

## INFLUENCE OF PEER PRESSURE ON ADOLESCENTS' MISBEHAVIOUR AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OSOGBO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OSUN STATE

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**Abstract:** *The continuous students' misbehavior necessitates careful consideration because there are several different pressures leading to adolescent misbehavior at school. One of the contributing factors is peer pressure among students. This study therefore, identifies that there is need to investigate the influence of peer pressure on adolescents' misbehavior among secondary school students. A sample of two hundred (200) students from ten (10) secondary schools (5 public and 5 private) were randomly selected from Oshogbo Local Government Area of Osun State in Nigeria. An instrument titled Peer Pressure and Adolescent Misbehavior Questionnaire (PPAMQ) was used for data collection. The results showed that adolescent misbehavior is prevalent among secondary school students and peer group negatively influence adolescent misbehavior. Statistically there was no significant difference on the influence of peer pressure on adolescents' misbehavior based on school type and gender. ( $t = 2.06$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and ( $t = 2.06$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Within the limitations of the findings of this study, it is hereby recommended that school counsellors need to understand: adolescents' misbehavior in the context of school type, in order to reduce the rate of adolescents' misbehavior in school. Students should also be educated on the negative implications of adolescent misbehavior and strict disciplinary measures should be meted out to students identified with adolescent misbehavior.*

**Keywords:** *adolescence; misbehavior; peer pressure; positive; negative.*

## Introduction

Adolescence is described as the developmental period between childhood and adulthood and is characterized by substantial physical, cognitive, social and affective changes (Lerner & Steinberg, 2004). Adolescence is the transitory period that individual passes through in his/her growth from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence is defined as a young person who is developing from child into an adult. In addition, Adedayo (2011) stated that the adolescent stage is the period of transition from dependence upon adult direction and protection to self-dependence and self-determination. Studies have shown that the period consists of pressure which may be either internal or external to the young adult (Adams, 2006 & Schneider, 2010). Besides being a transitory period, they posited that it is a time of self-definition for the young individual. Subsequently, it is noted that young people during their adolescence join different peer groups and identify themselves with these groups by participating in their activities in order not to be rejected. Peer group is defined as individuals who are equals for instance in terms of their age, status or skills. Brown & Larson (2019) defined peer group as a group of individuals in the same life stage. According to Palmer (2018), peer groups are among the most significant social contexts in adolescence that help to establish norms of behavior and normally develop a culture that manifests itself in aspects like language, dress, hairstyle, sports, and drinking habits.

However, adolescents tend to associate with peers who share similar behaviors, preferences and attitudes including academic aspiration, music taste, political opinion, fashion style or preferred leisure activities (Brechtwald & Prinstein, 2011). Peer groups create and maintain a culture separate from home in which adolescents are raised. Many young people spend more time with peers than with parents or other family members (Gara 2016). However, adolescents often experience peer influence to be like other peers at a time when they are trying to be more independent. This influence is pressure, planned or unplanned, exerted by peers to influence personal behavior and peer pressure is the persuasive influence that friends have over their peers, which can cause one to associate with certain people, to wear certain clothes, to use certain words and to use certain language (Palmer, 2018).

Peer pressure can be seen as the influence exerted by peer group in encouraging a person to change his/her attitude, values or behaviors to conform to the group. An adolescence affected by peer pressure may or may not want to belong to this group. They may also recognize dissociative groups that they do not wish to belong and therefore, adopt behavior in opposition to those of the group. However, most children in this situation are not discriminatory about the kind of group they join in as much as such behavior

is approved by their peer group irrespective of its acceptability or legality in the larger society.

Since majority of the students in secondary falls into adolescent stage, misbehavior in schools has become the concern in most schools in Nigeria and indeed many other countries worldwide (Owens, 2012). Ali, Dada, Isiaka & Salmon (2014) identified the various common forms of adolescents' misbehavior as late coming, bunking classes, drug and alcoholic abuse, bullying, love affairs, vandalism, assault on the school prefects, insult on educators, wearing the wrong school uniform, use of the mobile phone, smoking, writing or using foul language in class, work not done, class disruption and immoral acts which constitute a great challenge to teachers.

Rima (2008) asserted that adolescents in Nigeria engage in break laws and commit crimes such as murder, stealing and abuse drugs at school.

