

# **Effect of Self-Instruction Technique on Stealing Tendency among Secondary School Students in Anambra State**

**By**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study determined the effects of the self instruction technique on stealing tendency among secondary school students in Anambra State. One research question was answered and one hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population size was 201 students, 100 male JS II and 101 female students purposively drawn from three co-educational secondary schools in Awka Education Zone, in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The sample size was 73 students, 37 males and 36 females who were selected with the aid of 20 self-constructed but validated instruments, used for data collection as questionnaire on students' stealing tendency (QSST), which had four columns (1, 2, 3, 4). The instruments were validated by two experts from Guidance and Counselling Department and one expert from the Measurement and Evaluation Department of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability coefficient value of 0.72 was obtained using Pearson-product Moment Correlation. Mean scores and analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA), were used in answering the one research question and hypothesis respectively. The findings of this study revealed that self instruction technique, was effective on stealing tendency among secondary school students in Awka Education Zone, Anambra State, who were identified with stealing tendencies. In line with the above findings, it was recommended that guidance counsellors, teachers, and parents must guide, explain and discuss the detrimental consequences of stealing tendencies, role model their children/students behaviours and make sure that stealing tendency is not rewarded. However, if they still commit compulsive stealing tendency, the attention of an expert should be drawn.

**Keywords:** Effect, Self-instruction, Technique, Stealing tendency, School

## **Introduction**

Crimes in secondary schools especially ones that involves stealing tendency or taking fellow students belongings without their consent, are threats to the basis of safety and security, and the destruction of academic calendars. Crimes are behaviours which are considered abnormal when it is different from the norms of the society or does not conform to what the societies expect. In organized societies and cultures of the world, there are persons who do not abide by the laws of the land. Their behaviours invariably constitute threats to the citizenry and the society at large.

Most secondary school students today, take fellow students' things without their consent to maintain parental approval, to gain attention, to boost their ego, to serve their feelings or someone else's feelings and to achieve their life's desires. They may have done all these things intentionally or unintentionally or may have taken these things to serve other reasons, but the truth is that these students have the tendency to steal. The effect of crimes in schools in Anambra State today, is not only felt by the individuals directly concerned, but the entire school authority, families and the society at large. There has been increasing concern of the government, police and the general public on the serious involvement of secondary school students in taking fellow students belongings without their consent and other conduct problems, (Eke, 2014).

Stealing is defined as the action of taking peoples' belongings without their consent and having no intention to return same. Stealing tendency therefore, is the urge which entails students to take fellow students money, property and belongings without their consent. According to Mahn (2010), stealing tendency has negative consequences for not only the individuals and their respective families, but also for the neighborhood and community at large. The manifestation of stealing tendency among secondary school students, has remained an age long problem in the Nigerian secondary school system.

However, stealing tendency refers to a likelihood that a person would engage in a particular behaviour or action (Anyamene, Nwokolo & Maduegbuna, 2015). Macmillan (2013), defined tendency as a strong chance that something will happen in a particular way. With the above definitions, stealing tendency, means that there is a high possibility, likelihood that a students would take someone's belonging without the person's consent or permission. It is also an inclination of a student to manifest anti-social behaviour, characteristics, traits and attitudes as well as express opinions that encourage stealing. Stealing tendencies heighten the

possibility of beliefs, feelings, thoughts and psychological arousal to embrace the act of taking peoples belongings without their consent or permission.

Stealing tendency among secondary school students is heightened by numerous factors, which include – impulse drive, antisocial behaviours, peer groups, single parenthood, genetic disposition and socio-economic status of parents and poor parents practices and training, Grant et al (2011). According to the study carried out by Ajake, Etuk and Omori (2010), there are high rates of school complaints about students’ stealing tendency, which may have emanated from the child’s upbringing at home. They inferred, that as the students grow older, they have more courage to try out new things such as more criminal acts and rebellious nature also increases. Despite the early age at onset of taking fellow students belongings, as well as the significant adult morbidity associated with this behaviour, stealing tendency among secondary school students has historically received relatively little interventions from teachers, clinicians and researchers.

