

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND GENDER DIFFERENCE IN TRUANCY  
AMONG IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN IBADAN, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

Truancy has always been a major challenge to the success of the educational system, a problem that has been especially titanic for most southwestern states in Nigeria, especially Oyo State as high level of truancy has been responsible for high social vices and crime rate among the adolescents and youths. The current study attempts to investigate the role of emotional intelligence and gender in the truancy of in-school adolescents in Ibadan. The research adopted an ex-post facto research design that used multi-stage sampling technique to select 1,215 in-school adolescents from 6 local governments in Ibadan comprising of 638 males and 577 females, with ages between 14 and 19 years. A self-administered structured questionnaire that contained validated scales measuring truancy with the 24 item school refusal assessment scale by Kearney (2002), emotional intelligence with trait emotional intelligence scale–adolescent short form (TEIQue-Asf) by Petrides, Chamorro-Permuzic, Furnham, and Frederickson (2005) and gender was used for data collection. Three hypotheses were stated and tested at .05 level of significance. Emotional intelligence dimensions significantly predicted truancy among secondary school students and accounted for 4.1% of the observed variance ( $R^2 = .041$ ,  $F(4,1210) = 12.924$ ,  $p < .01$ ); only the independent contribution of wellbeing ( $\beta = -.168$ ,  $t = -5.887$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and self-control ( $\beta = -.106$ ,  $t = -3.762$ ,  $p < .01$ ) dimensions of emotional intelligence were significant. Male students ( $\bar{X} = 59.50$ ,  $SD = 23.66$ ) were significantly higher on truancy than female students ( $\bar{X} = 55.77$ ,  $SD = 21.51$ ) ( $t(1212) = 2.868$ ,  $p < .01$ ). *Gender significantly moderated the relationship of wellbeing emotional intelligence with truancy* ( $R^2 = .005$ ;  $F(1,1210) =$

6.770,  $p < .01$ ) and emotionality emotional intelligence with truancy ( $R^2 = .006$ ;  $F(1, 1210) = 7.465$ ,  $p < .01$ ) but *did not significantly moderate the relationship of self-control emotional intelligence with truancy* ( $R^2 = .001$ ;  $F(1, 1210) = 11.780$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and *sociability emotional intelligence with truancy* ( $R^2 = .000$ ;  $F(1, 1210) = .432$ ,  $p > .05$ ). It was concluded that adolescents that possess high rates of emotional intelligence and females are at a lower risk of truancy. It was recommended that interventions on truancy be focused on male adolescents especially those with lower trait emotional intelligence.

**Keywords:** Truancy, Trait Emotional Intelligence, Gender, Adolescents

### **Introduction**

Formal education in schools is designed with the aim of imparting basic knowledge and skills which are necessary for students to develop their potentials in life, and also a foundation for tertiary education. The design of this system, in secondary schools especially, is built upon consistent attendance in schools as a pre-requisite for completing a designated curriculum of learning which is time-based, and serves as a yard stick for the assessment of performance and promotion. This infers

that irregularity or inconsistency in the attendance of students in classes would truncate the flow of learning and make knowledge imparted rather disjointed and incomplete, a condition that is rather dangerous for the future of our society.

Truancy, an unjustified intentional or habitual act of being absent from school without permission (Van-Pefegem, 1994), remains an issue which has drawn the concern of parents, society and the government as it is the forerunner to many social and discipline problems among students. When students start to play truant, it implies that school has lost its importance and failed to attract students to stay in school. Truanting behavior also indicates the beginning of exposing students to life problems because the unsupervised time of the truants may stimulate students to initiate and commit high risk activities. Truancy is a serious problem because it has served as a gateway to criminal activities. Crime records have revealed that about 80% of adolescents involved in crime are either dropouts or students in school uniform who divert from school to criminal activities (Badru, 2001).

Adolescents who engage in truancy has been said to increase the number of hoodlums in the society. When they refuse to be punctual at school, they end up somewhere else either as thugs, drug addicts, drunkards, armed robbers and other anti-social vices. This is detrimental to the image of the society and could terminate student's aspiration, dreams, and striving. Thus, the negative impact of truancy act has become endemic in the society which calls for urgency for the act(s) to be curb. Truancy is also considered a pressing societal issue that is becoming increasingly prevalent in many schools in the nation.

