Truancy reduction efforts: A best practice review. *Spectrum Journal of State Government*, 73 (4), 13-15
18. Ukwuije, Chinedu Kelechi. Coping Strategy of Delinquent behaviour Among Adolescent in Secondary School in Mbaitoli Local Government Area of IMO State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, Vol 4, no 10, pp 2587-2592 October 2023

UNDER PEER REVIEW