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EDITORIAL STATEMENT

The Nigerian Journal of Guidance and Counselling, Volume 29, Number 1, 2024, brings together a wealth of scholarly contributions that address various aspects of counselling, mental health, education, and youth development in Nigeria. In this edition, we proudly featured an array of meticulously researched, peer-reviewed articles that contribute to the academic discourse on pressing issues affecting individuals, families, and educational systems.

The first article, authored by Adjei, Kagbetor, and Agbemabiese, explored the effects of divorce on divorcees within the Assemblies of God Church in Sege, Tema, providing a crucial understanding of the emotional and spiritual toll of divorce in a faith-based community. In their paper, Aminu, Adeoye, Adio, and Iyanda examined the influence of parental socio-economic factors on the academic performance of secondary school students in Kwara State, providing valuable perspectives on how family dynamics impact educational outcomes. Ajibola, Ajokpaniovo, and Olayiwola-Adedola addressed attitudes towards family planning among married women in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, contributing to the discourse on reproductive health and family planning practices within Nigerian communities.

Ogunbade presented a critical analysis of the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria, offering valuable implications for counselling interventions aimed at addressing school absenteeism. Agubosi, Olowe, Oketoye, and Fashina focused on teachers' perceptions of the behavioural patterns of students with drug abuse issues in public secondary schools in Kwara State, contributing to a better understanding of the behavioural challenges students face and the role of guidance counsellors in addressing these issues. In their study, Balogun, Ikotun, Opoola, Raji, and Awoniyi examined teachers' awareness of dyslexia among lower and upper school students in Ondo State, highlighting the need for greater awareness and intervention strategies for students with learning difficulties. Gidado addressed the pivotal role of guidance counsellors in eradicating maladjusted behaviours in Nigerian schools, shedding light on the importance of counselling services in fostering healthy student development. Lastly, Oyedemi, Esere, and Afolabi explored the influence of peer groups on the academic performance of secondary school students in Ogbomoso Metropolis, offering valuable insights into the impact of peer relationships on students' academic success.

The Nigerian Journal of Guidance and Counselling is available on the Open Journal System (OJS) platform of the University of Ilorin portal. The Journal is indexed by African Journal Online (AJOL) thereby enabling it to maintain her leadership position as a repository for scientific knowledge in the area of Guidance and Counselling in Nigeria. The Editorial team of the Journal assures all our readers and contributors that our review process will continue to be thorough and efficient. We are determined to ensure that our readers/contributors are provided with most outstanding research and research-finding reportage in Guidance and Counselling and related areas. It is thus my unique pleasure to invite you to join our team on an intellectual journey through the pages of this combined edition.

Thank you.

Dr. Falilat A. Okesina
(Editor-in-Chief)

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The Nigerian Journal of Guidance and Counselling (TNJGC) (ISSN 0794-0831) is published annually by the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. The journal publishes well researched and well-articulated papers/articles on all issues relating to counselling and applied psychology which use a variety of appropriate approaches in the conduct of research and inquiry in theoretical, empirical and experimental studies. The editors invite submission of manuscripts from contributors for publication. Manuscripts are peer reviewed anonymously, and those that are accepted are published in the following issue of the journal.

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- Prepare manuscripts according to the prevailing edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
- Type all components of the manuscript using double space on A4 size sheets.
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FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRUANCY AMONG STUDENTS AS EXPRESSED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

