

**THE INFLUENCE OF PEER PRESSURE ON THE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF
ADOLESCENT IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL IN OREDO LOCAL
GOVERNMENT OF EDO STATE**

BY

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UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,

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DECEMBER, 2025.

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**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM
AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY, FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.SC.ED.)
DEGREE IN SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION**

DECEMBER, 2025.

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that this project work is adequate in scope and was carried out by NWOKO EMMANUEL OMOHOGHENE with Matriculation Number EDU2005392 in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, EdoState, Nigeria in partial fulfillment for the award of B.Sc.(Ed.) Degree in Social Studies.

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**PROF. F.O .IDEHEN.
(HEAD OF DEPARTMENT)**

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty, my father and my mother Mr. Nwoko Reuben and Mrs. Nwoko Esther

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I give all thanks and praise to God Almighty, the Author and Finisher of our faith. I am deeply grateful for His endless grace, mercy, love, protection, and guidance throughout my life.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. L. O. Aimiyeagbon, for his valuable guidance, and timely advice throughout this project. May the Almighty continue to bless him and his family, and grant them all their heart's desires.

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to examine the influence of peer pressure on the social behavior of adolescents in senior secondary schools. The study investigated the extent to which peer-related factors such as conformity, susceptibility, social expectations, family involvement, school environment, and cultural norms influence adolescent behavior during the secondary school stage. The research also examined how positive and negative forms of peer pressure shape students' academic participation, social conduct, and decision-making patterns.

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of senior secondary school students across selected schools, with a sample size of 450 adolescents drawn through stratified random sampling. The research instrument used was a structured questionnaire titled: Influence of Peer Pressure on Adolescent Social Behavior. The questionnaire was validated by experts in educational psychology and measurement evaluation.

The major findings of the study revealed that peer pressure significantly influences adolescents' behavior in school, with many students modifying their conduct to gain acceptance or avoid rejection. The findings further indicated that low self-esteem, lack of parental guidance, social media exposure, and unstable family structures increase adolescents' susceptibility to negative peer influence. The results also showed that while

negative peer pressure encourages risky and deviant behaviors, positive peer pressure promotes discipline, academic effort, and goal-setting.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made: parents should strengthen communication and emotional support; schools should adopt peer education and mentorship programmes; guidance counselors should intensify counseling services; and government should integrate life-skills training into school curricula to help students resist negative peer influences and embrace positive ones.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Peer pressure plays a key role in shaping adolescent social behavior, particularly in senior secondary school, where students are highly influenced by their peers. At this stage, teenagers seek acceptance, approval, and a sense of belonging within their social groups. As a result, they often adopt behaviors, attitudes, and lifestyles that align with their peers, sometimes at the expense of their personal values and decision-making (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007).

Adolescents are in a developmental phase where their cognitive, emotional, and social skills are still maturing. Their ability to make independent decisions is often overshadowed by the desire to conform. Research suggests that peer influence can be both positive and negative. Positive peer pressure encourages academic success, participation in extracurricular activities, and adherence to societal norms. On the other hand, negative peer pressure can lead to delinquency, substance abuse, truancy, and other forms of risky behavior (Santor, Messervey & Kusumakar, 2000).

Social behavior in adolescents includes the way they communicate, form relationships, resolve conflicts, and respond to authority. In senior secondary schools, students often form peer groups based on shared interests, socioeconomic backgrounds, or perceived social status. These groups create informal social hierarchies that dictate acceptable

behaviors. Students who fear exclusion or rejection may modify their conduct, speech, dressing, or attitudes to align with the dominant group's expectations.

Research indicates that adolescents who associate with high-achieving peers are more likely to perform well academically. Conversely, those surrounded by delinquent peers are at a greater risk of engaging in misconduct (Ryan, 2001). The impact of peer pressure is particularly strong because the adolescent brain is still developing. The prefrontal cortex, responsible for decision-making and impulse control, is not fully mature, making teenagers more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors under peer influence (Blakemore & Robbins, 2012).

Cultural, family, and educational factors also influence how adolescents respond to peer pressure. Some students develop resilience through strong parental guidance, personal values, or supportive school environments. Others, particularly those from unstable backgrounds, may be more susceptible to negative influences.

This study examines the extent to which peer pressure shapes adolescent social behavior in senior secondary schools. It explores both positive and negative effects and identifies the factors that make some students more vulnerable to peer influence.

