

Effect of Token Economy Counselling Technique on Truancy Behavior among Primary School Pupils in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area, Ogun State

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Abstract

The study centered on the effect of token economy counselling technique on truancy behavior among primary school pupils in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State. Four objectives, research questions and hypothesis were developed in the course of the study. A true experimental and simple random technique was used in selecting 150 pupils from an intact class out of which male are 87 and female are 63. The four research questions and the hypothesis which sort to find out the effect of the technique were answered and tested at 0.05 level of significant and ANCOVA was used to analyse the result. The instrument used are class attendance register and pupils truancy behavior questionnaire (PTBQ). From the findings it was recommended that training of counsellor should be organized through seminars, workshop and symposium with more emphasis on token economy counselling technique in dealing with truancy behavior primary school pupils, token economy counselling technique inculcated into school curriculum in order to reduce truancy behavior among primary school pupils and all teachers should be exposed to training and token economy counselling technique.

Introduction

Primary education is the education that is given to pupils age 6 and above. It is the foundation in which other level is built upon. The objectives of primary education is to enable children to learn arithmetic, numeracy, and other basic skills that are needed for further education, pupils are expected to come to school from morning till afternoon after which they are to close. Most of the children usually come alone and they go back on their own. Every registered pupil is expected to be in school and must be present in school, engage in class attendance and activities regularly in order to achieve academic excellence and sound education. While some pupils are punctual some are not, hence skipping out of the class without good reasons. The ability of a child to stay off the school without parents or school authority is called truant. The person who habitually stays away from school without good reasons is a truant. He or she is irregular at school attendance but finds other places more attractive than that of school. Therefore, truancy has been identified and regarded as a serious problem which tenders the academic performance and school success at a high risk because they are not always takes part in class activities.

Token economy counselling technique is a secondary reinforcement system of positive behaviour support where by token (i.e conditional reinforce) are delivered to pupils for exhibiting specific behaviour. Token economy counselling technique is use as a motivator of desire target behaviour which is demonstrated when a pupil is immediately given a token which can be a physical material things like biro, pencil, money, biscuit, sweet and award of point for exhibiting desire behaviour in the school. Token economy counselling techniques works by specifying behaviour to be performed as well as the consequence for performing them because performance of behaviour describe in token usually dictate the delivery of immediate consequences and when employed in classroom setting, they are meant to motivate pupils. Available evidences shows that some primary school children play truancy in school were they absent themselves from school. For example, statistic from school register showed that 20% of the pupils hardly attend school and some that attend, usually leave the school before closure. Some reasons for such truancy among pupils is that some are involved in inter border trading where they make money from it. Some are into drugs and other form of misbehavior.

Objectives of The Study

1. Determine the pre-test and post-test truancy behaviour mean scores of pupils in experimental and control group.
2. Establish the post-test truancy behaviour mean score of male and female pupils.
3. Determine the pre-test and post-test attendance mean scores of pupils in the experimental and control group.
4. Examine the post-test attendance mean scores of male and female truant pupils in the experimental group.

Research questions

1. What is the pre-test and post-test truancy behaviour mean scores of pupils in experimental and control group?
2. What is the post-test truancy behaviour mean score of male and female pupils?
3. What is the pre-test and post-test attendance mean scores of pupils in the experimental and control group?
4. What is the post-test attendance mean scores of male and female truant pupils in the experimental group?

Hypotheses

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test truancy behaviour mean scores of pupils in experimental and control group.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the post-test truancy behaviour mean score of male and female pupils.
- Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test attendance mean scores of pupils in the experimental and control group.
- Ho₄: There is no significant difference in the post-test attendance mean scores of male and female truant pupils in the experimental group.

