



**EFFECT OF REALITY BEHAVIOUR THERAPY (RBT) ON TRUANCY AMONG JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DAMATURU METROPOLIS, YOBE STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study investigated the Effect of Reality Behaviour Therapy (RBT) on truancy among junior secondary school students in Damaturu Metropolis, Yobe State, Nigeria. This study adopts quasi-experimental research designs. Specifically, the study employed the use of cohort quasi-experimental design. This design is aimed at comparison of post-test scores of the two cohorts. The population for the study comprised of all truant students in government day junior secondary school in Damaturu metropolis, Yobe state, Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used to select one hundred and sixty nine (169) truant students through class register record for the first term of 2019/2020 academic session. Data was collected in three different but interconnected phases viz: pre-treatment, treatment and post-treatment and was analysed using t-test and ANOVA. The result obtained shows that there was significant effect of reality behaviour therapy on truancy among junior secondary school students and also the effect of reality behaviour therapy was significantly differ according to the age of the student. The study recommended that counselling/Educational psychologists should intensify their effort to organize seminars on the implications of reality behaviour therapy as effective interventions on truancy rate among junior secondary school students; students in the school should be encouraged and trained on the effective usage of these interventions (reality behaviour therapy). This will make the students to adopt effective attitude towards truancy.*

**Keywords: Junior Secondary School, Students, Reality Behaviour Therapy and Truancy.**

**INTRODUCTION**

The development of any country depends largely on the quality of education that it gives to its citizens. It is generally believed that the basis for any true progress must start with the development of human resources. Education focuses attention in all round development of the student, not only in present age, but also in the past.

So also the home assists in laying the foundation for personality and character development of a child by transmitting the cultural values and norms. Therefore, formal education remains the viable vehicle for development and social mobilization of any community (Shittu, 2004). Despite the fact that education has been considered as the viable tool for national development, Sara (2014) observed that the rate of truancy being witnessed recently among students in Nigeria is becoming rampant and quite alarming which has posed serious threat to educational stakeholders which if not managed would not augur well to the educational sector.

Truancy is defined as absence that has not been authorized by the school and where leave has not been given or approved (Al-Hassan, 1992; Carol, 1996). Halilu (2001) also sees truancy as the act of keeping away from school for no any good reason. In this study, truancy is defined as a means of keeping away from school or leaving school without permission. It can also be seen as the inconsistency in coming to school by the student. Truants students tend to hide it from their parents or do it against their parent wishes or consents.

Therefore, because of the importance attached to education, nowadays, students are forming the negligent attitude of truancy and researchers have attributed such factors to include socio-economic factors (Reid, 2000; Kraus & Keltner, 2007; Adeloje, 2008; Okwakpam & Okwakpam, 2012); parental occupation (Ng'eno, 2012); parental education level (Omoraka, 2001; Davis-Kean, 2005; Muruwei, 2011); family size (Lai, 2011; Eremie, 2015). While other researchers like Orji (2013); Jordan and Kostandini (2012); Ajaja (2012); Eremie (2015) have attributed student truancy to school location. In addition, Oyebanji (1997) affirmed that any student who stays away from school, he/she will miss many lessons that will result to low and poor academic achievement. Therefore, the effect of truancy affects the academic achievement and the overall development of the student and also such students are indulged in to anti-social behaviour (Garry, 2001, Mburza, 2011). Truancy is a problem because students cannot benefit from the various activities that the school offers.

In the same vein, National Center for School Engagement (2005) has reported that both boys and girls are indulging in truancy behaviour. Similarly, Oluremi (2013) had found that there was significant difference between male and female manifestation of truancy behaviour. Similarly, Nkomo (2014) also found out that there was significant difference between male and female student involvement in disruptive anti-social behaviour in

schools. However, girls are more often truant because they are caring for their own children or other family members. However, boys are more likely to be engaged in truancy because of their peers. Similarly, both genders shows of romantic relationship cause truancy; moreover, girls are more likely to be truant due to their relationship with older boys.

Another worth factors to consider for truancy among junior secondary school students in Damaturu metropolis is the unfriendly school setting. Students who don't have friends or are being bullied are likely to miss school. Moreover, some students are facing peer group pressure also miss class. Teachers also attest that students who lack confidence in their mental abilities or have learning disabilities also tend to be truant. High truancy rates also are seen in schools that have unfriendly relationships between staff and students and a poor attendance policy. Similarly, being absent from school and class declines a student's ability to learn. It is difficult to succeed if a student misses too much work, because it is hard to catch up. In addition, truants students lose interest in school, which in upshot to low academic achievement. Nevertheless, truancy has known effects on students and has negative effects on the overall learning environment. It is against this background that the researchers investigated the effect of reality behaviour therapy on management of truancy among secondary school students in Damaturu Metropolis, Yobe State, Nigeria.