Truancy has caused a lot of setbacks for children, adolescents and youths in their educational pursuits in Nigeria; a serious issue which hampers the achievement and overall development of learners (Ewhrudjakpor, 2009; Kearney, 2002; Adeyemo, 2008; Animasahun, 2009). Truancy invariably can be seen as a global challenge which needs to be accosted in order to abridge its influence on the society as a whole. Short-term sequelae of truancy include reduced level of academic achievement, family crisis, and problems

with peer relationships. Long-term negative effect may include academic under-performance and employment difficulties.

Aftermath of truancy has not been pleasant neither to the adolescents nor to the society at large. The in-school adolescent who indulge in truancy act usually engage in other illegal activities during a period that they should be pre-occupied with school activities. Such activities they indulge in includes; taking drugs, gambling, robbery, immoral activities, smoking and other anti-social vices. These behaviours enumerated above have been seen to have significant impingement on the society and impairment on the life of the truant adolescents themselves.

Adolescents who are truant have been found to repeat classes repeatedly / intermittently. Repeating of academic classes have made these truants to be failure in their school works, thus the government have to incur additional expenses in tutoring them over and over again in public secondary schools. Most importantly, Reid (2010) and Hodgkinson (1991) have noted that most criminals (70% precisely) have

been found to be truant one time or the other while they were in school.

However, Agnew (2004), among others have argued that particular emotions may be especially conducive to produce certain types of school disobedience and further suggested that research should be undertaken to determine the type of emotional behaviour that will result in antisocial acts. Emotional intelligence has been defined as the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others (Mayer et al., 2000). A similar definition was given by Bar-On (1997) as “an array of emotional, personal, and social abilities and skills that influence an individual's ability to cope effectively with environmental demands and pressures”.

Research linking truancy and emotional intelligence is rather scarce. However, research has shown that organizing tutorials on emotional intelligence skills in schools, such as high schools and secondary schools is very vital as it can have positive effect on academic performance of adolescent (Elias,

Brume, Blum and Schumber, 1991). Adeoye and Emeka (2008) in their study noted that emotional intelligence trainings had a more significant impact on student academic achievement. Okafor and Amayo (2006) in their study of locus of control, self-concept and emotional intelligence as correlates of academic achievement found that emotional intelligence significantly correlates with improvement in academic achievement of the participants. Self-efficacy which is one of the constructs of emotional intelligence was reported to ultimately determine how an individual behaves, thinks and becomes motivated to be involved with particular roles especially academic performance (Bandura, 1963, 1997). Individuals with inadequate social skills, cognitive skills, emotional problems, low self-concepts, and low self-esteem were reportedly more likely to exhibit problematic absenteeism (Reid, 2005).

Emotional intelligence has been noted to proffer means by which problems are tackled. Higher level of emotional intelligence can be said to be related with different indicators of social adaptation including more altruistic behaviours among

children. It is worthy of note at this juncture that this present study did not focus on the human cognitive ability related emotional intelligence, but on the in-born characteristics of the adolescent that makes him/her emotionally intelligent, a lower order personality.

The finding on gender differences in truancy has rather been inconclusive. Some studies revealed that the relationship between truancy and delinquent behavior tends to be particularly very obvious most especially among males (Kelley, 1992). Brackett, Mayer and Warner (2004) in their own study noted that the male gender who possess reduced emotional intelligence gets involved in potentially dangerous behaviour like abusing drugs as well as exhibiting other health risky behaviour than their female counterparts. Others reports that the number of academic learners in secondary schools admitting truancy was almost equal in both genders (Marjoribanks, 1992; Cairns, Mewlurter, Duffy and Barry, 1990; Smith, 1996). Clowards (1995) also states that the variation that exists in truancy levels of males and females is slight. It is therefore,

apparent that some researchers are in agreement with regard to the truancy levels of male and female learners; though some found that there is no significant difference between male and female truants. However, Kurdek and Sinclair (1988) found that girls play truancy more than boys in their first three years (junior school) in secondary school, while Gesinde (2004) submitted that males at any level of education play truancy more than girls. This inconsistency has formed a basis for inquiry in this study.

To this end, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- I. Will the emotional intelligence of in-school adolescents predict the level of truancy?
- ii. Are there gender differences in truancy among in-school adolescents?
- iii. Will gender moderate the influence of emotional intelligence on truancy of in-school adolescents?

## **Method**

### **Design**

This study is a cross-sectional survey and

the ex-post facto design was used for this study to only measure the relationship between the independent variables, emotional intelligence and gender and the dependent variable, truancy.