Concept of Truancy

Truancy is one of the many inappropriate behaviour by primary school pupils in Ogun State. According to UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS, 2016) 8.7 million Nigeria children are out of school and more females than males will never get education, they shall be forced to sit up to take care of their younger ones and do house chores. Earlier statistics released by the office of the youth and social development, an arm of the Ogun State ministry of youths, sports and social development shows that of the entire identified indiscipline act among pupils in Ogun state primary schools, truancy had the largest number of 2,095 pupils. Childhood truancy has been linked to negative social and health outcomes later in life. Adult who were truants as teenagers were more likely than their counterparts who were not truants as adolescents to experience marital or employment instability as well as psychological maladjustment. Truancy for example has been shown to have a negative impact on pupils academic achievements, promotion, graduation, self-esteem and employment prospects. Majority of pupils who are frequently truants in primary school fail to graduate in a longitudinal study. Failure to graduate is unquestionably linked to lower any potential in childhood and other negative outcomes.

Approaches To the Study of Truancy

1. Individual factors for example pupils', family, community.
2. Institutional factors

Considering the fact that different categories of pupils' stay away from school for different reasons – intelligence, gifted as well as unintelligent children. It has become necessary to examine different approaches suggested and employed in different places in managing the issue of truancy. According to Reimer and Dimock (2005) student get involved in truancy for many reasons, some external to school and some education-related. As a result, it is difficult to predict which student will become a truant since there have not been rigorous evaluation of truancy prevention and reduction programmes. There is also no evidence that point to the “best” programmes and practices that will reduce the truancy rate. The implementation of the same strategy may vary from place to place, so results to the same programme may differ. Nevertheless, the results of existing programmes and practices provide useful insight when developing intervention strategies. Programmes and practices fall into two broad categories: Comprehensive school-wide strategies (e.g., educational reform models and strategies to increase a student's sense of belonging and engagement) and those that focus on meeting the needs of individual pupils'. These researchers noted that a variety of promising programmes and practices exist within each category and that successful implementation of these strategies will require the political will of policy makers, educators, families and communities, a sustained commitment and over time, increased and redirected resources and focused attention on the person and academic needs of pupils'. Smink and Reimer (2005) in the same vein, observed that reducing truancy rate require urgent attention from policy makers. The researchers outlined the broad strategies for reducing truancy rates as follows: Provide rules that will prevent pupils' from staying away from school, address the root causes of truancy, strengthen school readiness, strengthen the skills, and motivate the pupils' to practice regular school attendance.

Concept of Token Economy

Token economy systems, also referred to as token reward systems, are a type of intervention strategy that has been utilized since the beginning of the 19th century (Ivy et al., 2017). In brief terms, rewards are given to individuals when they perform a certain behaviour, response, or task that is desired by the intervention administrator. These rewards are intended to reinforce that the behaviour, response, or task will happen again. In psychology terminology, this type of reinforcement is also known as operant conditioning. Throughout history, reward-based interventions have been used among humans and animals. More specifically, (Ivey, Ivey, Downing, 2017) said that token economies have been developed for use in classrooms, psychiatric inpatient programs, community-based rehabilitation group homes, vocational settings, college courses, and in sport training, also, token economies have been found to be effective across the life span, from young children to geriatric adults, and across both typically developing and clinical populations. (p. 709-710)

Benefits of Token Economy Systems

When beginning any new intervention, understanding its benefits is vital to determining if it may produce successful results for a particular study. For example, in special education, it can be important to keep lessons moving and attempt to diminish interruptions as much as possible. Diamond, Wagner and Lovy (2016) stated that “token reward systems are beneficial for pupils”, including those with severe disabilities who may have difficulty attending to teacher instruction by relying solely on intrinsic motivation” (p. 75). The use of rewards in token systems allow for the implementation of extrinsic motivation which may be just as effective. Motivation will be discussed further later in this paper. In the classroom, maintaining student attention can also be difficult. However, token reward systems also provide benefits in this area as well. Diamond, Wagner and Lovy (2016) said “these systems are valuable in that they allow teachers to reinforce correct behaviours/skills without impeding the flow of instruction by delivering backup reinforcers after a specified number of tokens are earned” (p. 75). If a teacher must stop a lesson to provide feedback, pupils may lose attention and it can be difficult to gain it back. The ability to give tokens quickly and quietly decreasing the likelihood of disruptions to teaching. Students with special needs are often transitioning among several settings (e.g., special education classroom, general education classroom, speech office, gym, music, recess) so finding a reward system that can be easily utilized in many settings is important. Another benefit described by Ivey, Ivey and Downing (2017) is that tokens are easily portable allowing for their use across multiple settings and times (p. 712). Token rewards systems’ ability to be easily portable can make them highly appealing in a special education setting. Also, “a token can be used to maintain performance during periods of time in which the backup reinforcer is not available” (Ivey, Ivey and Downing 2017). This creates advantages when pupils are in various environments throughout the day. The token system can still be utilized and effective even if the reinforcer is not present.

