

Truancy, Indiscipline and Peer Pressure as Correlates of Students' Academic Performance in Social Studies in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure as correlates of students' academic performance in social studies in Upper Basic Schools in Ido/Osi Government Area of Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study adopted correlational research design. The sample of this study was made up 100 upper basic 3 students from 5 out of 16 public upper basic schools in Ido/Osi LGA of Ekiti State, Nigeria was selected using multistage sampling techniques. The instruments used for data collection were Truancy, Indiscipline and Peer-Pressure Questionnaire (TIPPQ) and result of basic education certificate examination (BECE) for 2022 set. The result of BECE and TIPPQ used was validated by two experts in social studies and one expert in measurement and evaluation. TIPPQ was trial tested which yielded the reliability coefficient of 0.88 using Cronbach Alpha. Three research questions raised in the study were answered using multiple regression analysis while the three null hypotheses formulated in the study were tested using ANOVA of regression analysis. The study revealed among other that there is significant relationship between truancy and students academic performance [$F_{1, 99} = 34.737$; $p < 0.05$]. There is significant relationship between indiscipline and students academic performance [$F_{1, 99} = 12.009$; $p < 0.05$]. There is significant relationship between peer pressure and students' academic performance [$F_{1, 99} = 10.319$; $p < 0.05$]. It was recommended among that, to improve students' academic performance in social studies, school administrators including principals and vice-principals should set up disciplinary committee reduce or curb truancy, indiscipline and peer group among students in upper basic schools.

Keywords: truancy, indiscipline, peer pressure and students' academic performance

1. Introduction

Education is the primary agent of transformation towards sustainable development as it increases people's capacities to transform their visions for society into reality

(Ajayi, 2019). Education plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual's well-being and opportunities for better living. It ensures the acquisition of knowledge and skills that enable

individuals to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life. This increase in productivity also leads towards new sources of earning which enhances the economic and technological growth of a country (Moola, 2015). Social Studies as a school subject considered as comparatively new in the Nigerian school. The institutionalization of Social Studies as a curriculum subject rose out of the realization that the subject study of man and his society was not adequately covered by one discipline in either Social Science or Humanities. Presently in Nigeria, Social Studies is one of the core subjects in primary and junior secondary school curricula (FGN, 2013). This implies that Social Studies is compulsory for all students in these categories of Nigerian schools.

Mkpa (2019) opine that the recognition accorded to Social Studies seems to be derived from the potential of the subject for achieving certain desirable goals for general education in Nigeria. However, despite the importance of Social Studies to individuals and nation at large, it seems that students' academic performance in the subject is not encouraging particularly in external examinations such as basic education certificate examination. The poor academic performance of students in Social Studies examinations in the recent years appears to have contributed to the public outcry about declining educational system in Nigeria. Various researchers such Ajayi and Ajayi (2023), Ajayi, Aboho and Ajayi (2018) and Johnson (2017) investigated the major causes of students' poor performance in Social Studies. Prominent among the factors found include poor teaching methods, poor teachers' classroom practices, shortage of qualified professional teachers, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate teaching equipment and facilities.

Ajayi (2017) also concluded that teachers' content knowledge, qualifications and experience are also some of the contributing factors to students' poor performance. As a results of the above, series of recommendations were made yet the academic performance seems not improving. However, the researchers observed that some social related problems may have the potential of causing students' academic performance in upper basic schools. Social related problems are disruptive behaviours of students which are against school or class routines, practices, and rules as an institution. These anti-social problems may include truancy,

indiscipline, and peer-pressure.

Truancy is one of the major antisocial discipline problems among upper basic school students in Nigeria. Truancy is unapproved absence from school, usually without a parent's knowledge. Also, truancy is an act of or practice of deliberately staying away from school without any acceptance reason, whether or not the parents or guardians know and approve of it (Fugleman & Richardson, 2011). Truancy refers to any international unauthorized or illegal absence from compulsory schooling. It describes absence from school caused by students of their own free will and does not refer to excused absence from school. There are four main truancy; Students being in school but absent in class, students neither in school nor in the classroom but at home, students who keep away from the class as a result of the difficulty in school subject of dislike for the subject teachers and those that are neither at home nor in the classroom (Ajayi, 2014).