### **Setting**

The setting of the research was the public senior schools located within these less city areas of Ibadan the capital of Oyo State in Nigeria; the areas include Ona-Ara, Lagelu, Egbeda, Oluyole, Akinyele and Iddo. The choice of this research setting was due to the fact that the state government has embarked on various programmes in clearing the state capital (Ibadan) off truants, which actually have not yielded much positive result. Yet little or none has been done in the suburb of the town. Statistics from the state Ministry of Education also indicate that about 15% of pupil registered in school within these less city areas are marked absent per week. The search light of the government has not been focused on less cities and the pupils are still seen loafing about, getting involved in illicit acts which are detrimental to their lives and the society at large, when they ought to be in school.

### **Participants**

The focus of this study was the in-school adolescents within the selected populace. These are boys and girls within the ages of 14 – 19 years, in the secondary school system. This SSS 1, 2 and 3 classes were chosen to enhance adequate representation and generalization of the result at the end of the study. A total of one thousand two hundred and fifteen participants (n = 1,215) in-school adolescents was selected for this study, out of which six hundred and thirty-eight (638) were boys and the remaining five hundred and seventy-seven (577) were girls to allow for equal representation. The schools were selected within the six local government areas in Ibadan.

### **Inclusion criteria**

- a. Secondary schools within less-city areas around Ibadan.
- b. Less city areas (rural areas which are with the absence of good infrastructure, such as good motorable roads, pipe borne water, electricity and low social economic status of residents).
- c. Local government areas: Akinyele, Iddo, Oluyole, Egbeda, Lagelu and

- Onaara local government areas.
- d. Senior secondary school adolescents between the age bracket of 14 and 19 years old.

### **Sampling**

The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted because different sampling techniques were used at various stages of the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select Akinyele, Egbeda, Iddo, Lagelu, Ona-Ara and Oluyole local government areas. This was done with the use of the 2006 population census data in identifying less city areas (underdeveloped communities) as the less-city areas. Purposive sampling technique was used to pick six (6) secondary schools in each local government areas which are located within and around Ibadan municipal. Convenience sampling was used to select participants among senior secondary school students in the schools.

### **Instruments**

A structured self-administered questionnaire was administered to the students. It consists of a measure of gender, emotional intelligence and truancy.

**Emotional Intelligence:** Trait Emotional Intelligence Scale – adolescent short form (TEIQue-Asf) developed by Petrides, Chamorro-Permuzic, Furnham, and Frederickson (2005) was adapted. The scale is a simplified version in terms of wording and syntactic complexity of the adult short form of the TEIQue; it comprises 30 short statements (items). The internal consistency reliability of the scale is usually above .80 and is said never to be below .70 in any study. The scale has been said to be used successfully with children as young as eleven (11) years old. The scale is of a 7-point response format, ranging from Disagree (1) – Agree (7). 26 of the 30 items are assigned to one of the following four subscales: Emotionality (eight items); Sociability (six items); Self-control (six items); Well-being (six items). The four remaining items contribute to only the cumulative TEI score. The higher the score of the respondent indicates agreement with the item and vice-versa. The coefficient alpha the scale in this present study was reported at .87.

**Truancy:** This was measured by school refusal assessment scale-revised and

developed by Kearney (2002). The scale is a 7 point format scale ranging from “never to always = 6” for positive statement and vice versa. Previous research with the scale has demonstrated adequate psychometric, part of which is one to two weeks test-retest reliability of 0.68. Inter-item reliability coefficient ranged from 0.56 to 0.78 (Kearney, 2002) in their study of school refusal behaviour in ecological context. In this study the scale coefficient reliability was reported at .77. Idowu, Durosaro and Esere (2004) reported an internal consistency (coefficient alpha) of 0.77 for the scale in their study “Efficacy of group counselling interference (positive reinforcement and self-control technique) in remedying truancy among school going adolescents in Ilorin, Nigeria”.

### **Procedure**

In conducting this study, research assistants were employed for the distribution of the questionnaires. The secondary schools selected; Community High School Ejioku and Otun Agbakin, Idi Iya and Aba Alfa Community High School, Eleshin Funfun Community High School and Community

High School Eleshinshonsho assembled the students in the senior classes in the school halls where two hundred and thirty-five (235) were randomly selected in each of the schools and the scales were administered to them. The researcher and the researcher assistants were on ground to guide the participants in filling the scales appropriately. In some of the schools, school assembly halls were used and in some other schools the scales were administered to participants in their classrooms, after which the data collected through the scales were analyzed appropriately.

