

**EFFECTIVENESS OF TWO COUNSELLING THERAPIES ON TRUANCY
AMONG IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS WITH SMUGGLING TENDENCY IN
THE BORDER TOWNS OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Truancy among in-school adolescents in the border towns of Ogun State presents a significant social challenge with profound implications for both individual well-being and community development. This study sought to delve into the intricate dynamics of truancy, particularly among adolescents with a proclivity for smuggling. Consequently, this study examined the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy (ABAT) in the management of truancy problems among in-school adolescents with smuggling tendency in the border towns of Ogun State, Nigeria. Quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test control group research design was adopted with three experimental groups of two treatment packages of CBT and ABAT and Control Group. The study involved 111 students, consisting of 66 male and 45 female who were selected in the three Local Government Areas of six border towns using multistage sampling process. Relevant data were collected using Student in Business Questionnaire and Truancy Need Assessment Questionnaire. Statistical tools, which include mean, standard deviation, mean differences and Analysis of Covariance were employed to analyse the data. The study found out that the interventions were efficient in the management of adolescents' truancy. Specifically, the use of ABAT was better in the management of adolescents' truancy than the CBT. Truancy among the control group increased because no treatment was given to them. It was also observed that there was a significant gender difference in the post-test mean scores on truancy among adolescents with smuggling exposed to treatment and control groups. One of the recommendations given was that group therapy sessions involving CBT and ABAT should be integrated into

the school curriculum to curb and prevent truancy among adolescents, particularly in the border towns.

Keywords: *Adolescent, Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Smuggling Tendency, Truancy.*

Introduction

Smuggling is a phenomenon which seems to have an adverse effect on the psychosocial wellbeing and development of humans with reference to adolescent students residing in areas where border towns are located. Smuggling is described as a clandestine activity which involves the importation and/or exportation of goods by wrong or unlawful means with the objective of evading taxes and any other measure restricting the importation or exportation of such goods (Deflem & Kelly, 2001 as cited in Aliu, Adejimi & Adebayo, 2021).

A few studies on smuggling have been conducted and had identified the prevalence of smuggling of people and prohibited goods through the borders of Nigeria (Abegunde & Fabiyi, 2020; Ojo & Okunola, 2014). With focus on the border towns in south-western part of Nigeria, Golub Mbaye and Golubski (2019) reported that the smuggling of people and prohibited goods through Benin Republic has been prevalent before her independence in 1960. According to Ahimie, Adeniyi and Haastrup (2023), the level of awareness of smuggling among adolescent students in Seme and Owode-Apa border areas of Lagos is deemed high. The disturbing trend may be the extent to which the adolescents aged below 18 years old, are being induced into the act of smuggling (Adeniyi & Jinadu, 2021). This may have influenced truancy among in-school adolescents in border towns of Ogun State and may have resulted in a multifaceted issue with far-reaching consequences. The intersection of smuggling tendency and academic absenteeism creates a complex scenario that demands a nuanced and comprehensive approach.

Truancy among in-school adolescents in the border towns of Ogun State presents a significant social challenge with profound implications for both individual well-being and community development. Ogun State, is situated in southwestern Nigeria, shares extensive borders with neighboring countries, making it susceptible to various socio-economic challenges, including smuggling. The complex interplay between academic absenteeism and involvement in smuggling activities underscores the need for a comprehensive and contextually relevant approach. Osarenren (1999) identified poor home upbringing, school circumstances, psychological and personality factors, socio-economic status of the students, societal demands, influence of peer group and

government as reasons for truancy. Obe (1998) reported lack of writing materials such as pen, pencil, exercise book, recommended textbooks, school uniform and middle meal as factors that influenced truancy among adolescents (as cited in Obiunu & Ozuri, 2018). Other studies may have documented factors such as child factor, socioeconomic status, bullying and the environment to have influenced truancy (Abdullah Salim, & Arip 2018; Anyamene Anyachebelu, & Anyikwa 2017).