Teachers and parents have often resorted to the use of punitive measures, like corporal punishments, suspension and expulsion, in dealing with students who take fellow students’ belongings within and outside the school environments. These approaches utilized by parents and teachers in curbing stealing tendency among secondary school students have many a time proved ineffective. This is why, the present researcher decided to determine the effects of self-instruction technique on stealing tendency among secondary school students in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State.

According to Mahn (2010), self-instructional technique, which aims to give clients control over their behaviours, through guided self-talk, gradually becomes covert and self-generated. O’Leary and Dubey (2008) stated that, a potentially important method for developing self-control in secondary school students (adolescents) is through self-instructional technique, a form of cognitive restructuring technique, in which individuals are taught to make suggestions to themselves in order to guide their behaviours.

Self-instruction technique has been proved to be effective on different types of undesirable behaviours among students, on the studies carried out by these scholars (Staver & Jack, 2006; Abodike, 2010; Onyia, 2010; Nwankwo & Obi, 2011; Chinwuba, 2010). Therefore, the

researcher, assumed that self-instruction technique, will be effective on secondary school students' stealing tendency, in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Taking peoples' belongings without their consent, is a disturbing issue confronting many secondary school students, parents, Guidance Counsellors, teachers, Government and the society at large. Taking together the increase in number of student offenders, the severity of stealing tendency and its overwhelming consequences, the society has validated the notion that, stealing tendency among secondary school students has become a prominent national issue. In all its ramifications, stealing tendency has destructive and dysfunctional effects on the lives of the individuals involved. It could lead to the end of their lives when they are caught in such act or leads to life jail and other consequences.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study was to determine the effects of self-instruction technique on stealing tendency among secondary school students in Anambra state specifically, the study intends to determine:

- 1) the effect of Self Instruction technique, on stealing tendency among secondary school students in Anambra State, when compared with those in the control group, using their pre-test and post-test mean scores.

### **Research Question**

- 1) What are the effect of self instruction technique on the stealing tendency among secondary school students when compared with those in the control group, using their pre-test and post-test mean scores?

### **Hypothesis**

The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 levels of significance.

- 1) There will be no significant difference in the effects of self instruction technique on stealing tendency among secondary school students, when compared with those in the control group treated with conventional counselling method using their post-test mean scores.

### **Method**

This study adopted quasi experimental research design, comprising two experimental groups and one control group (pre test, post test and control groups). Many quasi experimental methods are available, but the one that will be used for this study is the non-randomized pre-test, post-test and control group design. There were two groups of participants from three co-education schools, chosen purposively. Group one was administered with treatments, while two group was used as the control group. This study was conducted in Anambra State of Nigeria. Anambra State is one of the thirty-six states in Nigeria, located in the South East geo-political zone of the country bounded by Kogi State in the north, in the south Imo by State, in the west Delta State and in the East Enugu State. For the purpose of this study, Awka-Education Zone was used. Awka Educational Zone of Anambra State which has eighteen co-educational secondary schools was selected for the study. The researcher purposively sampled students from this area, because of its high population density, which accommodates many students with various levels of maladjustive behaviours especially stealing tendency.

The population of this study was 201 students (males and females), made up of all the junior (JSS 2) and senior SSS 2 secondary school students from all the eighteen co-educational secondary schools under Awka Education Zone. Anambra State, identified to have stealing tendency, and was selected purposively. The students' population was identified through the pretest administration of Stealing Tendency Instrument (STI).

The sample size for this study was 73 students, identified through the pretest. This comprised samples of all the junior and senior co-educational secondary school students (JSS2 &SSS2), that were identified, with stealing tendency instruments. In applying the pretest instrument, those who scored 41 to 49 and above, were selected as the students exhibiting stealing tendency, while those students who scored below 41, were ignored.

An instrument developed by the researcher, labelled Questionnaire on Students' Stealing Tendency (QSST) was used for assessment. The Questionnaire had the introductory-part A, which indicated the instructions to the respondents, age, class and sex. Part-B, was structured towards indicating students' frequency levels of stealing tendency. These respondents, were expected to indicate their acceptance or non-acceptance of the stealing tendency items shown in the different columns.

The reliability of the instrument was determined, through a pilot testing. The data collected using test re-test method was analyzed, using Pearson-product Moment Correlation, which yielded the co-efficient  $r=0.72$ . The data which was collected for the study was analyzed, using statistically weighted mean in answering the research question and then Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), was used in testing the hypothesis.