### **Statistical Analysis**

Using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software 21.0 version, data collected in the study were analyzed. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis of the data collected. Specifically, Pearson product moment correlation, multiple regression analysis, t test for independent samples and hierarchical multiple regression were used for hypotheses testing at .05 level of significance.



**Results**

**Table 1:** Correlation Matrix Showing Relationship between the Dependent Variable and Independent Variables of the Study

S/N	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Truancy	-						
2	Emotional Intelligence (EI)	-.146**	-					
3	Wellbeing EI	-.170**	.662**	-				
4	Self-Control EI	-.111**	.406**	.017	-			
5	Emotionality EI	-.032	.492*	.163**	.051	-		
6	Sociability EI	-.033	.488*	.023	.091**	.057*	-	
7	Gender	-.082*	.084*	.085**	.002	.083**	.021	-

Result from table 4.1 reveals that truancy has a significant inverse relationship with emotional intelligence - EI ( $r=-.146$ ,  $p<.01$ ). This infers that rate of student truancy decreases with increase in students' emotional intelligence.

A further look at the dimensions of emotional intelligence reveals that truancy is significantly inversely correlated with wellbeing ( $r=-.170$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and self-control ( $r=-.111$ ,  $p<.01$ ) dimensions of emotional intelligence. This infers that truancy decreases when students wellbeing and self-control aspects of emotional

intelligence increases. However, there was no significant relationship of truancy with both the emotionality ( $r=-.032$ ,  $p>.05$ ) and sociability ( $r=-.033$ ,  $p>.05$ ) dimensions of Emotional intelligence.

Also, truancy showed a significant inverse relationship with gender ( $r=-.082$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Since gender is a dummy variable in this study, such that the females were accorded a higher score than males, this would infer that truancy tends significantly towards the male gender than it does towards the female gender.

**Table 2:** Summary of Multiple Regression showing influence of Emotional Intelligence dimensions on Truancy

	Variables		T	P	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P
Truancy	Wellbeing EI	-.168	-5.887	<.01	.202	.041	12.924	<.01
	Self-Control EI	-.106	-3.762	<.01				
	Emotionality EI	.002	.053	>.05				
	Sociability EI	-.019	-.680	>.05				

Results from table 2 revealed that emotional intelligence dimensions significantly predicted truancy among secondary school students ( $R^2 = .041$ ,  $F(4,1210) = 12.924$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This infers that emotional intelligence accounts for only 4.1 % of variance observed in the truancy of

secondary school students. It was further revealed that only the independent contribution of wellbeing ( $\beta = -.168$ ,  $t = -5.887$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and self-control ( $\beta = -.106$ ,  $t = -3.762$ ,  $p < .01$ ) dimensions of emotional intelligence were significant in the model.

**Table 3:** T-Test Showing Gender differences in Truancy

	Gender	N	SD	Df	T	P
Truancy	Male	638	59.50	23.66	1212	2.868
	Female	576	55.77	21.51		

**Results from table 3 reveals that** there is a significant difference in the truancy of male and female students ( $t(1212) = 2.868$ ,

$p < .01$ ), such that males ( $\bar{X} = 59.50$ ,  $SD = 23.66$ ) present to be higher on truancy than females ( $\bar{X} = 55.77$ ,  $SD = 21.51$ ).

**Table 4:** Summary of Moderated Multiple Regression Analysis Showing Moderating Role of Gender in the Relationship between Wellbeing Emotional Intelligence and Truancy.

Predictors	Model 1 Step 1			Model 2 Step 2		
	Beta	t	Sig	Beta	t	Sig
Wellbeing EI	-.165	-5.802	<.01	-.073	-1.615	>.05
Gender	-.068	-2.401	<.05	.041	.815	>.05
Wellbeing EI*Gender				-.166	-2.602	<.01
R		.183			.197	
R <sup>2</sup>		.034			.039	
?R <sup>2</sup>		.034			.005	
F		21.055**			16.360**	
?F		21.055**			6.770**	

Results in Table 4 revealed that in the first step of the regression analysis (model 1), wellbeing dimension of emotional intelligence and gender jointly accounted for 3.4% variance in truancy [ $R^2 = .034$ ,  $F(2, 1211) = 21.055$ ,  $P < .01$ ]. Both the independent contribution of wellbeing emotional intelligence and gender were significant [ $(\beta = -.165, t = -5.802; p < .01)$  and  $(\beta = -.068, t = -2.401; p < .05)$  respectively].