Reality Behaviour Therapy (RBT) popularly known as Reality Therapy seems to have developed as a reaction against many practices of psychoanalysis. RBT is a counselling intervention and problem-solving focuses on how actions of the student and the ability to choose a better future. It is the technique of counselling based on choice theory and aimed at assisting individuals to increase more effective control over their lives. According to RBT all hopeless persons have similar problems and they are unable to get along well with the people because human beings tend to control others (Dike, 2013).

Glasser and his mentor G.L Havington were drawn together by their similar doubts about traditional psychoanalysis. Glessner (1965) used the term "Reality Therapy" for the first time in formal manuscript title "Reality of Therapy as a realistic approach to young offender". The book made a basic foundation and the refinement of the techniques and principles of Reality Therapy. The book was specifically for application of reali-

ty therapy techniques in school system and the educator training centers. Later special institution for reality therapy was established. The approach does not permit the use of past event as an excuse for behaving in an irresponsible manner. The client under this approach must assume responsibility for what he does now, no matter what happened to him in the past. Until the individual can accept the fact that he/she is responsible for what he/she does, there can be a treatment (Omeogun, 2001).

Glasser (1965) sees the RBT as an approach that works but under conditions where the client behaviour is manipulated through reward, confrontation, motivation, learning and or punishment. RBT in this study refers to the process of scrutinizing and appraising current behaviour, attitude and needs of the students and makes plans to fulfill their needs in order to manage truancy. RBT was found to be effective in making individual to remain aware of what is needed and make rational choices that will ensure that such goals are achieved (Glasser, 1998; Asuzu & Akintola, 2009). RBT upholds that what really drives human beings is their need to belong and to be loved.

Moreover, RBT is a technique of counselling which teaches people how to manage their own lives, make more effective choices, and how to develop the strength to cope with the stresses and problems of life (Glasser, 1998; Glasser, 2003). Since the conceptualization of reality therapy, several of studies have been done showing its ability to effectively treat a variety of human problems and disorders pertaining to both the young and old people. These include the rearing of children (Glasser, 1960), delinquency (Cox, 2009; Glasser, 1998), paranoia and schizophrenia (Brink, 1981), Mathematics anxiety (Henker, 2009), dementia (Hanley, McGuire & Boyd, 1981), and communication and decision skills (Schaughency, 2007; Glasser, 2003). While these have confirmed the feasibility and resourcefulness of RBT as a therapeutic model, there are many other areas of human interaction that RBT can be applied to and shown to be useful. Therefore, in order to fill the gaps and add more to the existing literature, the present researchers deem it fit to investigate the effect of reality behaviour therapy on truancy among junior secondary school students in Damaturu Metropolis, Yobe State, Nigeria.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Attending and staying in school is the first step to achieve academic excellent and quality education. As much as students tend to avoid coming to school by cultivating high truancy rate would affects their academic achievement. Similarly, truancy has severely hampers the students to a narrow field of study and professions they can find nowadays. Also, truancy has make students to sidestep so many school and co-curricular activities. It is on these notes that the researchers investigated the effect of reality behaviour therapy on truancy among secondary school students in Damaturu Metropolis, Yobe State, Nigeria.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were to determine:

1. the effect of reality behaviour therapy on truancy among junior secondary school students in Damaturu Metropolis
2. weather the effect of reality behaviour therapy differ according to the age of the junior secondary school students in Damaturu Metropolis

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant effect of reality behaviour therapy on truancy among junior secondary school student in Damaturu Metropolis

**Hypothesis 2:** The effect of reality behaviour therapy do not significantly differ according to the age of the junior secondary school students in Damaturu Metropolis

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopts quasi-experimental research designs. Specifically, the study employed the cohort quasi-experimental design. This design is aimed at comparison of post-test scores of two or more cohorts (Kpolovie, 2010). Cohort design is use to investigate the effect of treatment conditions on a dependent variable by obtaining post-test scores

from one of a cohort and comparing them with pot-test scores of a cohorts control groups. The researchers are convinced that this present study; effect Reality Behaviour Therapy (RBT) on Truancy among Junior Secondary School Students in Damaturu Metropolis would be suitable with use of cohort quasi-experimental research design.