Methodology

The study adopted true experimental research. The population of the study consisted of all primary six pupils in Idi Ota primary schools and Oke Ore under Ado Odo Local Government Area of Ogun State. The Local Government has a total number of 56 primary schools with a population of 11247 primary six pupils. The sample of the study consisted of 65 pupils from two primary school which include: Idi Ota primary school and Oke Ore Methodist primary school. Oke Ore methodist primary school with a sample of 33 was used as experimental group while Ido Ota with a sample of 32 was used as control group. The primary school pupils used were identified to be exhibiting truancy behavior. Three instruments were used for data collection. The instruments used include social studies achievement test, pupils’ truancy behavior questionnaire (PTBQ) and attendance register.

Research Question One

Result of the analysis on truancy behaviour of pupils between the experimental and control group using mean and standard deviation.

Group		N	X	X	Mean gain	Mean difference
Experimented	Pre –test	33	37.72	6..01		
	Post –test	33	26.90	8.34	-10.82	
Control	Pre –test	32	38.03	4.94		-11.79
	Post –test	32	38.69	5.85	-0.66	

The result indicates a mean difference of -11.79. This implies that Token economy helps to reduce truancy behavior of primary pupils more than conventional method.

Research Question Two

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Effect of Token Economy Counselling Technique on ... Yakubu, A. M., Et. al. (2025)

Results of the analysis on truancy behavior of male and female pupil in the experimental group using mean and standard deviation

GROUP		N	X	SD	Mean Group	X Difference
Male	Pre-test	23	36.96	5.00		
	Post-test	23	26.87	7.59	=10.09	
Female	Pre-test	42	37.84	7.99		0.43
	Post- test	42	26.44	12.79	-11.40	

The result indicates a mean difference in the post truancy mean score between the male and the female of 0.43 in favor of females hence it can be concluded that token economy help to reduce truancy behavior among males than females.

Research Question Three

Result of the analysis of attendance mean scores of pupils in the experimented and control.

Group		N	X	X	Mean gain	Mean difference
Experimented	Pre –test	33	67.40	12.45		
	Post –test	33	73.41	15.77	6.01	
Control	Pre –test	32	68.40	11.41		0.47
	Post –test	32	72.94	12.48	4.54	

This implies that Token economy improve the attendance of pupils in school more than conventional method.

Research Question Four

Result of the analysis on attendance mean score of male and female pupils in the experimental group.

Group		N	x	SD	Mean Gain	Mean difference
Male	Pre –test	33	62.66	11.14		
	Post –test	33	72.67	15.74	10.01	
Female	Pre –test	33	63.01	7.54		0.8
	Post –test	33	73.47	12.45	10.46	

The result showed the mean difference of 0.8 in favour of female. This implies that Token economy increases the attendance of females more than males.

Hypothesis One

Summary of ANCOVA Analysis on the truancy behaviour mean score of truant pupil in the experimented and control groups

Source	Type sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig	Partial squared	Eta
Corrected model	2593.6769	2	1296.838	11.855	.001	.277	
Intercept	3939.300	1	3939.300	36.015	.001	.367	
pre achievement	141.771	1	141.771	1295	.259	.020	
Group	2363.754	1	2363.254	21.606	.001	.058	
Error	6781.463	62	109.378				
Total	97548.000	65					
Corrected total	9375.138	64	0				

a R squared = 277 (adjusted R squared 253)

We can conclude that token economy helps to reduce truancy among pupils more than conventional method.