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Abstract

Truancy has been found as one of the first indicator of academic failure, suspension, expulsion and delinquency. Reports showed that there is alarming rate of truancy in public secondary schools all over the nation. Various stakeholders in education sector are putting in their best to reduce truancy such as school counsellors, psychologists, teachers, school administrators, government, and parents, it is still persisting in various secondary schools in Nigeria. Therefore, this study investigated factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria: Implications for counselling. The population of the study comprised 893 teachers in both public and private schools in Ilorin metropolis. A sample of 287 from the three Local Government in Ilorin was used. This is a descriptive survey design. A self-developed questionnaire entitled "Factors Responsible for Truancy questionnaire (FRTQ)" was used. The data was analyzed based on the research question and the hypotheses. The only research question was answered using mean and rank order while the research hypotheses was tested using t- test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significant. The findings revealed that unmet basic needs like food, clothing or shelter; lack of interest or engagement in school activities and family issues such as parental neglect; peer pressure; bullying or harassment at school are common factors responsible for truancy among students. There were significant differences in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria based on gender and age while there were no significant differences on school type and educational qualification. It was recommended that Schools, in collaboration with government agencies and non-governmental organizations, should implement support programs for students facing unmet basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter. Initiatives like school feeding programmes, clothing drives, and partnerships with social services can help alleviate the factors that may lead students to skip school. Also, School Counsellors should advocate for school policies and programmes that can motivate students to long for schooling. Moreover, School Counsellors should create engaging school activities to foster a positive school climate.

Keywords: Truancy, Counselling, antisocial behaviour and school counsellors

Introduction

Truancy among secondary school students has become an escalating issue in numerous countries, attracting considerable attention from professionals such as counsellors, educators, parents, government authorities, and other stakeholders. This

behaviour serves as a precursor to numerous social problems, including indiscipline, which can have a far-reaching impact on students' lives and educational outcomes. In Nigeria, truancy remains one of the principal challenges in secondary schools, indicative of a deeper issue that often leads to other risky behaviours and life difficulties. The unmonitored time that truant students spend away from school frequently results in the initiation of high-risk activities, exacerbating the problem. Given its significant consequences, truancy as an act of indiscipline has garnered substantial academic and societal attention. It has been linked to school dropout rates, substance abuse, academic underachievement, and various forms of delinquency. According to Oluremi (2013), truancy is often associated with several behavioural disorders, such as theft, violence, drug abuse, examination malpractice, and sexual exploitation. These behavioural patterns disrupt the teaching-learning process to such an extent that some teachers feel powerless and disoriented in their efforts to impart knowledge to their students.

The concept of school truancy has been examined from various perspectives by professionals like counsellors, psychologists, sociologists, welfare experts, and educators. Osborne, Labor, Bangura, and Kangbai (2024) defined truancy as the deliberate act of skipping school without authorisation, recognising it as a complex issue with wide-ranging consequences for individual students, educational systems, and society. Seidu, Dadzie, and Ahinkorah (2021) observed that adolescents in high-income countries exhibit lower truancy rates compared to those in low- and middle-income countries. Similarly, Heyn, Gren-Landell, Melvin, and Gentle-Genitty (2019) defined truancy as the act of skipping classes or failing to attend school entirely without any justifiable reason.

Truancy is widely regarded as a destructive force that erodes the foundation of educational systems, posing numerous challenges for secondary school students and their educational trajectory (Adeyemi, 2011; Seidu, Ahinkorah, Darteh, Dadzie, Dickson, & Amu, 2019). The literature identifies several contributing factors to truancy. For example, adolescents engaging in sexual activities are often more likely to exhibit truant behaviour (James, Osborne, Bah, Margao, & Conteh-Barrat, 2022). Gosain (2013) highlighted four key factors typically associated with truancy: family dynamics, school environment, economic conditions, and individual student characteristics. Extensive research has documented the various predictors of truancy, with parental influence being one of the most significant. Factors such as parental involvement, support services, role modelling, family dynamics, and attitudes towards education play crucial roles in shaping students' truancy behaviours (Pascoe, Hetrick, & Parker, 2020; Van-Breda, 2014; Okpu & Agboola, 2020).