Truancy is the failure of an absentee student to obtain permission from parents and school (Osarenren, 2016). This implies that that truancy occurs if a student is absent without an excuse from parent/guardian or school. It is noted that student who stay away from school without permission will not only be left out in the learning process, but they may also probably end up engaging in antisocial behaviour such as drug abuse, gangsterism, bullying, alcohol consumption, free and unregulated sex, gambling and loitering with their negative consequences and experience. Ajayi (2019) opine that truants exhibit class disruptive behaviour such as truancy, absenteeism, tardiness, cutting classes that constitute an impediment to a meaningful teaching and learning process. It appears that truants may have poor academic performance in school examinations as they may miss classes that would have improve their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Indiscipline in school is another social problem that disrupts and disturbs teaching and learning and the smooth social interaction in classroom functioning (Jolasanmi, 2017). It appears that a number of acts of indiscipline are directed against constituted authorities and established rules in upper basic schools. An example of indiscipline among students is refusal to wear the appropriate school uniform and out of school boundaries without formal permission. It appears that the respect which teachers

command among students had been seriously worn-off. Some teachers have not done much to help the situation by their actions and this seems to have made the teachers to reduce their commitment towards effective teaching in schools which in turn may lead to students' poor performance in Social Studies. It was observed that indiscipline hinders effective teaching and learning, creates violent and unsafe environment within a school community which in turn may cause poor academic performance.

Peer pressure refers to the influence exerted by a peer-group in encouraging a person to change his or her attitudes, values or behaviours in order to conform to group norms (Ajayi, 2017). In young people, students peer pressure is considered as one of the most frequently referred to under forms of peer pressure. It is particularly common because most youth spend a lot of time in fixed groups (schools and subgroups within them) regardless of their opinion of those groups. In addition to this, they may lack the maturity to handle pressure from 'friends'. Also, young people are more willing to behave negatively towards those who are not members of their own peer groups. However, youth peer pressure can also have positive effects. For example, if one is involved with a group of people that are ambitious and working to succeed, one might feel pressured to follow suit to avoid feeling excluded from the group.

Ajayi (2019) opine that peer groups are person of same age group, friends or equals with whom the child shares certain social characteristics. This social world to which they belongs could be one in which they share same language, values, norms and mode of interaction which may not be understood by the adults. However, it is through the peer pressure that students are most likely to be introduced and involved in negative or positive behaviours. Positive behaviours such as study group and discipline and negative behaviours such as drinking, smoking, indecent act and drop out of school which may tend to affect their academic performance. Peer pressure may affect the performance of students in Social Studies in secondary school. The peer group seems to be a source of affection, sympathy, understanding, and a place for experimentation among students in secondary schools. It appears that students who are well-liked by many peers may display higher levels of ego development and secure attachment, as well as better interactions with their best friends. Wentzel

(2011) opined that from a social competency viewpoint, it is likely that students who have difficulty establishing themselves in a peer group may also have academic difficulties in school. It is observed that majority of students who exhibit negative social behaviours in schools inherited it from their peers and the behaviours seem to have negative influence on their attitude towards learning which in turn may lead to poor academic performance.

Academic performance refers to the performance of a student in school. Ajayi and Ogbeba (2017) defined academic performance to mean the manner in which students deal with their studies and cope with or accomplish different assignments or examination given to them by their instructors within a period of time. In Nigeria, the performance of students appears to be failing to meet minimum learning requirements to acquire basic skills and competence. As a result, poor academic achievement seems to be the order of the day reflected in the students' examinations and test score. Further, the result of students in basic education certificate examination from 2010 to 2022 sessions proved that most candidates are below credit level (Ekiti State Ministry of Education, 2022). The researchers observed that the attitude of students towards the learning of Social Studies is not encouraging and the likely reasons for this poor attitude may be due to social related problems such as truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure which in turn may affect students academic performance.