Hypothesis Two

Summary of AVCOVA Analysis on post-test truant behavior mean score male and female pupils in the experimented and control group

Source	Type II sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig	Partial Efa
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Corrected model	38.210	2	19.105	7.37	.484	.008
Intercept	5879.2931	1	5879.293	285.631	.001	.05
Presender	4.417	1	4.417	.170	.682	.001
Gender	37.496	1	37.466			
Error	1615.544	30	26.057	14.39	.235	.023
Total	104935.000	33				
Corrected total	1053.754	32				

a R Square = .023 (Adjusted R square = 0.08)

We can conclude that Token economy does not affect the truancy behavior of pupils based on their gender.

Hypothesis Three

Summary of ANCOVA Analysis on the post-test attendance mean score of male and female truant pupils in the experimented group

Source	Type III sum of squares	Df	Sum of F	Sig	Partial squared	Efa
Corrected model	10512.231	2	5256.115	282.833	.000	.787
Intercept	3850.605	1	3850.605	207.202	.000	.575
Pre attendance	575.778	1	575.778	30.983	.000	.168
Group	9415.978	1	9415.978	506.676	.000	.768
Error	2843.327	62	18.584			
Total	126271.000	65				
Corrected total	13355.558	64				

A R Squared = .787 (Adjusted R square = .784)

We can conclude that token economy helps to improve pupil's attendance more than conventional method.

Hypothesis Four

Summary of ANCOVA Analysis on the post-attendance mean scores of male and female pupils in the experimented group

Source	Type III sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig	Partial square	Eta
Corrected model	736.368	2	368.193	1.983	.45	.052	
Intercept	22447.254	1	22447.254	120.902	.000	.624	
Pre attendance	686.537	1	686.337	3.698	.058	.048	
Group	36.167	1	36.167	.195	.660	.003	
Error	13553.548	30	185.66				
Total	326739.000	33					
Corrected total	14289.934	32					

a R Squared = .052 (Adjusted R squared = 0.26)

We can conclude that token economy does not affect pupils attendance based on gender.

Summary Of Finding

1. Token economy counseling technique helps to reduce truancy behavior among primary six truancy pupils.
2. Pupil achievement in social studies was not affected by their gender
3. Token economy counseling technique helps to improve pupil's attendance.

Discussion of Finding

The result shows that the experimental group had truancy behavior mean score of 37.72, SD = 6.06. While control group had truancy mean score of 38.83 with SD of 4.94 and post-truancy mean score of 38.69, SD = 5.85 with mean gain of 0.66 which indicate that mean score difference of 11.29 which shows that token economy help reduce truancy behavior of primary school pupils. In research question two, it was also found that post-truancy mean score of 38.96, SD=5.00 and post-truancy mean score of 26.87, SD=7.59 with mean loss of 10.09 while the control group had pre-truancy mean score of 37.84, SD=7.99 and post-truancy mean score of 26.44, SD=12.29 with means loss of 11.40. The research shows that a mean score difference in post-truancy score between the male and female of 43 females hence it could be concluded that token economy helps to reduce truancy behavior among male than female. The finding agree with Mamman (2015) that token economy is effective in reducing truancy behavior.

Conclusion

1. From the study finding, it was concluded that there was a significant in the rate of truancy reduction on the post-test experimental which shows token economy counselling technique in truancy reduction among primary school pupils.
2. The technique is gender sensitive for there was a significant effect in the rate of truancy reduction on the post-experimental of male and female.
3. The technique is also very effective in reducing truancy behavior rather than conventional method.

Recommendation

1. Training of counsellor should be organized through seminars, workshop and symposium with more emphasis on token economy counselling technique in dealing with truancy behavior primary school pupils.
2. Token economy counselling technique inculcated into school curriculum in order to reduce truancy behavior among primary school pupils.
3. All teachers should be exposed to training and token economy counselling technique.

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