Research consistently shows that parental engagement in their child's education is directly linked to higher attendance rates. When parents are actively involved in their child's academic life—offering support, monitoring progress, and maintaining communication with teachers—students are more likely to attend school regularly. In contrast, a lack of parental involvement can contribute to truancy, as students may feel less accountable for their school attendance (Bunijevac, 2017; Kearney, 2016). Furthermore, factors such as parental neglect, poverty, substance abuse, lack of family support, household instability, and broken homes significantly contribute to truant behaviour (Maduabuchi, 2013; Van-Breda, 2014; Lees, Meredith, Kirkland, Bryant, & Squeglia, 2020). Additional student-specific factors, including issues related to

homework, health problems, social incompetence, low self-esteem, poor peer relationships, and underperformance in academics, also contribute to truancy (Maduabuchi, 2013; Gosain, 2013). Tackling the parental factors that influence truancy requires a cooperative approach involving schools, families, and communities. Educational institutions can implement initiatives to engage parents, provide resources and support, and establish clear communication channels to address truancy issues. Similarly, community organisations and social services can offer counselling, financial aid, and parenting programmes to assist families struggling with challenges that lead to truancy. By addressing parental factors comprehensively, stakeholders can collectively work to create an environment conducive to regular school attendance and academic success for all students. These parental influences often intersect with student-specific factors, which can further influence students' behaviours and contribute to truancy (Diaz, 2013; Reinke, Herman & Stormont, 2016; Ekpo & Ajake, 2017).

There are several student-specific factors that directly impact truancy behaviour. Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective interventions to reduce truancy rates. Peer influence, academic performance, motivation, family circumstances, mental health issues, substance abuse, and socio-economic challenges such as poverty, housing instability, and familial responsibilities are just some of the factors that can hinder regular school attendance. Students who face financial hardship or significant family obligations may prioritise work or caregiving over attending school. To address student-specific factors, a multi-dimensional approach is needed, focusing on interventions that support academic success, foster positive peer relationships, address mental health concerns, and create a supportive school environment. By taking a holistic approach to these factors, educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders can develop strategies that reduce truancy rates and support the overall well-being and academic achievement of students (Diaz, 2013; Basch, 2017; Hassan, Uddin, Younas, Mukta & Zahid, 2023).

The school environment plays a critical role in shaping students' performance, and there are several school-related factors that can contribute to the development of truant behaviours. The policies, practices, climate, and culture within a school can either encourage regular attendance or foster truancy. Key factors in this domain include the school's climate, teacher effectiveness, student support services, engagement with parents and the community, and the relevance and engagement of the curriculum (Ramberg, Laftman, Almquist, & Modin, 2019; Pennola, 2014; Oluremi, 2013). By addressing these factors comprehensively, schools can foster environments that promote regular attendance and student engagement. Collaborative efforts involving school staff, parents, community partners, and students themselves are essential to effectively combat truancy and enhance academic success (Kearney, 2018; Yoep, Tupang, Jai, Kuay, Paiwai, & Nor, 2016).

Teacher-related factors are also crucial in the development of truancy among secondary school students. Teachers' roles in fostering engagement and regular attendance are vital, but certain factors within their control may inadvertently contribute to truancy. These factors include teaching style, classroom environment, teacher-student relationships, attendance monitoring, curriculum relevance, and support for students' well-being. Professional development opportunities for teachers that focus on building

positive student relationships, implementing effective classroom management techniques, recognising signs of disengagement, and fostering a supportive school culture can help mitigate truancy. By addressing teacher-related factors and strengthening teacher-student relationships, educators can play a proactive role in reducing truancy and promoting regular attendance (Adeyemi, 2011; Kearney, 2016; Ramberg, Laftman, Almquist & Modin, 2019).

Gosain (2013) identified that school and family environments are the most influential factors contributing to truancy. Other variables, such as gender, school type, and school location, can also influence truancy behaviour. These demographic factors serve as moderating variables that may impact the occurrence of truancy, highlighting the complexity of the issue. Truancy is not only detrimental to the individual student but also to the overall learning environment, posing significant challenges to all stakeholders, including parents, students, schools, and society. The long-term consequences of persistent truancy include poor academic performance, hindered social development, and adverse effects on community welfare. Addressing truancy requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders to mitigate its impact and create an environment conducive to academic success (Pengpid & Peltzer, 2017; Seidu, Ahinkorah, Darteh, Dadzie, Dickson & Amu, 2019).