**Model 2 is a test of moderation;** when the interaction term was introduced results

from model 2 revealed that gender significantly moderated the relationship between wellbeing emotional intelligence and truancy ( $R^2 = .005$ ;  $F(1, 1210) = 6.770, p < .01$ ).

In order to determine the direction of the interaction, a table containing conditional effects of wellbeing emotional intelligence on truancy at two levels of gender using the mean scores of the interaction was presented on table 5.

**Table 5:** Descriptive table showing the mean scores on Truancy based on interaction between combat exposure and coping self-efficacy.

Wellbeing Emotional Intelligence	Gender	Mean
Low	MALE	63.0620
	FEMALE	59.5954
High	MALE	54.0120
	FEMALE	51.4853

As shown in Table 5, truancy tends to be highest when wellbeing emotional intelligence is low. However, truancy is higher among males both when wellbeing emotional intelligence is low ( $\bar{X}= 63.06$ ) and high ( $\bar{X}=54.12$ ), but lower among females both when wellbeing emotional intelligence is low ( $\bar{X}=59.60$ ) and high ( $\bar{X}= 51.49$ ). Hence, the gender of adolescents moderates the influence of wellbeing emotional intelligence on truancy.

**Table 6:** Summary of Moderated Multiple Regression Analysis Showing Moderating Role of Gender in the Relationship between Self-Control Emotional Intelligence and Truancy.

Predictors	Model 1 Step 1			Model 2 Step 2		
	Beta	t	Sig	Beta	t	Sig
Self-Control EI	-.111	-3.904	<.01	-.140	-3.342	<.01
Gender	-.082	-2.876	<.01	-.119	-2.425	<.05
Self-Control EI*Gender				.054	.933	>.05
R		.138			.141	
R <sup>2</sup>		.019			.020	
? R <sup>2</sup>		.019			.001	
F		11.780**			8.142**	
? F		11.780**			.870	

Results in Table 6 revealed that in the first step of the regression analysis (model 1), self-control dimension of emotional intelligence and gender jointly accounted for 1.9% variance in truancy [ $R^2 = .019$ ,  $F(2, 1211) = 11.780$ ,  $P < .01$ ]. Both the independent contribution of self-control emotional intelligence and gender were significant [ $(\beta = -.111, t = -3.904; p < .01)$  and  $(\beta = -.082, t = -2.876; p < .01)$  respectively].

Model 2 is a test of moderation; when the interaction term was introduced, results in model 2 revealed that gender did not significantly moderate the relationship between self-control emotional intelligence and truancy ( $R^2 = .001$ ;  $F(1,1210) = 11.780, p > .05$ ).

**Table 7:** Summary of Moderated Multiple Regression Analysis Showing Moderating Role of Gender in the Relationship between Emotionality Emotional Intelligence and Truancy.

Predictors	Model 1 Step 1			Model 2 Step 2		
	Beta	t	Sig	Beta	t	Sig
Emotionality EI	-.026	-.904	>.05	-.110	-2.614	<.01
Gender	-.080	-2.783	<.01	-.185	-3.858	<.01
Emotionality EI*Gender				.160	2.732	<.01
R		.086			.116	
R <sup>2</sup>		.007			.013	
?R <sup>2</sup>		.007			.006	
F		4.520*			5.518**	
?F		4.520*			7.465**	

Results in Table 7 revealed that in the first step of the regression analysis (model 1), emotionality dimension of emotional intelligence and gender jointly accounted for 0.7% variance in truancy [ $R^2 = .007$ ,  $F(2,1211)=4.520$ ,  $P<.05$ ]. Only the independent contribution of gender was significant ( $\beta = -.080, t = -2.783; p < .01$ ).

Model 2 is a test of moderation; when the interaction term was introduced, results revealed that gender significantly

moderated the relationship between emotionality emotional intelligence and truancy ( $R^2 = .006$ ;  $F(1,1210) = 7.465, p < .01$ ).

In order to determine the direction of the interaction, a table containing conditional effects of emotionality emotional intelligence on truancy at two levels of gender using the mean scores of the interaction was presented on table 8.

**Table 8:** Descriptive table showing the mean scores on Truancy based on interaction between Emotionality Emotional Intelligence and gender.