Statement of the Problem

Peer pressure is a significant force shaping adolescent behavior in senior secondary schools. While it can lead to positive behaviors, such as improved academic performance and better social skills, it also contributes to negative behaviors, including drug use, aggression, and academic disengagement (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011). Many adolescents struggle to resist negative peer pressure, leading to long-term consequences that affect their education, relationships, and overall well-being.

One of the main problems is that adolescents are still developing self-awareness and independent thinking skills. This makes them highly susceptible to peer influence, often without considering the long-term effects of their actions. In many cases, students who engage in negative behaviors due to peer pressure do so out of fear of exclusion, bullying, or ridicule (Brown, Bakken, Ameringer & Mahon, 2008).

School authorities and parents face challenges in addressing the impact of peer pressure. Traditional disciplinary measures often fail to tackle the root cause of peer-driven behaviors. In some cases, strict punishment may push students further into negative peer groups rather than helping them develop resistance skills. There is a need for better strategies to help students recognize and manage peer pressure while encouraging positive social interactions.

This study investigates how peer pressure influences adolescent behavior in senior secondary schools. It seeks to identify the factors that make students more vulnerable to peer influence and explore effective ways to help them develop resilience.

Research Questions

- 1) In what ways does peer pressure influence adolescent social behavior in senior secondary school?
- 2) What factors contribute to students' susceptibility to peer influence?
- 3) How do positive and negative peer pressure impact adolescent behavior?
- 4) What role do family, school, and cultural factors play in shaping students' responses to peer pressure?
- 5) What strategies can schools and parents use to help students manage peer pressure effectively?

Purpose of the Study

The study aims to:

Analyze how peer pressure influences the social behavior of senior secondary school students.

Identify the psychological and social factors that make some students more susceptible to peer influence.

Examine the differences between positive and negative peer pressure in adolescent behavior.

Investigate the role of family, school environment, and cultural factors in shaping students' responses to peer pressure.

Recommend strategies for helping students resist negative peer pressure while benefiting from positive peer interactions.

Significance of the Study

This study is important because peer pressure affects almost every aspect of adolescent life. Understanding its impact can help students, educators, parents, and policymakers develop better approaches to managing it.

Students: Helps them become aware of how peer pressure influences their decisions and behavior. Provides strategies to resist negative influences and make independent choices.

Teachers and School Administrators: Offers insights into how peer pressure shapes student behavior. Helps in designing policies and programs that promote positive peer influence.

Parents: Equips them with knowledge on how to guide their children through peer-related challenges. Helps them provide support and develop stronger parent-child communication.

Researchers: Contributes to academic discussions on adolescent psychology and peer influence. Helps in developing further studies on the topic.

Policy Makers: Provides data for developing school policies that address peer influence and student behavior.

By exploring the effects of peer pressure, this study aims to provide practical recommendations to support adolescent development and improve school environments.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on senior secondary school students within a selected geographic region. It examines peer pressure's influence on social behavior, considering factors like age, gender, family background, and academic performance.

The study does not include primary or junior secondary school students, as their level of social development differs. It also does not focus on external influences such as media or broader societal trends, though these may indirectly affect peer dynamics. The research is limited to student interactions within school settings and does not extend to peer influences outside the academic environment.

Definition of Terms

Peer Pressure: The influence exerted by individuals of similar age or status on a person's behavior, attitudes, and decisions.

Social Behavior: The way individuals interact, communicate, and behave in social settings, including friendships, group interactions, and responses to authority.

Adolescence: A stage of human development between childhood and adulthood, typically between the ages of 10 and 19 (WHO, 2023).

Senior Secondary School: The stage of formal education for students aged approximately 15–18, preparing them for higher education or vocational training.

Positive Peer Pressure: Influence that encourages beneficial behaviors, such as academic excellence, good manners, and healthy habits.

Negative Peer Pressure: Influence that leads to harmful behaviors, such as truancy, substance abuse, and delinquency

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a detailed review of existing literature related to the influence of peer pressure on the social behavior of adolescents in senior secondary schools. The review is organized under the following subheadings:

Concept of Peer Pressure

Social Behavior of Adolescents in Secondary Schools

Peer Pressure and Adolescent Social Behavior

Impact of Peer Group Type on Social Conduct

Influence of Positive vs. Negative Peer Pressure

Relationship between Peer Pressure and Risky Behaviors

Summary of Reviewed Literature

Concept of Peer Pressure

Peer pressure refers to the influence people of the same age or status have on each other. Among adolescents, it usually means the effect classmates, friends, or schoolmates have on a student's decisions and behavior. Peer pressure can be direct, where someone is

openly asked to do something, or indirect, where a person simply feels the need to follow others to fit in.