This study thus investigated factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria: Implications for counselling. The following research question was raised to guide the conduct of this study:

1. What are the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria?

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the conduct of the study:

1. there is no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on gender.
2. there is no significant difference in factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on age.
3. there is no significant difference in factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on school type.
4. there is no significant difference in factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on educational qualification.

By understanding the factors responsible for truancy, researchers can work towards creating a supportive, inclusive learning environment that promotes academic success and personal development for all students. Through collaborative efforts and sustained commitment, investigating factors responsible for truancy among secondary school students in Ilorin might pave the way for a brighter future for the youth of Ilorin and beyond.

Methodology

The research designed adopted for this study is descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Kwara State. For the purpose of this study, three Local Government Areas were selected from Ilorin. Multi-stage sampling technique was used, at stage one, a sample of 287 teachers was drawn from the three Local Government Areas in Ilorin including Ilorin East, Ilorin south and Ilorin west, using the simple random sampling techniques. At the second stage, a dip-hat simple random technique was used to select the locations where the respondents for the study would be found. Schools (private & public), from each of the three sampled Local Government Areas.

At the third stage, stratified sampling was used to place secondary schools into strata based on the variables under study which were: gender, school type, age and educational qualification. At the fourth stage, proportional sampling technique was used to select a total of 105, 95, 87 secondary school teachers from each of the three local governments LGAs of the study. A grand total of 287 secondary school teachers was selected from the Ilorin metropolis. The instrument used was a structured questionnaire entitled Factors Responsible for Truancy Questionnaire (FRTQ).

The questionnaire was of two sections: sections A and B. The Section A comprised demographic data. While the Section B contained 20 items on factors responsible for truancy among secondary school students. The items were patterned after a four-point Likert type with 4 points as the highest obtainable points and 1 point as the lowest obtainable point using Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Agree (SD). Content and face validity were ascertained by five lecturers in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin while the reliability of the instrument was established using test re-test method whereby 20 copies of the Questionnaire was administered to a group of respondents twice at an interval of four weeks to ascertain the reliability. The results obtained from the two tests was correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) and a coefficient of 0.65 was obtained, hence the instrument was adjudged reliable for the research. The data obtained were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and rank order for research question while t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to analyzed hypotheses at a level of significance 0.05.

Results

Research Question One: *What are the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers?*

Table 1: Mean and Rank Order Analysis of the Respondents' Expressions on the Factors Responsible for Truancy among Students

Item No.	In my opinion, the following are the factors responsible for truancy among students:	Mean	Rank
9	unmet basic needs like food, clothing or shelter	3.30	1 st
5	lack of interest or engagement in school activities	3.28	2 nd
1	family issues such as parental neglect	3.26	3 rd
2	peer pressure	3.15	4 th
6	bullying or harassment at school	3.04	5 th
10	classroom indiscipline	3.01	6 th
3	substance abuse	2.99	7 th
7	learning difficulties or academic struggles	2.96	8 th
4	mental health issues like depression	2.95	9 th
12	truancy normalization within the community or pressure group	2.91	10 th
13	difficulties getting to school	2.88	11 th
8	financial constraints affecting attendance (e.g., needing to work to support the family)	2.87	12 th
18	poor method of teaching	2.84	13 th
11	lack of positive role models or mentors	2.81	14 th
16	cultural or societal factors influencing attitudes toward education	2.79	15 th
15	negative experiences with authority figures at school	2.77	16 th
17	early signs of delinquency or involvement in crime	2.75	17 th
14	school environment issues such as safety concern	2.74	18 th
20	lack of motivation to study	2.68	19 th
19	unconducive learning environment	2.65	20 th