Mattessich and Hosley (2014) found that adolescents' misbehavior rarely occurs in isolation, and that children with severe behavioral problems usually have a collection of problems thereby making it difficult to understand their problems. Adolescents' misbehavior not only escalated with time but also lower academic achievement and increase delinquent behaviors. To lessen these immediate and gradual adverse effects of student misbehaviors, it is of primary importance to identify what exactly are these behaviors inside classroom. According to Reed and Kirkpatrick (2012), adolescents' misbehaviors include; disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness to teacher, defiance and hostility.

Kim & Got (2016) discovered high level of peer influence on delinquent behaviors with no discrimination on the platform of ethnicity. Cashwell (2016) also found that Peer group provides adolescents with the attitudes, motivation and rationalization that support delinquent behaviors and the opportunities to engage in the acts thereby attesting peer influence on delinquent behaviors. Salmivalli (2010) also attested to the above premised on the finding that violent towards others are usually seen as an indication of physically and psychologically strength among the peers of the perpetrator. Mounts (2014) attributed peer pressure and parenting style as determinants of delinquent behaviors which are also in line with Gara (2016) and Dillon, Pantin, Robin and Szapocznik (2018). Asmak (2016) showed that peer influence on students involved in misconduct is as high as 63.3%. Male students were also found to be willing to take the risk of their actions and behaviors without considering failure in their studies in as much such behaviors is valued by their peers. Pyrooz & Decker (2013) also attested to the

relationship that exists between adolescents' misbehavior and peers influence to commit group misconduct, especially violence.

The principal's role is to design and implement the most effective learner discipline management strategies in order to instill a positive school climate. However, to be successful as an effective learner discipline management leader in his/her school, the principal must understand the various causes of adolescent misbehavior that are predominant in the school. As such, this study seeks to investigate the influence of peer pressure on adolescents' misbehavior in senior secondary schools in Osogbo Local Government Area of Osun State.

**Statement of the Problem:** In most Nigerian schools and homes, adolescents have proved to be very difficult to discipline. Some of these behaviors are not easy to deal with or to control. Most adolescents drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes and they are known for their misbehavior. The type of behaviors these adolescents are exposed to is believed to be highly motivated by peer pressure which leads them to commit crimes under the influence of alcohol. Such crimes include beating other children, bullying others at school, stealing, school absenteeism. In addition, there are many reported cases of suicide among adolescents.

However, since disruptive behaviors from secondary school students is a major and persistent administrative problem as well as a public health problem, it is of utmost importance to review the existing literature on the problem. And as such, this study investigated the influence of peer pressure on adolescents' misbehavior in senior secondary schools in Osogbo Local Government Area.

**Research Questions:** The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the prevalence of adolescent misbehaviour among secondary school students in Osogbo L.G.A?
2. What is the influence of peer group on adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students in Osogbo L.G.A
3. Would there be school type (public and private) difference in the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior in Oshogbo L.G.A?
4. Would there be gender (male and female) difference in the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior in Oshogbo L.G.A?

**Methodology:** A descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. The targeted population of the study comprised all adolescents in secondary schools in Osogbo Local Government Area of Osun State. The study employed simple random sampling technique in selecting Ten (10) secondary schools (5 public and 5 private), twenty (20) students were randomly selected

from each school making a total of two hundred (200) participants in the study. The study adopted a self-constructed instrument titled “Peer Pressure and Adolescent Misbehavior Questionnaire (PPAMQ)”. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: A, B and C. Section ‘A’ elicits responses on the demographic data of the respondents such as gender, level, school type among others, section ‘B’ contains 20 items on the prevalence of adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students while section ‘C’ contains 15 items on peer influence on adolescent misbehavior. The questionnaire was formulated on a four (4) point scale, ranging from Strongly Agreed (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). To ascertain the validity of the instrument, the initial draft of the instrument was given to two lecturers in the field of adolescent psychology to assess the suitability of the instrument in relation to the research topic. The instrument was also administered to 20 respondents who were not part of the study sample after which the instrument was subjected to Person Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis to establish the reliability of the instrument. Their responses were analyzed using Cronbach alpha analysis and a reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. Copies of the questionnaire were personally administered to 200 secondary school students and data collected were analyzed using frequency count, percentages, mean, standard deviation and t-test.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the prevalence of adolescent misbehavior

among secondary school students in Oshogbo L.G.A?