Emotionality Emotional Intelligence	Gender	Mean
Low	MALE	59.2021
	FEMALE	54.7685
High	MALE	59.9455
	FEMALE	56.9358

As shown in Table 8, truancy is higher among males both when emotionality emotional intelligence is low ( $\bar{X}=59.20$ ) and high ( $\bar{X}=59.95$ ), but lower among females both when wellbeing emotional intelligence is low ( $\bar{X}=54.77$ ) and high ( $\bar{X}=56.94$ ). Hence, the gender of adolescents moderates the influence of emotionality emotional intelligence on truancy.

**Table 9:** Summary of Moderated Multiple Regression Analysis Showing Moderating Role of Gender in the Relationship between Sociability Emotional Intelligence and Truancy.

Predictors	Model 1			Model2		
	Beta	T	Sig	Beta	T	Sig
Sociability EI	-.031	-1.076	>.05	-.055	-1.177	>.05
Gender	-.081	-2.844	<.01	-.110	-2.112	<.05
Sociability EI*Gender				.042	.657	>.05
R		.088			.090	
R <sup>2</sup>		.008			.008	
? R <sup>2</sup>		.008			.000	
F		4.692**			3.270*	
? F		4.692**			.432	

Results in Table 9 revealed that in the first step of the regression analysis (model 1), sociability dimension of emotional intelligence and gender jointly accounted for 0.8% variance in truancy [ $R^2 = .008$ ,  $F(2, 1211) = 4.692$ ,  $P < .01$ ]. Only the independent contribution of gender was significant ( $\beta = -.081$ ,  $t = -2.844$ ;  $p < .01$ ). **Model 2 is a test of moderation;** when the interaction term was introduced, results in model 2 revealed that gender did not significantly moderate the relationship between sociability emotional intelligence

and truancy ( $R^2 = .000$ ;  $F(1,1210) = .432, p > .05$ ).

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

This study was set out to identify the role of gender and trait emotional intelligence dimensions in the truancy reported among secondary school students in Ibadan. From the findings of this study, it was made evident that rate of student truancy decreases with increase in students' trait emotional intelligence. This underlines the importance of trait emotional intelligence in the tendency of a student to become truant in secondary school. A further look at the dimensions of emotional intelligence revealed that truancy decreases when students wellbeing and self-control dimensions of trait emotional intelligence increases. But there was no significant relationship of truancy with both the emotionality and sociability dimensions of trait emotional intelligence.

It was also clearly revealed that emotional intelligence significantly predicted truancy among secondary school students, accounting for 4.1 % of variance observed in the truancy of secondary school students;

it was only the independent contribution of wellbeing and self-control dimensions of emotional intelligence that were significant. These results align with that of Petrides, Frederickson and Furnham (2004) which showed that adolescents with poor social and emotional skills are more likely to feel withdrawn and excluded, which increases their likelihood of behaving in such unconventional ways. It could rather be inferred from these findings that possessing the emotional intelligence trait would serve as a buffer for the adolescent from becoming truant. This would leave the truancy tendency among adolescents prominent among those who do not possess the trait emotional intelligence, which signals them as the vulnerable population that should be given more attention.

It is however worthy of note that wellbeing and self-control dimensions of trait emotional intelligence are more correlated and has a better predictive prowess of adolescent truancy than other dimensions. Since the wellbeing dimension consists of trait happiness, trait optimism and self-esteem, this would infer that happy adolescents, optimistic adolescents and

adolescents with a good self-esteem and at a lower risk of becoming truant even in the presence several risk factors. Also, possessing the self-control dimension consisting of emotional regulation, impulsiveness and stress management reduces the tendency of becoming truant in secondary school.

A significant difference in the truancy of male and female students was also revealed, such that males were higher on truancy than females. Also, truancy tends significantly towards the male gender than it does towards the female gender. This is concurrent with the stance of Kelley (1992) and Clowards (1995). A study carried out in South West Nigeria by Gesinde (2004) also submitted that males at any level of education play truancy more than females. Further, gender was found to significantly moderate the relationship of self-control emotional intelligence with truancy and sociability emotional intelligence with truancy. In both moderations, the direction of influence still tended towards the male gender. It connotes that while increase in happiness, optimism and self-esteem (wellbeing dimension) as well as emotional

regulation, impulsiveness and stress management seem to predict a reduced rate of adolescent truancy, being female co-joined in reducing such likelihood in secondary school students while being male comorbid an increased vulnerability for males students. This view point is consistent with the conclusions of Kelley (1992) revealed that the relationship between truancy and delinquent behavior tends to be particularly very obvious most especially among males. Hence, even while possessing a high level of trait emotional intelligence, male adolescents are at an increased risk of becoming truant while female adolescents are at a lower risk of becoming truant.

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