Table 1 presented the mean and rank order of the respondents' expressions on the factors responsible for truancy among students. The table indicated that items 9, 5 and 1 are the common factors responsible for truancy among students: unmet basic needs like food, clothing or shelter; lack of interest or engagement in school activities; and family issues such as parental neglect ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd with the mean scores of 3.30, 3.28 and 3.26 respectively. Likewise, items 14, 20 and 19 are the least factors responsible for truancy among students: school environment issues such as safety concern; lack of motivation to study; and unconducive learning environment ranked 18th, 19th and 20th with the mean scores of 2.74, 2.68 and 2.65 respectively. Since all the items have the mean scores that ranked above 2.50, this implies that unmet basic needs like food, clothing or shelter; lack of interest or engagement in school activities; family issues such as parental neglect; peer pressure; bullying or harassment at school are common factors responsible for truancy among students.

Hypotheses Testing

Four hypotheses were postulated and tested for this study. The hypotheses were tested using t-test and ANOVA statistical methods at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on gender*

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value showing difference in the Respondents' Expressions on the Factors Responsible for Truancy among Students Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. value	t-	p-value
Male	135	57.47	7.859	285	2.84*	1.96		.00
Female	152	59.69	5.244					

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 2 showed that the calculated t-value of 2.84 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 with a corresponding p-value of .00 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis one is rejected. This indicates that there is significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on gender.

Hypothesis Two: *There is no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on school type*

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value showing difference in the Respondents' Expressions on the Factors Responsible for Truancy among Students Based on School Type

School	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. value	t-	p-value
Private	115	58.98	6.327	285	.700	1.96		.485
Public	172	58.42	6.923					

Table 3 showed that the calculated t-value of .700 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 with a corresponding p-value of .485 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis is not rejected. This indicated that there is no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on school type

Hypothesis Three: *There is no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on age*

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing difference in the Respondents' Expressions on the Factors Responsible for Truancy among Students Based on Age

Source	SS	Df	Mean Square	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	663.989	2	331.995	7.78*	3.00	.001
Within Groups	12117.760	284	42.668			
Total	12781.749	286				

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 4 showed the calculated F-ratio of 7.78 is greater than the critical F-value of 3.00 with a corresponding p-value of .001 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria based on age. In order to ascertain where the significant difference lies, Scheffe Post-Hoc was carried out and the output is shown on Table 9.

Table 5: Scheffe post-hoc where the significant difference lies based on Age

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
18-27 years	70	56.11	
38 years and above	111		59.90
28-37 years	106		60.05
Sig.		1.000	.495

Table 5 showed that respondents who were between 18-27 years of age have a mean score of 56.11 (in subset 1), thus who were 38 years of age and above as well as those who were between 28-37 years have the highest mean scores of 59.90 and 60.05 (in subset 2) respectively, thus contributed to the significant difference.

Hypothesis Four: *There is no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on educational qualification*

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing difference in the Respondents' Expressions on the Factors Responsible for Truancy among Students Based on Educational Qualification

Source	SS	Df	Mean Square	Cal. ratio	F- ratio	Crit. ratio	F- p-value
Between Groups	144.919	3	48.306	1.08		2.60	.357
Within Groups	12636.831	283	44.653				
Total	12781.749	286					

Table 6 showed the calculated F-ratio of 1.08 is less than the critical F-value of 2.60 with a corresponding p-value of .357 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis is not rejected. Hence, there is no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on educational qualification.

Discussion

The finding of the study showed that unmet basic needs like food, clothing or shelter; lack of interest or engagement in school activities; family issues such as parental neglect; peer pressure; bullying or harassment at school are common factors responsible for truancy among students were the factors responsible for truancy. The finding agrees with the study of Kearney (2016) which found that unmet basic needs, family dysfunction, and negative school experiences, such as bullying, are closely linked to chronic absenteeism. Similarly, research by Gage, Sugai, Lunde, and DeLoreto (2019) indicated that students who experience food insecurity or housing instability are more likely to exhibit truancy, as these factors contribute to stress, fatigue, and disengagement from school (Pascoe, Hetrick & Parker, 2020). Furthermore, the finding relates to the study of Basch (2017) which identified some factors such as health-related issues, hunger and mental health problems.