The socio-economic landscape of border towns in Ogun State is marked by economic disparities, limited educational resources, and a challenging employment environment. These factors contribute to the vulnerability of in-school adolescents to engage in smuggling activities, seeking economic opportunities beyond the formal educational structure. Truancy becomes a coping mechanism for these adolescents, as they attempt to navigate the delicate balance between academic responsibilities and the lure of illicit activities.

Understanding the factors that contribute to truancy and smuggling tendency is crucial for developing effective intervention strategies. Economic hardships, lack of educational infrastructure, and the allure of quick financial gains through smuggling are key contributors. Adolescents facing these challenges may view truancy as a means of supplementing family income or succumb to the temptation of participating in illicit cross-border activities. The psychological toll on adolescents involved in both truancy and smuggling activities cannot be underestimated. These individuals face heightened stress, anxiety, and feelings of alienation, which may manifest in behavioural issues and academic disengagement. The need for targeted interventions that address both the cognitive and behavioural aspects of these challenges is evident.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) offers a structured and evidence-based approach to address the cognitive distortions and negative thought patterns that underlie truancy and engagement in smuggling activities. By helping adolescents reframe their perceptions and develop adaptive coping strategies, CBT holds the potential to break the cycle of maladaptive behaviours. Sulaiman and Uhuegbu (2021) reported that the overall intention when using cognitive restructuring is to help clients move away from more extreme and unhelpful ways of seeing things to more helpful and balanced conclusions. In the Ogun State context, tailoring CBT to address the specific challenges related to academic pressures, economic stressors, and the allure of smuggling is essential for its effectiveness.

Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy (ABAT) focuses on modifying observable behaviours through reinforcement and consequences. It is an individualized behavioural modification whereby skills are taught, and socially “undesirable” or “inappropriate” behaviour is regulated according to expert claims that focus on correction, imitation, repetition, reinforcements, and environmental modification (Gruson-Wood, 2016). In the context of truancy and smuggling tendency, ABAT can serve as a complementary approach to CBT. By establishing a system of rewards for positive behaviours, such as regular school attendance, and consequences for engaging in smuggling activities, ABAT aims to reshape behaviours at a practical and observable level.

The integration of CBT and ABAT in addressing truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency holds promise for transformative change. Successful implementation, however, hinges on collaboration among educators, mental health professionals, and community stakeholders. Long-term success requires a commitment to ongoing research, evaluation, and adaptation of therapeutic interventions to the unique socio-cultural context of border towns in Ogun State. In conclusion, the impact of cognitive behavioural and applied behaviour analysis therapies on truancy among in-school adolescents with smuggling tendency in border towns of Ogun State is a critical area of study. The exploration of these therapeutic interventions within the specific socio-economic and cultural context of the region provides a foundation for developing targeted and effective strategies to mitigate the complex challenges faced by these adolescents.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study;

- i. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores on truancy among in-school adolescents with smuggling tendency exposed to cognitive behavioural therapy, applied behaviour analysis therapy and the control group.
- ii. There is no significant gender difference in the post-test mean scores on truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency exposed to treatment and control groups.

Methodology

Research Design

Quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test control group research design was used for the study. The design was found appropriate for the study because it gives room for the treatment (ABAT and CBT) of subject to condition with a view to determining its effectiveness on the psychosocial variables of adolescents with smuggling tendency. Also,

it was found suitable for usage because it did not allow full randomization of the subjects into experimental groups. There were three experimental groups for the study. Two treatment groups and one control group.

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
A (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy)	O₁	X_A	O₂
B (Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy)	O₁	X_B	O₂
C (Control Group)	O₁	X_C	O₂

Figure 1: Diagrammatic Representation of the Research Design

Where: X_A = Treatment 1: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
 X_B = Treatment 2: Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy (ABAT)
 X_C = Control Group

Population of the Study

The population for this study comprised all Senior Secondary School Two (SSS 2) students in public secondary schools in the border towns of Idi-roko, Imeko, Ijoun, Ohumbe, Ilara and Ilase below the age of 18 years in Ogun State. Specifically, the participants through the baseline assessment comprised all identifiable in-school adolescents with smuggling tendency, male and female, who were free from the pressure of writing the final senior secondary school certificate examination.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