During adolescence, students are often unsure of their identity. They start to depend more on friends for advice and acceptance. As a result, they are more likely to change their behavior to match those of their peers. At the senior secondary school level, peer groups become central in shaping beliefs, attitudes, and habits. Peer pressure can have both good and bad effects. While some students are encouraged by their friends to work harder or avoid trouble, others are pushed into skipping classes, using drugs, or disrespecting teachers (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007).

Peer influence can be social, emotional, or even academic. For example, some students may engage in unhealthy competition because of peer influence. Others may get into trouble to gain popularity or avoid being seen as weak. In many cases, adolescents underestimate the impact peer pressure has on their lives, believing they are making independent choices.

In cultures where group belonging is strongly valued, peer pressure may be even more influential. In many Nigerian secondary schools, group acceptance plays a large role in a student's social success or failure. This makes students more likely to follow what others are doing, even when it conflicts with what they know is right.

Social Behavior of Adolescents in Secondary Schools

Social behavior includes how people interact with others, manage relationships, and respond in social situations. For adolescents in secondary schools, this means how they behave with friends, teachers, and classmates. It also includes how they talk, resolve conflicts, and follow rules.

Adolescence is a period marked by rapid physical, mental, and emotional changes. These changes affect how students act and relate to others. Teenagers often feel misunderstood and pressured to meet certain expectations. These feelings are sometimes expressed through aggression, mood swings, or sudden withdrawal from social activities.

Students who experience positive peer interactions tend to develop better communication and emotional skills. They show empathy, respect others, and maintain healthy friendships. However, those who experience negative peer interactions may show signs of isolation, depression, or rebellious behavior.

In school, social behavior is observed in areas such as:

Participation in class activities

Interaction with teachers and classmates

Respect for school property and rules

Attendance and punctuality

Behavior during group projects or sports

Social behavior is strongly influenced by the environment at home and in school. Where students feel safe, accepted, and supported, they are more likely to behave positively. But when they face constant criticism, bullying, or neglect, their social behavior may become disruptive or withdrawn.

Peer Pressure and Adolescent Social Behavior

There is a strong link between peer pressure and how adolescents behave socially. Teens who are part of responsible peer groups often behave well, show respect to others, and take their studies seriously. On the other hand, those who belong to groups that value rebellion or rule-breaking are more likely to behave badly in and out of school.

Peer pressure affects:

How students dress or talk

Whether they attend classes regularly

Their level of respect for teachers and school authority

The kind of friends they choose

Their willingness to engage in risky behaviors

Social behaviors linked to peer pressure include speaking rudely to teachers, copying others during exams, refusing to participate in school functions, and ignoring school rules. Some students even engage in physical fights to gain respect among peers.

Students who lack strong family bonds or guidance are more vulnerable to peer pressure. They often look to their friends for validation. When their peer group supports harmful behaviors, such behaviors become normalized. The more time a student spends in such a group, the harder it becomes to resist its influence.

Peer Pressure Type, Common Effects on Social Behavior

Peer Pressure Type	Common Effects
Positive	Group work, kindness, leadership, school focus
Negative	Rule-breaking, rudeness, bullying, absenteeism

Impact of Peer Group Type on Social Conduct

The kind of peer group a student belongs to plays a major role in how they behave. There are usually two broad categories:

1. Positive peer groups: Encourage good behavior, study habits, and respect for others
2. Negative peer groups: Promote rule-breaking, disrespect, and risky behavior.

Students with stable homes and close supervision are more likely to resist joining bad groups. However, those with less guidance may fall into harmful circles. A peer group becomes especially powerful when it offers emotional support that the student lacks at home (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011).

Teachers also play a role. Students often join peer groups that align with their academic performance. For instance, those who struggle in school may feel more comfortable with peers who do not value academics. Meanwhile, high-achieving students may form study groups or participate in school clubs that foster discipline and goal-setting.