The researchers observed that, indiscipline is very rampant in upper basic schools. The cases of beating of teachers by students have been reported frequently in recent time and this has led to closure of schools which literarily means disruption of academic activities. In the same vein, students who involved in truancy may find it difficult to understand or perform well in social studies since social studies entail demonstration or hands-on activities that must be attended by students for effective learning. The objectives of upper basic education in Nigeria are to provide students with academic and vocational skills as well as moral ethics, but it is quite unfortunate that these objectives have not been fully achieved due to the poor academic performance in most subjects especially social studies. Thus, the researchers opine that social related problems such as truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure may tend

to affect students academic performance in social studies. However, it is scarcity of study to clearly show if truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure have any relationship with students academic performance in social studies that necessitate this study. In response to this problem, this study investigated if truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure has any relationship with students' academic performance in social studies in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate truancy, indiscipline and peer-pressure as correlates of students' academic performance in social studies in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Specifically, the purpose of the study is to:

- 1) Investigate which of the identified anti-social problems is the most prominent among students in upper basic schools.
- 2) Investigate the relationship between truancy and academic performance of students in social studies.
- 3) Investigate the relationship between indiscipline and academic performance of students in social studies.
- 4) Investigate the relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of students in social studies.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- 1) Which of the identified anti-social problems is the most prominent among students in upper basic schools?
- 2) What is the relationship between truancy and academic performance of students in social studies?
- 3) Is there any relationship between indiscipline and academic performance of students in social studies?
- 4) What is the relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of students in social studies?

1.3 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested:

- 1) The relationship between truancy and students' academic performance in

Social Studies is not significant.

- 2) There is no significant relationship between indiscipline and students' academic performance in Social Studies.
- 3) There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and students' academic performance in Social Studies.

1.4 Research Design and Procedure

The study adopted correlational research design. The target population for the study consisted of all students offering Social Studies in Upper Basic (UB 3) students in all sixteen (16) public upper basic schools in Ido/Osi Local Government Area of Ekiti State, Nigeria. The sample for the study consisted of 100 upper basic 3 students in five out of sixteen public secondary schools in Ido/Osi Local Government Area of Ekiti State. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select the sample. The first stage was selection of five upper basic schools using simple random sampling technique. The second stage was selection of 20 Social Studies students from each of the five schools using simple random sampling technique. The instruments used for data collection were Truancy, Indiscipline and Peer-Pressure Questionnaire (TIPPQ) and result of basic education certificate examination (BECE) for 2022 set.

TIPPQ consists of two sections, A and B. Section 'A' focuses on the demographic variables of the respondents while section 'B' covers 30 items on truancy, indiscipline and peer-pressure. The questionnaire was patterned on four-Likert rate of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The result of BECE and TIPPQ used was validated by two experts in social studies and one expert in measurement and evaluation. TIPPQ was trial tested which yielded the reliability coefficient of 0.88 using Cronbach Alpha. The instrument was administered by the researcher with the assistance of the three trained research assistants after taking permission from the principals of the sampled schools. The respondents were given instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. The face-to-face method was used in the distribution of 100 copies of the questionnaire. To avoid missing copies of the questionnaire, the questionnaires were given to the respondents and collected by the research assistants the same day. The research questions were answered using multiple regression

analysis. While the null hypotheses were tested using ANOVA of regression analysis to investigate the extent to which truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure account for academic performance of students in social studies in upper basic school in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

2. Results

2.1 Research Question One

Which of the identified anti-social problems is the most prominent among students in upper basic schools? The answer to research question one is contained in Table 1.