Hypothesis one revealed that there was significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on gender. This suggests that male and female teachers perceived factors influencing truancy differently. This difference in perception could be due to a variety of reasons, including gender-based communication styles, different interactions with students, or varying expectations from male and female teachers. The finding relates to the study of Tatar and Emmanuel (2020) which found that male and female teachers often prioritize different aspects of students' behaviour and performance, which could extend to their understanding of truancy.

Hypothesis two revealed that there was no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on school type. This finding implies that teachers perceived that the issues leading to truancy are pervasive and not confined to a particular category of schools. This could be that despite the differences in school types, students might face similar challenges outside of school, such as poverty, lack of parental supervision, or involvement in child labor, which affect their school attendance uniformly. The finding

relates to the study of Okpu and Agboola (2020) which found that both public and private school students experienced truancy due to similar reasons, including poor academic performance, lack of interest in school activities, and peer pressure.

Hypothesis three revealed that there was significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin Nigeria based on age. The finding suggests that teachers of different ages may have varying experiences and perspectives towards students truant behaviour. The result of Scheffe post-hoc revealed that respondents who were 38 years of age and above as well as those who were between 28-37 years of age contributed more to the significant difference. This could be that older teachers, due to their maturity, may have a different understanding of the factors leading to truancy compared to younger teachers. The outcome of this study relates to the submission of Reinke, Herman and Stormont (2016) who asserted that younger teachers were more likely to adopt preventive approaches to managing classroom behaviour, while older teachers tended to use more reactive strategies. This difference in approach may explain why teachers of different ages might perceive the factors responsible for truancy differently.

Hypothesis four revealed that there was no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria based on educational qualification. This implies that teachers, regardless of their educational background, perceived the factors responsible for truancy similarly. This could be that the factors contributing to truancy might be universally recognized and understood among teachers, irrespective of their level of education. The finding supports the study of Ekpo and Ajake (2017) which found that teachers, irrespective of their qualifications, identified similar factors such as parental neglect, poverty, and lack of interest in school as primary factors responsible for truancy among students.

Conclusion

It was concluded that unmet basic needs like food, clothing or shelter; lack of interest or engagement in school activities; family issues such as parental neglect; peer pressure; bullying or harassment at school are common factors responsible for truancy among students. The study further revealed that there was no significant difference in the factors responsible for truancy among students as expressed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin, Nigeria based on school type and educational qualification but significant differences was found based on gender and age.

Implication for Counselling

The findings of this study have implications for counselling practice. This approach should consider not only the academic but also the socio-emotional and physical well-being of students. Since no significant difference was found in the factors responsible for truancy based on school type and educational qualification, it suggests that these issues are pervasive and affect students across different educational settings and regardless of the qualifications of their teachers. For counsellors, this means that intervention strategies should be comprehensive and adaptable to various school environments, with a focus on addressing the universal factors responsible for truancy among students. Counsellors can work closely with teachers to identify students who are

at risk of truancy due to unmet basic needs or family issues. Additionally, counsellors should advocate for school policies and programmes that address truancy, provide nutritional support, and create engaging school activities to foster a positive school climate.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

- Schools, in collaboration with government agencies and non-governmental organizations, should implement programs that provide support for students facing unmet basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Initiatives like school feeding programmes, clothing drives, and partnerships with social services can help alleviate the challenges that may lead students to skip school. Ensuring that students' basic needs are met can improve their overall well-being and reduce the likelihood of truancy.
- School managements should develop and enforce policies that address truancy comprehensively. This includes early identification of at-risk students, consistent monitoring of attendance, and timely intervention strategies.
- Teachers should also receive training to recognize the signs of truancy and understanding the underlying factors responsible for truancy.
- Counsellors should advocate for school policies and programmes that address bullying, provide nutritional support, and create engaging school activities to foster a positive school climate.

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