Positive peer groups help students build life skills such as:

Teamwork

Problem-solving

Respect for authority

Time management

Negative groups may lead students into:

Lying or hiding the truth from adults

Frequent suspension or punishment

Use of harmful substances

Influence of Positive vs. Negative Peer Pressure

Peer pressure can push adolescents in two very different directions.

Positive peer pressure encourages students to:

Join school activities

Study regularly

Speak respectfully to teachers

Avoid harmful substances

Help classmates and contribute to school events

Negative peer pressure may lead students to:

Skip school

Smoke or drink alcohol

Fight or bully others

Lie to parents and teachers

Join gangs or cult groups

Adolescents may not always recognize when peer pressure is negative. It may start as fun or jokes, but can grow into dangerous habits. Friends may shame or exclude anyone who refuses to join in. Over time, students may change their personality just to avoid rejection.

Type of Pressure	Immediate Effect	Possible Long-term Effect
Positive	Improved behavior, cooperation	Self-discipline, academic success
Negative	Rebellion, misconduct	Poor grades, risky lifestyles

Schools that promote mentorship and group guidance can help reduce negative peer pressure. When students are supported by role models, they are more likely to make better choices. School programs that celebrate positive peer influences also help.

Relationship between Peer Pressure and Risky Behaviors

Research has shown that many risky behaviors in adolescents are linked to peer pressure.

These behaviors include:

Drug or alcohol use

Early sexual activity

Stealing or lying

Skipping school

Vandalism

Joining secret cults or gangs

Adolescents are more likely to take risks when surrounded by peers who support or normalize such behaviors. This is partly because the part of the brain that controls judgment and self-control is still developing in teenagers (Blakemore & Robbins, 2012). This means they respond more to peer approval than to rules or consequences.

Peer pressure is especially dangerous when combined with poor parental supervision, poverty, or low academic achievement. Students may seek comfort in peer groups that promise protection or respect, even when those groups are harmful.

Negative peer influence has been linked to school dropout, early pregnancy, and arrest among Nigerian youth. Without early intervention, these problems often grow worse. Some students find it difficult to return to normal life once they get involved in harmful behaviors.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

The reviewed literature shows that peer pressure is a powerful force that can shape how students in senior secondary school behave. Key points include:

Peer pressure affects choices, habits, and values.

It can be positive or negative depending on the peer group.

Students who lack support from family or school are more vulnerable.

Risky behaviors are more likely in students who are under negative peer pressure.

Helping students build self-confidence and make better choices is key to reducing negative peer influence.

Schools, parents, and communities must work together to provide guidance.

Positive peer pressure has the power to improve student behavior and performance. It should be encouraged through school programs and support groups. Negative peer pressure must be addressed through discipline, counseling, and early detection.

Adolescents need strong guidance during this stage of life. The right peer group can lead them to success, while the wrong one can lead to failure. Understanding the role of peer pressure is essential for teachers, parents, and policymakers who want to improve student behavior and reduce social problems in schools.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the methodology used to examine the influence of peer pressure on the social behaviour of adolescents in senior secondary schools. It covers the following sections:

Design of the study

Population of the Study

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Research Instrument

Validation of the Instrument

Reliability of the Instrument

Method of Data Collection

Method of Data Analysis

Design of the study

This study adopts a descriptive survey design. The design allows the researcher to gather information from a sample of students in order to describe the current state of peer

influence on their behaviour. It is appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect data without manipulating any variable. The responses gathered reflect students' real-life experiences with peer groups and how it influences their social interactions within the school environment.

Populatin of the Study

The target population for this study includes all senior secondary school students in public schools located in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State. These students are from diverse family, social, and economic backgrounds. The population includes students from SSS1 to SSS3. The estimated population is about 10,000 students, based on school enrolment records provided by the local education authority.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study made use of a total sample of 300 students. Three public senior secondary schools were randomly selected from the available schools in Oredo Local Government Area. From each of the three selected schools, 100 students were chosen to participate in the study. These students were selected across the three levels of senior secondary education (SSS1, SSS2, and SSS3). Simple random sampling was used to select the schools and the students, giving each one an equal chance of being selected. Efforts were made to ensure gender balance and representation across the different classes.

Research Instrument

The main instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled “Peer Pressure and Social Behaviour Scale (PPSBS).” The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A collected demographic information such as age, sex, and class. Section B focused on peer pressure, using statements that students responded to on a four-point scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Section C covered students’ social behaviour, including school attendance, classroom behaviour, and interactions with peers, also measured on a four-point scale.