## Result

The data collected from the field for this study were analyzed and the summaries were presented in tables to highlight the findings.

### Research Question 1

What are the effects of self-instruction technique on stealing tendency of secondary school students when compared with those treated with conventional counselling using their pretest and posttest scores?

**Table 1 Pretest and Posttest mean scores on stealing tendency of students treated with SIT and those treated with conventional counselling**

Source of Variation	N	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Lost Mean	Remark
Self-instruction Tech.	28	60.36	34.11	26.25	Effective
Control	21	55.05	51.67	3.38	

Table 1 revealed that the students treated with Self-instruction technique had pretest mean score of 60.56 and posttest mean score of 34.11 with lost mean 26.25 in their stealing tendency scores, while those in the control group who were taught with conventional counselling had pretest mean score of 55.05 and posttest mean score of 51.67 with lost mean 3.38. With posttest mean of 34.11 which is below 40.00.

### Null hypothesis

The effect of self-instruction technique on stealing tendency of secondary school students is not significant when compared with those treated with conventional counselling using their posttest mean scores.

**Table 2 ANCOVA on the effect of self-instruction technique on stealing tendency of secondary school students compared with those treated with conventional counselling using their posttest mean scores**

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	Pvalue	$P \leq 0.05$
Corrected Model	3769.095	2	1884.548			
Intercept	258.470	1	258.470			

Pretest	69.053	1	69.053			
TreatmentModel	3265.513	1	3265.513	201.28	0.000	S
Error	746.293	46	16.224			
Total	89446.000	49				
Corrected Total	4515.388	48				

In table 2, it was observed that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 48df denominator, the calculated F is 201.28 with P-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected. So, the effect of self-instruction technique on stealing tendency of secondary school students is significant.

## Discussion

### Effect of Self-Instruction Technique on Students' Stealing Tendency

In this study, self instruction technique proved very effective in modifying stealing tendency among secondary school students. In contrast with the hypothesis 1, it was observed that there was a significant difference between the post-test mean scores of the control group. The experimental group 1 and the post-test mean scores were greatly reduced more than the control group post-test mean scores. This is because the mean loss for the students exposed to the self instruction technique when compared to the mean loss of the control group is lower (26.25)(3.38) and this formed the yardstick for the judgment. This means that, the treatment had an effective impact on the students' stealing tendency. These findings are similar to the findings of Lounge (2014), Kendal (2012), Eva in Nwamuo and Ekwe (2005) and others. The results of their studies respectively showed that, self instruction technique was effective in modifying stealing tendency, maladaptive and undesirable behaviours, that hinged on internalized wrong thoughts and beliefs. They stated that, wrong choices, errors and negative thoughts and beliefs contributed to undesirable behaviours among individuals and students. By modifying these thoughts and beliefs which are often irrational and illogical, individuals can be modified to behave in a healthier manner. The changes in the post-test mean scores of the stealing tendency in the experimental group 1, indicates that the self instruction technique had much impact on them. Therefore, the use of self instruction technique, in modifying stealing tendency among secondary school students is a veritable method and procedure.

### Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have numerous implications. Having known that self instruction techniques on stealing tendency among secondary school students in Awka Education zone proved effective, therefore, the major implication of this counselling technique, rather than the former classical measures which had failed entirely on reducing stealing tendency in all levels of education.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study and its implications, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Parents, teachers and school guidance and counsellors should set specific rules for students who take peoples things without their consent, and give specific punishments when stealing tendency occurs. They should make sure that there is a reward and praise for being honest. For example, when students are dishonest about their misdeeds, they should provide a punishment for the dishonesty. Parents, teachers and school should be careful, however, not to be too severe or too frequent in their punishment, or their children may continue to take peoples things without their consent, as a means of protecting themselves, satisfying their needs, and other motives.
2. Teachers should try to refer these offenders to the school guidance counsellors for proper diagnosis of the problems, dialogue and immediate counselling before it goes out of hand, since it was observed and proved that these students take peoples things because of their ignorance of the underlying detrimental consequences of stealing tendency.
3. Parents, teachers and school guidance counsellors must explain and discuss why not taking people's things without their consents is important. Parents must begin teaching their children the benefits of getting satisfied with whatever they have while their children are young.

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