Table 1. Ranking of Anti-social problems among upper basic schools

S/N	Anti-social problems	Frequency count (%)	Rank
1.	Peer Pressure	42 (42%)	1 st

2.	Indiscipline	35 (35%)	2 nd
3.	Truancy	23 (23%)	3 rd
Total		(100) 100%	

Table 1 shows the ranking of the identified anti-social problems among students in upper basic schools. The result indicated that peer pressure has the highest ranking with 42%. However, indiscipline and truancy were ranked 2nd (35%) and 3rd (23%) respectively. This implies that peer pressure is the most prominent among the anti-social problems identified among students in upper basic schools in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

2.2 Research Question Two

What is the relationship between truancy and academic performance of students in social studies? The answer to research question one is contained in Table 2.

Table 2. Regression Analysis of Truancy and Students' Academic Performance

Model	N	R	R Square (R ²)	Adjusted Square (Adj. R ²)	R Std. Error of the Estimate (SEE)	R ² %	Durbin-Watson
1	100	.678 ^a	.460	.451	.99436	46.0	2.212

Table 2 shows the regression analysis of the relationship between truancy and academic performance of students in social studies in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria. The result indicated that the correlation between truancy and academic performance of students in social studies is 0.678 with a coefficient of determination of 0.460. This means that 46.0% of the variation in academic performance in social studies can be attributed to truancy among

upper basic students in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

2.3 Research Question Three

Is there any relationship between indiscipline and academic performance of students in social studies? The answer to research question three is contained in Table 3.

Table 3. Regression Analysis of Indiscipline and Students' Academic Performance

Model	N	R	R Square (R ²)	Adjusted Square (Adj. R ²)	R Std. Error of the Estimate (SEE)	R ² %	Durbin-Watson
1	100	.762 ^a	.581	.563	1.02236	58.1	2.077

Table 3 shows the regression analysis of the relationship between indiscipline and academic performance of students in social studies in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria. The result indicated that the correlation between indiscipline and academic performance of students in social studies is 0.762 with a coefficient of determination of 0.581. This means that 58.1% of the variation in academic performance in social

studies can be attributed to indiscipline among upper basic students in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

2.4 Research Question Four

What is the relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of students in social studies? The answer to research question three is contained in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression Analysis of Peer Pressure and Students' Academic Performance

Model	N	R	R Square (R ²)	Adjusted Square (Adj. R ²)	R	Std. Error of the Estimate (SEE)	R ² %	Durbin-Watson
1	100	.798 ^a	.637	.613		1.1105	63.7	1.9107

Table 4 shows the regression analysis of the relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of students in social studies in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria. The result indicated that the correlation between peer pressure and academic performance of students in social studies is 0.798 with a coefficient of determination of 0.637. This means that 63.7% of the variation in academic

performance in social studies can be attributed to peer-pressure among upper basic students in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

2.5 Hypothesis One

The relationship between truancy and students' academic performance in Social Studies is not significant.

Table 5. Result of Regression Analysis Relationship between Truancy and Students' Academic Performance in Social Studies

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F.	p-value	Remark
1	Regression	436.878	1	436.878	9.981	.001	Significant relationship
	Residual	3404.213	98	34.737			
	Total	3841.091	99				

- Predictors (Constant): Truancy
- Dependent Variable: Students Academic Performance

Regression analysis result in Table 5 reveals that there is significant relationship between truancy and academic performance of students [F1, 99 = 34.737; p<0.05]. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between truancy and academic performance of students in Social Studies in

Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

2.6 Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between indiscipline and students' academic performance in Social Studies.

Table 6. Result of Regression Analysis Relationship between Indiscipline and Students' Academic Performance in Social Studies

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F.	p-value	Remark
1	Regression	396.982	1	396.982	12.009	.000	Significant relationship
	Residual	3798.339	98	38.759			
	Total	4195.321	99				

- Predictors (Constant): Indiscipline
- Dependent Variable: Students Academic Performance

Regression analysis result in Table 6 reveals that there is significant relationship between indiscipline and academic performance of

students [F1, 99 = 12.009; p<0.05]. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between

indiscipline and academic performance of students in Social Studies in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and students' academic performance in Social Studies.

