

**IMPROVING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF A GRADE EIGHT STUDENT
EMPOWERING COMPETENCE, AUTONOMY SUPPORT AND RELATEDNESS
THROUGH SCIENCE ACTIVITIES: AN ACTION RESEARCH**

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Teachers' support of students' basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness facilitates students' autonomous self-regulation for learning, empowering academic performance and well-being. Teachers can nurture these needs by autonomy-supportive behaviours. Thus, it creates more opportunities for students to work on their own. Autonomy-supportive teachers promote the relevance of schoolwork, provide more opportunities for choice, ask more questions about what students want to do, and praise signs of improvement. As there was a Grade eight student with meagre attendance, this action research was conducted to improve the attendance of a student who was absent from school regularly (only once in two weeks) by enhancing three innate needs of intrinsic motivation: Competence, Autonomy support, and Relatedness (CAR). This was accomplished through various science activities in a 1AB school in the Dehiowita education zone. Discussions were held with the student, the teacher of Grade Eight, the sectional head, and the child's mother to explore the reasons for poor attendance, interests of the child, learning style, and level of achievement as the first phase of the intervention process. Existing CAR was estimated using a multidimensional questionnaire as pre-intervention. Different activities in science with the supportiveness of CAR were conducted with the students with the support of the school community as lab-based activities, innovations with the support of technology teachers, scientific drawings with other science teachers, and equipment handling with lab assistants as the steps of interventions. The same multidimensional questionnaire was administered to measure student CAR after the intervention. The mean statistics of CAR were 1.5, 1.85, and 1.43, respectively, prior to the intervention, and related mean statistics of CAR were 3.35, 3.54, and 3.26 after the intervention. Thus, student's interest in engagement in science has been improved while increasing student's school attendance with the enhancement of science performance. As such, this study concludes that the empowerment of CAR is highly effective in the enhancement of student school attendance and performance while developing student's intrinsic motivation.

Keywords: Attendance, Autonomy support, Competence, Relatedness, Science activities