A sample of 111 students consisting of 66 male and 45 female were used for the study. A multistage sampling process was adopted to select the participants for the study. The participants were selected in five stages. At first, the researcher used purposive sampling technique to select the three Local Government Areas of Ipokia, Yewa North and Imeko-Afon Local Government Areas where the six border towns are located. There are six border towns in the three Local Government Areas with 2 located in each of the three Local Government Areas. At the second stage, simple random sampling was used to select three border towns (that is, one in each Local Government Area). In the third stage, simple random sampling was used to select one public senior secondary school in each of the three border towns selected in the second stage. The fourth stage involved using a baseline questionnaire titled Students in Business Questionnaire (SIBQ) to purposely select adolescents in Senior Secondary School Two (SSS 2) with smuggling tendency from the schools selected in the second stage. There were 442 students. A total of 111 students from the senior secondary schools were identified as adolescents with smuggling tendency.

Table 1

Distribution of Sample in Pre -assessment selection for baseline data

Pre-Assessment (Using SIBQ)		Experimental Groups	Gender		
School	Total		Male	Female	Total
A	150	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	24	12	36
B	172	Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy	25	13	38
C	120	Control Group	17	20	37
Total	442	Total	66	45	111

Finally, the groups were assigned into treatment and control groups through simple random sampling. 36 students, 24 male, 12 female for CBT, 38 students, comprising 25 male, 13 female for ABAT, while 37 students, 17 male and 20 female were in the control group.

Research Instruments

The following research instruments were used for collecting relevant data for the study:

1. Student in Business Questionnaire (SIBQ)
2. Truancy Needs Assessment Questionnaire (TNAQ)

Students in Business Questionnaire (SIBQ) is a researcher-developed instrument that was used to identify the in-school adolescents with smuggling tendency. This baseline questionnaire designed by the researcher contains two (2) sections – A and B. Section A contains personal data such as age, gender and so on, while section B contains ten (10) items. This was administered to know the status and number of students who have the tendency for smuggling based on the scoring template for the study. Response format for SIBQ is a four point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD), which was scored 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively for positive items, while the negative items were scored in the reverse order for example, SA = 1, A = 2, D = 3, SD = 4. It has a maximum obtainable score of 40 and a minimum of 10. The higher the score, the higher the smuggling tendency. The qualifying range of score on the SIBQ is 20 and above. It should be noted that the listed items of business on the baseline questionnaire are either prohibited or controlled by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

Truancy Assessment Questionnaire (TAQ) was developed by the researcher to seek students' view on their belief of possible causes of absenteeism and truancy in school. It has a 5-point rating scale of starting from 1 being “Not a Cause” to 5 being “Definitely a Cause”. A low score indicates the absence of absenteeism and a high score indicates a high

tendency of absenteeism and truancy.

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity. To achieve this, copies of the instruments were given to three resource persons in the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Lagos. Comments and observation of the resource persons were incorporated in the copies used for pilot study and field exercise. A test-retest reliability was used to determine the stability of the instruments. A sample of 20 students were selected from a school that was not part of the main study. The instrument was administered twice within two weeks interval. The scores generated were used to compute the correlation coefficient using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. A correlation coefficient of at least 0.7 was used as a criterion to select the instrument. The SIBQ and TNAQ respectively had 0.89 and 0.74.

A pilot study was carried out by the researcher to ascertain the feasibility of the study, optimize the approaches and practices necessary for the main project. This was carried out in a school that is not part of the main study. It comprised 30 students (15 male and 15 female). Ten students were randomly assigned to each of CBT, ABAT and Control Group.