2.7 Hypothesis Three

Table 7. Result of Regression Analysis Relationship between Peer Pressure and Students' Academic Performance in Social Studies

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F.	p-value	Remark
1	Regression	491.092	1	491.092	10.319	.000	Significant relationship
	Residual	4098.002	98	41.816			
	Total	4589.094	99				

- Predictors (Constant): Peer Pressure
- Dependent Variable: Students Academic Performance

Regression analysis result in Table 7 reveals that there is significant relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of students [F1, 99 = 10.319; p<0.05]. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of students in Social Studies in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

3. Discussion of Findings

The study investigated truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure as correlates of students' academic performance in social studies in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The finding of the study revealed that peer pressure is the most prominent among the social problems identified among students learning Social Studies in secondary schools. The finding is in conformity with the finding of Adeniyi and Kolawole (2015) that peer influence is the most prominent among the problems being faced by students in secondary schools. The finding is also in line with the finding of Mosha (2017) that peer influence is one of the social problems that cannot be easily control in secondary schools.

The finding of the study revealed that there is significant relationship between truancy and students' performance in Social Studies in upper basic schools in Ido-Osi LGA, Ekiti State. This implies that truancy contributes to students' poor academic performance in Social Studies in upper basic schools. The finding is in line with the finding of Aliobu (2015) that truancy has significant influence on students' performance in biology in secondary schools. The finding also agreed with Ali (2014) that one of the social

problems that negatively affect students' performance in agricultural science in upper basic schools is truancy. However, the finding disagreed with the finding of Crede and Kieszczynka (2010) that regular school attendance does not guarantee academic success probably because many students may show up in school without actually participate in learning activities.

The finding of the study revealed that there is significant relationship between indiscipline and students' academic performance in Social Studies in upper basic schools. This implies that indiscipline contributes to students' poor academic performance in Social Studies in upper basic schools, that is, indiscipline students are tend to have poor academic performance. The finding in agreement with the finding of Simuforsa and Rosemary (2014) that indiscipline students cannot perform excellently like disciplined students in secondary schools. The finding also concurred with the finding of Dafiaghor (2011) that indiscipline is a critical social problem capable of reducing students' performance in commerce in secondary schools.

The finding of the study revealed that there is significant relationship between peer pressure and students' academic performance in Social Studies in upper basic schools.

This implies that peer pressure contributes to students' poor academic performance in Social Studies in upper basic schools. The finding of the study coincides with the finding of Omotere (2011) that peer group influence contributes to adolescents' performance. The finding also

agreed with the finding of Bankole and Ogunsakin (2015) that peer group had strong influence on the academic performance of students in Basic Science in secondary schools. The finding showed that students who had positive peer group recorded higher academic performance while those who had negative peer group influence experienced poor academic performance in Social Studies.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that peer pressure was the most prominent among the social problems in upper basic schools in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria. Furthermore, it was concluded that truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure are determinant of students' academic performance in social studies in Ido-Osi, Ekiti State, Nigeria. This means that there will be an improvement in academic performance of students in social studies, if parents and educational administrators can set up plans and strategies to reduce or curb truancy, indiscipline and negative peer pressure among students in upper basic schools.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

- 1) To improve students' academic performance in social studies, school administrators including principals and vice-principals should set up disciplinary committee reduce or curb truancy, indiscipline and peer group among students in upper basic schools.
- 2) Schools should co-opted parents on how to combat truancy among Social Studies students in secondary school. Teachers and parents should help in proper monitoring of student activities curb truancy, indiscipline and peer pressure in order to enhance academic performance of students in social studies.
- 3) Symposium should be organized for students on the dangers of truancy, indiscipline and peer group.

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