**Table 1: Statistical Analysis of the prevalence of adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students**

S/ N	VARIABLES	SDn (%)	D (%)	n	A n (%)	SA n (%)	MEA N	S.D
1	Some students damage school properties	56 (28.0)	65(32.5)		25(12.5)	54(27.0)	2.385	0.617
2	Students do fight each other	54(27.0)	46(23.0)		50(25.0)	50(25.0)	2.52	0.358
3	Some students are rude in their	41(20.5)	93(46.5)		29(14.5)	37(18.5)	2.69	0.521

	utterances to teachers						
4	Some students do argue blindly with teachers	135(67.5)	38(19.0)	20(10.0)	7(3.5)	1.495	0.825
5	Some students do cheat in class in class tests/examination	49(24.5)	52(26.0)	55(27.5)	44(22.0)	2.25	1.122
6	Some students do steal school properties	66(33.0)	87(43.5)	35(17.5)	12(6.0)	3.035	1.219
7	Some students do fight with teachers	23(11.5)	32(16.0)	117(58.5)	28(14.0)	2.75	1.336
8	Learners do bring other clothes to school rather than school uniform	32(16.0)	66(33.0)	38(19.0)	64(32.0)	2.33	1.072
9	Learners sometimes threaten other students	55(27.5)	46(23.0)	45(22.5)	54(27.0)	2.49	0.990
10	Students do take hard drugs	119(59.5)	51(25.5)	21(10.5)	9(4.5)	1.6	0.905
11	Some students do bully other students	86(43.0)	58(29.0)	32(16.0)	24(12.0)	3.03	0.569
12	Some students usually smoke cigarettes in school	39(19.5)	76(38.0)	64(32.0)	21(10.5)	2.665	1.553
13	Learners play electronic games during lessons with phones	2(1.0)	2(1.0)	47(23.5)	149(74.5)	1.285	0.622

14	Students are sometimes involved in examination malpractice	2(1.0)	2 (1.0)	47 (23.5)	149(74.5)	1.285	0.622
15	Learners do take advice from friends to threaten other students	123(61.5)	54(27.0)	19 (9.5)	4 (2.0)	1.52	0.749
16	Some students sometimes pretend to be sick so as to stay away from school	86(43.0)	58 (29.0)	32 (16.0)	24 (12.0)	3.03	0.569
17	Students do hide school materials	39(19.5)	76(38.0)	64 (32.0)	21 (10.5)	2.665	1.553
18	Some students are not civil in their discussion with other students	2(1.0)	2 (1.0)	47 (23.5)	149(74.5)	1.285	0.622
19	Some learners engage in truancy	2(1.0)	2 (1.0)	47 (23.5)	149(74.5)	1.285	0.622
20	Learners sometimes grab things from other students e.g. Food	123(61.5)	54(27.0)	19 (9.5)	4 (2.0)	1.52	0.749

Table 1 shows the prevalence of adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students in Osogbo Local Government Area. It can be seen that 39.5% of the respondents agreed that some students damage school properties while 60.5% of them disagreed, 50.0% of them agreed that students do fight each other while 50.0% of them disagreed, 33.0% of them said that Some students are rude in their utterances to teacher while 67.0% of them disagreed, 13.5% of the respondents opined that some learners do argue blindly with teachers while 67.0% disagreed, 49.5% of them agreed that some students do cheat in

class tests/examination while 50.5% of the respondents disagreed, 23.5% of the respondents said that some students do steal school properties while 76.5% of them disagreed, 72.5% of them believed that some students do fight with teachers while 27.5% disagreed, 51.0% of the respondents opined that Learners do bring other clothes to school rather than school uniform while 49.0% of them disagreed, 49.5% of them agreed that learners sometimes threaten other students while 50.5% of them disagreed, 15.0% of the respondents said that students do take hard drugs while 85.0% of them disagreed, 42.5% of them opined that some students do bully other students while 57.5% of them disagreed, 98.0% of them said that some students usually smoke cigarettes in school while 2.0% of them disagreed, 11.5% of them agreed that learners play electronic games during lessons with phone while 88.5% of them disagreed. 72.5% of them believed that students are sometimes involved in examination malpractice while 27.5% disagreed, 51.0% of the respondents opined that learners do take advice from friends to threaten other students while 49.0% of them disagreed, 49.5% of them agreed that some students sometimes pretend to be sick so as to stay away from school while 50.5% of them disagreed, 15.0% of the respondents said that students do hide school materials such books while 85.0% of them disagreed, 42.5% of them opined that some students are not civil in their discussion with other students while 57.5% of them disagreed, 98.0% of them believed that some students engage in truancy while 2.0% of them disagreed and 11.5% of them agreed that learners sometimes grab things such as food from other students while 88.5% of them disagreed.