In order to gain access to the respondents, a letter of introduction was obtained from the Head of Department, Educational Foundation Faculty of Education, University of Lagos, Yaba, Lagos State to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Abeokuta, Ogun State, to enable the researcher undertake the study in the selected schools for the research. The purpose was to seek the consent of the ministry, to allow the respondents participate in the study. The researcher randomly visited the various border towns on different days of the week, but for uniformity the same procedure was followed. The researcher obtained verbal consent from the respondents before administering the questionnaires. Thereafter, the procedure for the completion of the questionnaires was explained to the respondents by the researcher. Two research assistants with graduate and postgraduate qualifications in Guidance and Counselling, who were trained and remunerated by the researcher, assisted by helping the researcher in distributing and collecting the questionnaires on the spot. The questionnaires for the study were administered to the respondents in their various schools.

Study Procedure: The baseline questionnaires were administered across the selected schools in the first week to ascertain the number and status of students with smuggling tendency. The study was on for a period of seven (7) weeks. This was divided into three phases:

Phase 1: Pre-Test Assessment: The research samples were given a pretest before the treatment. This test was jointly administered by the researcher and two research assistants. The questionnaires were scored by the researcher. The pre-test was used to determine the comparability of the two groups, experimental and control. This was given a week before the treatment sessions.

Phase 2: Treatment: The main treatment for the study was assigned to two treatment groups; Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy (ABAT). The treatment group met once in a week for six weeks.

The Control Group: The control group was not subjected to any treatment.

Phase 3: Post Test Assessment: At the end of the treatment, the post-test questionnaires were re-administered to the respondents (The control and experimental groups). The questionnaires (pre-test and post-tests) were analyzed by the researcher. This was the last week of the study.

Treatment Procedure

Group A: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

The Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) was provided in one category on a group basis. CBT- takes a much broader approach to encourage wholesome and lasting development in the respondent. Cognitive therapies also centre upon identifying the thought, thought process and emotional underpinnings that shape external behaviours. Therefore, the goal of CBT is to teach adolescents who have the tendency of smuggling to change thought patterns and bring about good behaviour.

Group Therapy Session

Participants were exposed to group therapy sessions for one (1) hour once in a week with effect from the first week of the treatment for six (6) weeks.

Session One: Introduction of group members. Researcher welcomed group members. Discussion with clients on confidentiality and right to privacy. A look at negative thought patterns. Cognitive restructuring or reframing. Thought patterns in certain situations were discussed. Identification of negative thoughts and replacement with more balanced thoughts, through, awareness, asking questions and finding alternative views.

Session Two: Guided Discovery- Exposing learners to situations and language in order to let them understand the rules themselves. Clients' viewpoint were expressed. Questions on viewpoint were asked and other viewpoints were assessed.

Exposure therapy- Exposing clients to the stimulus that causes fear in a safe environment through imaginal and flooding types of exposure therapy, such as the introduction of a customs officer.

Session Three: Exposure to fear factors- Fear of poverty, law enforcement officers, rejection, separation, death etc. Guidance on Coping with each fear factor. Questions on effect of coping with fear factor. Journaling and thought records- Capturing one's thought in a journal or diary when, what and effect. Assignment on listing of negative thoughts that occurred between sessions and listing of positive thoughts that also occurred. Listing of New behaviours vis-à-vis thoughts.

Session Four: Researcher welcomed group members. Review of assignment. Activity scheduling and behaviour activation- scheduling one's activities by engaging in pleasant activities, and thus activate behaviour. Listing activities to put off on the calendar. Decision making based on the calendar. Identification of good habits based on decisions made through calendar. Behavioural experiments such as kindness and helping others in certain situations.

Session Five: Identifying tasks that make client anxious and the likely consequences. Identifying lower anxiety tasks and results. Building on lower anxiety tasks. Relaxation and stress reduction techniques. Deep breathing exercises. Muscle relaxation. Imagery.

Session Six: Role Playing. Improve problem solving skills- Definition, Cause, Identification and Solution. Gaining familiarity and confidence. Practicing social skills- Listening, Communication, Leadership, Empathy, Relationship building. Assertiveness training- Confidence, Clarity and Calmness. Improving Communication Skills- Listening, Speaking Writing etc. Successive Approximation- Breaking over whelming tasks into smaller achievable steps in order to build confidence. Discussion on smuggling and its likely consequences. Discussion on education as a basic tool for self-development. Reviews group members' latest scores on questionnaires after distribution and collection of the questionnaires. Session closure.