The population for the study comprised of all students in Junior Secondary School in Damaturu Metropolis, Yobe state, Nigeria. Two (2) co-educational public junior secondary schools were selected for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select one hundred and sixty nine (169) highly truant students from the two selected schools through class register record for the first term of 2019/2020 academic session. This record is also called an unobtrusive measure. It refers to data collection procedures, which involve no intrusion into the naturally occurring course of events. The unobtrusive method of data collection is useful because it eliminate the reaction of respondents to testing, and being observed, or interviewed, which often influence the nature of data obtained by researchers (Awotunde & Ugodulunwa, 2004). This method is also useful as supplementary to the use of interviews and questionnaires because it provides a useful way of checking the validity of data they yielded. However, the sampled participants were divided into 2 groups for each school selected, one group formed reality behaviour therapy class and the other group served as control group.

The study was carried out in three different but interconnected phases viz: pre-treatment, treatment and post-treatment. At the pre-treatment, a preliminary meeting was organized to familiarize with the selected participant for the study. At the treatment stage participants in the experimental group only were exposed to 8 sessions of treatment using reality behaviour therapy. Each session covered an average of 1 hour and twice in a week. Though the control group was not treated, they were exposed to a lecture on “Drug Abuse” for 8 sessions as well. At the post treatment stage the class register was used to check the number of absents of the truant student in the experimental group and those in the control group. Paired sample t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical analysis was employed to analyze the data for the study. Paired sample t-test was used so

as to establish any significant difference in the truancy behaviour of participant in experimental and control group while ANOVA was used to test the significant difference between the age group of the student.

## RESULTS

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant effect of reality behaviour therapy on management of truancy among secondary school student

Table 1: Summary of paired sample t-test of Students Exposed to Reality Behaviour Therapy and those exposed to Drug Abuse lectures

Group	N	Mean	t-value	P-value	Remark
Reality Behaviour Therapy	94	38.63			
			-8.11	.000	*Significant
Control	75	58.87			

\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$

The result in table 1 showed that there was significant effect of reality behaviour therapy on management of truancy between government day junior secondary school students exposed to reality behaviour therapy and those in the control group ( $t = -8.11$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). The mean value of the table further revealed that the students in experimental group had lower absence mean marks than their counterpart in the control group. This further meant that the treatment had significant effect on truancy behaviour of the students.

**Hypothesis Two:** The effect of reality behaviour therapy do not significantly differ according to the age of the students

Table 2: Summary of one way ANOVA on the effect of Reality Behaviour Therapy according to the age of the students

S/N	Variables	Sum of Square	Mean	Sign
	Sum of square within groups	660.077	330.039	0.004
		4841.514	56.959	
	Total	5501.591	43.0541	

Table 2 showed the mean score of age group was 330.039 and 56.959 while the p-value is .004. This means that there was significant age difference in respond to reality behaviour therapy of government day junior secondary school students in Damaturu metropolis, Yobe state. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that, the effect of reality behaviour therapy do not significantly differ according to the age of the students is hereby rejected.

## **DISCUSSION**

The result in the Table 1 showed that, there was significant effect of RBT intervention on truancy among students exposed to reality behaviour therapy. The mean value of the table further revealed that the students in reality behaviour therapy had lower truancy rate than their counterpart in the control group. This further meant that the treatment had significant effect on truancy behaviour of secondary school students. This finding is in line with the previous findings of Glasser (1998); Asuzu and Akintola (2009) who found that reality behaviour therapy was effective in making individual to remain aware of what is needed and make choices that will ensure that such goals are achieved.

The result in the Table 2 showed that there was significant difference in the age group of the student treated with RBT. Since the conceptualization of reality therapy, several of studies have been done showing its ability to effectively treat a variety of human problems and disorders pertaining to both the young and old. These include the rearing of children (Glasser, 1965), delinquency (Cox, 2009; Glasser, 1998), paranoia and schizophrenia (Brink, 1981), Mathematics anxiety (Henker, 2009), dementia (Hanley, McGuire & Boyd, 1981), and communication and decision skills (Schaughency, 2007; Glasser, 1980). While these have established the viability and versatility of reality therapy as a therapeutic model, there are many other areas of human interaction that reality therapy can be applied to and shown to be useful.

## **CONCLUSION**

Base on the findings of this study, persistent high truancy rate of secondary school students need not to continue forever. There is hope that with the use of reality behaviour therapy, the situation can be changed for the better. The study discovered that reality behaviour therapy has an effect on the management of truancy be-



haviour among secondary school students in the school. By and large, it was also concluded from this study that reality behaviour therapy has a great effect on the students' truancy rate in the school. By implication, students' truancy behaviour can be managed drastically through reality behaviour therapy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Counselling/Educational psychologists should intensify their effort to organize seminars on the implications of reality behaviour therapy as effective interventions towards management of truancy rate among secondary school students.
2. The students in the school should be encouraged and trained on the effective usage of these interventions (reality behaviour therapy). This will make the students to adopt effective attitude towards management of truancy rate.

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