**Research Question 2:** What is the influence of peer group on adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students in Osogbo L.G.A?

**Table 2: Statistical Analysis of influence of peer group on adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students**

S/N	Variables	SD n (%)	D n (%)	A n (%)	SA n (%)	Mean	S.D
1	I put on the kind of cloth my friends like	32(16.0)	48(24.0)	50(25.0)	70(35.0)	2.800	0.717
2	I cannot do anything on my own without input from my friends	15(7.50)	50(25.0)	60(30.0)	75(37.5)	2.975	0.658



3	I attend clubs in the company of my friends	25(12.5)	35(17.5)	50(25.0)	90(45.0)	3.025	0.621
4	What I do is determined by my friends	45(22.5)	70(35.0)	35(17.5)	50(25.0)	2.450	0.925
5	Most of my friends advice me to smoke marijuana	5(2.5)	50(25.0)	65(32.5)	80(40.0)	3.100	1.122
6	I like starting new activities	30(15.0)	35(17.5)	75(37.5)	60(30.0)	2.825	1.228
7	I receive advice from my friends to have a steady boyfriend or girlfriend	10(5.0)	30(15.0)	70(35.0)	90(45.0)	3.200	0.717
8	My friends taught me how to smoke	55(27.5)	35(17.5)	50(25.0)	60(30.0)	2.575	0.658
9	I want to experience relationship	30(15.0)	25(12.5)	60(30.0)	85(42.5)	3.000	0.621
10	Most of my friends advise me to drink beer or liquor	60(30.0)	30(15.0)	50(25.0)	60(30.0)	2.550	0.925
11	The friends I have advised me to give teachers a hard time	45(22.5)	50(25.0)	35(17.5)	70(35.0)	2.650	1.122
12	I discuss my learning problems	18(9.0)	19(9.5)	83(41.5)	80(40.0)	3.125	0.717

13	with my friends I do not go to my friends for clarification on what I was taught	61(30.5)	64(32.0)	30(15.0)	45(22.5)	2.295	0.658
14	My friend advised me to wear the types of cloth they wear	41(20.5)	55(27.5)	30(15.0)	74(37.0)	2.685	0.621
15	I want to explore my teenage years	46(23.0)	30(15.0)	69(34.5)	55(27.5)	2.665	0.925

Table 2 shows the influence of peer group on adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students in Osogbo Local Government Area. It can be seen that 60.0% of the respondents responded that they put on the kind of cloth their friends like while 40.0% respondents disagreed. Also, from this table, it is realized that 67.5% of respondents opined that they cannot do anything on their own without input from their friends while 32.5% disagreed. 70.0% respondents agreed that they attend clubs in the company of their friends while 30.0% disagreed. 42.5% of the respondents agreed that what they do is determined by their friends while 57.5% opposed it. In the same vein, 72.5% supported that most of their friends advised them to smoke marijuana, while 27.5% of respondents disagreed. 67.5% of respondents agreed that they like starting new activities while 32.5% disagreed. 80.0% of respondents agreed that they receive advice from their friends to have a steady boyfriend or girlfriend while 20% disagreed. 55.0% of the respondents agreed that their friends taught them how to smoke while 45.0% disagreed. 72.5% of the respondents agreed that they want to experience relationship while 27.5% disagreed. 55.0% of the respondents agreed that they drink beer or liquor based on advice from their friends while 45.0% opposed. 52.5% of the respondents agreed that they give hard time to the teachers based on advice from friends while 47.5% disagreed. Furthermore, the table reveals that 81.5% respondents discussed their learning problems with their friends while 18.5% opposed. 37.5% respondents opined that they do not go to their friends for clarification on what they were taught while 62.5% respondents disagreed. 52.0% of the respondents agreed that what they wear is based on friends' influence while 48.0% respondents disagreed. 62.0% of the respondents stated that they want to explore their teenage years while 38.0% disagreed.

**Research Question 3:** Would there be school type (public and private) difference in the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior in Oshogbo L.G.A?