Group B: Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy (ABAT)

The Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy was administered on a group basis for a period of six (6) weeks. Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy addresses specific and immediate behavioural issues. This therapy constitutes a reliable assessment of social or environmental variables and proven adaptive methods for behaviour modification. Applied Behaviour Analysis is based on learning theory which comes from the field of

behavioural psychology. One of the common techniques used is naturalistic teaching.

Group Session

The researcher had group sessions with members once in a week for one (1) hour in six (6) weeks starting from the first week of treatment.

Session One: Introduction of group members. Therapist/Researcher welcomed group members

Discussion with clients on confidentiality and right to privacy. Discussion on legal and stress-free business ideas in their environment such as shoe shining, barbing and dress making. Reviews group members' tendencies to business

Session Two: Links business tendencies to personal problems. Highlight types of illegal business and the risks involved. Introduction to, and definition of smuggling. Discussion on other money-making ventures around the border, while in school without losing focus on education. Examples are: car wash, food sales, cleaning jobs and farming.

Session Three: Discussion on career prospects and vocations. Assignment was given on career and vocational goals.

Session Four: Researcher welcomes group members and reviews their assignment. Evaluate group members' goals and dreams for the future.

Session Five: Discussion on the importance of education. They role played careers such as doctor, teacher, police officer and so on, as these were better career options than engage in smuggling.

Session Six: Researcher welcomes group members. Short revision on sessions and feedback. Reviews group members' latest scores on Questionnaires after distribution and collection of the questionnaires. Terminate group therapy.

Control Group

Participants in this group were not given any treatment during the study, but were given a general talk on dining etiquettes and table manners that was not related to any treatment package to engage them.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected during the field exercise were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics that were used are percentage, mean, standard deviation and mean difference. All the hypotheses were analyzed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores on truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency exposed to cognitive behavioural therapy, applied behaviour analysis therapy and the control group.

Table 1

Mean Difference Analysis on Truancy due to Experimental Conditions

Experimental Groups	N	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean Difference
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	36	37.00	8.56	35.78	7.33	-1.22
Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy	38	32.74	8.30	30.92	10.12	-1.82
Control Group	37	54.54	10.08	57.70	15.03	3.16
Total	111	41.39	13.04	41.42	16.22	0.04

The result of the mean difference in Table 1 shows reduction in truancy for participants in ABAT (-1.82) and CBT (-1.22). However, an increase in truancy in participants in the CG (3.16) was observed. Table 2 displays the ANCOVA result which displays the significance of the mean differences.

Table 2

ANCOVA Result on Truancy

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	19137.81	3	6379.270	69.614	.000
Intercept	892.276	1	892.276	9.737	.002
Covariate	3993.426	1	3993.426	43.578	.000
Group	1461.916	2	730.958	7.977	.001
Error	9805.289	107	91.638		
Total	219408.000	111			
Corrected Total	28943.099	110			

The computed F value ($F = 7.977$; $p < 0.05$) shows a value significant. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that there is significant difference in the post-test mean scores on truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency exposed to experimental conditions. A pairwise analysis was computed to determine the pair that was significant. The result is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3
Pairwise Analysis on Truancy

(I) Experimental Groups	(J) Experimental Groups	Mean Difference (I - J)	Sig. ^b
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy	1.980	.385
	Control Group	-10.089 *	.001
Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	-1.980	.385
	Control Group	-12.069 *	.000
Control Group	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	10.089 *	.001
	Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy	12.069 *	.000

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level. b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons:

Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

The result shows that only the pair of CG with each of ABAT ($t = 12.07$; $p < 0.05$) and CBT ($t = 10.09$) was found to be significant.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant gender difference in the post-test mean scores on truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency exposed to treatment and control groups.

Table 4
Mean Difference Analysis on Truancy due to Experimental Conditions and Gender.

Experimental Groups	Gender	N	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean Difference
			Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy	Male	24	39.25	8.36	35.08	7.34	-4.17
	Female	12	32.50	7.33	37.17	7.44	4.67
	Total	36	37.00	8.56	35.78	7.33	-1.22
Applied Behaviour Analysis Therapy	Male	25	32.72	8.30	30.76	9.18	-1.96
	Female	13	32.77	8.64	31.23	12.13	-1.54
	Total	38	32.74	8.30	30.92	10.12	-1.82
Control Group	Male	17	49.18	10.45	44.29	9.39	-4.88
	Female	20	59.10	7.27	69.10	7.48	10.00
	Total	37	54.54	10.08	57.70	15.03	3.16
Total	Male	66	39.33	10.92	35.82	10.03	-3.52
	Female	45	44.40	15.28	49.64	19.82	5.24
	Total	111	41.39	13.04	41.42	16.22	0.04

The male participants in CBT with a mean difference of -4.17 had a better reduction in truancy in than those in ABAT with -1.96. Similarly, the female participants in ABAT with a mean difference of -1.54 had reduction in truancy. Table 5 further shows the outcome of the ANCOVA used to determine whether the mean differences is significant.

Table 5
ANCOVA Result on Truancy due to Experimental Conditions and Gender

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	22728.595	6	3788.099	63.394	.000
Intercept	1842.047	1	1842.047	30.827	.000
Covariate	1893.193	1	1893.193	31.683	.000
Group	1938.200	2	969.100	16.218	.000
Gender	1881.672	1	1881.672	31.490	.000
Group * Gender	1642.224	2	821.112	13.741	.000
Error	6214.504	104	59.755		
Total	219408.000	111			
Corrected Total	28943.099	110			

F value ($F = 13.741$; $p < 0.05$) computed in Table 5 shows significant gender difference in the post-test mean scores on truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency exposed to treatment and control groups. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted.

Discussion of Findings

CBT and ABAT were found to be good treatment packages to manage truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency. The control group was not subjected to any treatment, hence, there was an increase in truancy among in-school adolescents in the border towns of Ogun State, Nigeria. The implication of this finding is that CBT and ABAT are efficient in the modification of behaviour with regards to smuggling tendency as it affects truancy. In a related study, Anyamene, et al. (2017) and Ibili (2022) reported that the treatment packages had significant effects on truants and consequently reduced truancy among adolescents. Shehu (2018) similarly noted factors such as parental education, wealth and distance to school as factors influencing learners' non-attendance. Abdullah, et al. (2018) during their study of factors that influence truancy among adolescents, identified environmental, attitude of the teacher and self-factors as what leads to truancy in the school.

Also, the study revealed that there was significant gender difference in the post-test mean scores on truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency exposed to treatment and control groups. The male participants in the CBT and female participants in the ABAT group were observed to be significant respectively. Male participants seemed to adjust quickly to changing thought patterns when exposed to CBT, while the female participants seemed to adjust easily to social and environmental variables which is a basic feature of ABAT, than their male counterparts. However, the study varied from the observation of Obiunu and Ozuri (2018), who reported that gender had no significant relationship with truancy among secondary school students in Edo State, Nigeria. Also, Sulaiman and Uhuegbu (2021) during their study of the effect of cognitive restructuring and token economy techniques on truancy reduction among secondary school students in Lagos state reported that gender had no significant effect on the reduction of truancy, but females play truants more than males.

Conclusion

The study observed that both therapies (ABAT and CBT) were effective in the management of truancy among in-school adolescents with smuggling tendency. The ABAT group was observed to be marginally better than CBT. Besides, there was no interaction effect of gender and experimental conditions on truancy among adolescents with smuggling tendency.

Recommendations

Due to the findings from the study, it was recommended as follows:

1. Group therapy sessions involving CBT and ABAT should be integrated into the school curriculum to curb and prevent truancy among adolescents, particularly in border towns.
2. Gender of adolescents should be put into consideration when planning an intervention for adolescents with smuggling tendency as it affects truancy.

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