**Table 3: Summary of t-test Analysis on the significant difference between public and private school in the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior**

	N	Mean	S.D	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Remark
Public	100	23.16	3.93	2.06	198	0.71	Not significant
Private	100	23.51	5.07				

Table 4 presents the analysis of the difference between public and private schools on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent behaviors in Osogbo L.G.A. The result reveals that there is no significant difference between private and public schools on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior in Osoogbo L.G.A. ( $t = 2.06$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that students in private and public schools do not differ on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior.

**Research question 4:** Would there be gender (male and female) difference in the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior in Oshogbo L.G.A?

**Table 4: Summary of t-test Analysis on the significant difference between male and female students on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior**

	N	Mean	S.D	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Remark
Male	92	17.02	4.89	4.196	198	.000	Not significant
Female	108	24.08	4.10				

Table 4 presents the analysis of the difference between male and female students on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent behavior in Osogbo L.G.A. The result reveals that there is no significant difference in between male and female students on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent

misbehavior in Osogbo L.G.A. ( $t = 2.06$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that the perception of male students on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehaviour is the same with their female counterparts.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The study revealed that adolescent misbehavior is prevalent among secondary school students in Osogbo L.G.A as majority of the respondents agreed that students fighting with another students, students always cheating in class, learners always fighting physically with a teacher learners always bringing other clothes to school other than school uniform, students usually smoking cigarettes, students are involving in examination malpractice, learners always receiving advice from friends to threatening another student and learners used to miss out lesson in school. The findings corroborate Pathak, Sharma, Parvan and Gupta (2011), Finn, Fish and Scott (2008), Jenkins (2017), Cashwell (2016), and Seidman (2005) and Evram (2018).

Furthermore, the findings also reveal that peer group negatively influence adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students in Osogbo L.G.A as majority of the students agreed that they put on the kind of cloth their friends like, they cannot do anything on their own without input from their friends, they attend clubs in the company of their friends, most of their friends advised them to smoke marijuana amongst others. The findings are in agreement with Owens (2002) and Vandivere, Moore and Gallagher (2004).

More so, the findings revealed that there is no significant difference in between private and public schools in the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior ( $t = 2.06$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that students in private and public schools do not differ on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior. The finding contradicts Kenned (2019) which identified significance difference between public and private school students with the private school in a better position.

Finally, the findings revealed that there is no significant difference in between male and female students on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior in L.G.A ( $t = 2.06$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that the perception of male students on the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior is the same with their female counterparts. The finding could be attributed to the fact that both male and female undergo the same emotional and psychological pressures during the period of adolescent.

**Conclusion:** In this research, a result of the survey of the influence of peer pressure on adolescents' misbehavior among secondary school students in Oshogbo L.G.A of Osun State. The study was limited to secondary school students in Oshogbo Local Government Area. Based on the findings from this study, it was deduced that adolescent misbehavior is prevalent among

secondary school students in Oshogbo L.G.A. Peer group negatively influence adolescent misbehavior among secondary school students in Oshogbo L.G.A. There is no significant difference in between private and public schools in the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior and there is no significant difference in between male and female students in the influence of peer pressure on adolescent misbehavior

**Implications of the findings:** A number of implications have emerged from the findings of the study. A result of the survey of the influence of peer pressure on adolescents' misbehavior among secondary school students in Oshogbo L.G.A of Osun State. School counsellors need to understand: adolescents' misbehavior in the context of school type, in order to reduce the rate of adolescents' misbehavior in school. Those in the helping profession especially counselling psychologists have a significant role to play. They have to work in hand with students in both public and private secondary school students to develop:

- Behavioral monitoring/supervision strategies
- Necessary information for students in order to educate them and solve problems relating to the misunderstanding among peers
- Programmed and seminars to educate them on morals and good behaviors
- Penalty to be awarded to adolescent students that violate school rules and regulation
- Disciplinary committee to handle all cases of adolescent misbehavior.

### **Recommendation**

In the light of the above, it is recommended that:

1. Adolescents in public schools should be properly disciplined like their counterparts in private schools. Strict disciplinary measures should be meted out to students identified with adolescent misbehavior.
2. Students should be educated on the negative implications of adolescent misbehavior. They should also be advised to dissociate themselves from friends who engage in such misbehavior. They should be told that exhibiting such behaviors makes them unwelcomed in the society and could endanger their future.
3. A school-based mental health services should be established to handle adolescent misbehavior in most effective way by providing help to the sufferers at earliest.
4. School management should carefully monitor the activities of students mostly those observed to exhibit adolescent misbehavior. This will help to manage the student and put him/her on the right track.

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