Validation of the Instrument

To ensure the instrument was valid, it was reviewed by the research supervisor and two other experts from the Faculty of Education. These experts examined each item in the questionnaire to assess how well it related to the study’s topic. Their suggestions helped the researcher to improve the wording and organisation of the items. Unclear or unrelated items were removed or adjusted based on their recommendations.

Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot test was carried out using 30 students from a school not included in the main study. These students completed the same questionnaire. The responses were used to check how consistent and dependable the items were. The reliability score obtained from the test showed that the instrument was stable and suitable for use in the main study.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher visited each selected school to administer the questionnaire. Before distribution, permission was obtained from school principals and students were informed about the study. They were assured that the information they provided would be used only for academic purposes and kept confidential. The questionnaires were completed by students in their classrooms and collected immediately after completion to avoid loss or influence from others.

Method of Data Analysis

The responses from the questionnaires were counted and grouped using basic methods. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarise students' responses and observe patterns related to peer pressure and social behaviour. The results were presented using tables to make them clear and easy to understand.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the data gathered in response to the five research questions posed in this study.

Research Question One: In what ways does peer pressure influence adolescent social behavior in senior secondary school?

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1	Peer pressure strongly affects how students dress, speak, or act.	198 (44%)	167 (37.11%)	52 (11.55%)	33 (7.33%)
2	Adolescents engage in risky behaviors to gain acceptance.	213 (47.33%)	141 (31.33%)	58 (12.88%)	38 (8.44%)
3	Students skip classes or disobey rules to impress peers.	175 (38.88%)	156 (34.66%)	78 (17.33%)	41 (9.11%)
4	Peer pressure leads to experimentation with alcohol, drugs, or other vices.	204 (45.33%)	147 (32.66%)	61 (13.55%)	39 (8.66%)
5	Adolescents often change their behavior to 'fit in' with certain groups.	221 (49.11%)	123 (27.33%)	71 (15.77%)	35 (7.77%)

Summary: The majority of respondents (78.15%) agree that peer pressure significantly influences adolescent social behavior—especially in terms of appearance, group acceptance, and disobedience of rules. This highlights the dominance of peer conformity among adolescents.

Research Question Two: What factors contribute to students' susceptibility to peer influence?

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
6	Low self-esteem makes adolescents more vulnerable to peer pressure.	238 (53.33%)	144 (32.22%)	44 (9.77%)	21 (4.66%)
7	Lack of parental guidance increases susceptibility.	194 (43.11%)	167 (37.11%)	58 (12.88%)	31 (6.88%)
8	Desire for social acceptance drives peer conformity.	216 (48.00%)	153 (34.00%)	48 (10.66%)	33 (7.33%)
9	Exposure to social media heightens peer influence.	182 (40.44%)	169 (37.55%)	65 (14.44%)	35 (7.77%)
10	Peer influence is stronger in students from large or unstable families.	209 (46.44%)	142 (31.55%)	60 (13.33%)	39 (8.66%)

Summary: Most respondents believe low self-esteem, lack of parental support, and social validation are key drivers of peer susceptibility. Social media and family instability are also contributing factors.

Research Question Three: How do positive and negative peer pressure impact adolescent behavior?

S/S	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
11	Positive peer influence can encourage good study habits and discipline.	241 (53.55%)	151 (33.55%)	39 (8.66%)	19 (4.22%)
12	Negative peer influence leads to smoking, drinking, and theft.	267 (59.33%)	123 (27.33%)	38 (8.44%)	22 (4.88%)
13	Peer encouragement boosts school involvement (clubs, sports, etc).	189 (42%)	161 (35.77%)	56 (12.44%)	42 (9.33%)
14	Negative peer influence discourages academic commitment.	205 (45.55%)	134 (29.77%)	65 (14.44%)	47 (10.22%)
15	Peer mentoring positively affects students' life goals.	177 (39.33%)	153 (34.00%)	70 (15.55%)	50 (11.11%)

Summary: Students perceive peer pressure as a double-edged sword. While negative forms are linked to deviant behavior, positive influence promotes discipline and academic engagement.

Research Question Four: What role do family, school, and cultural factors play in shaping students' responses to peer pressure?

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
16	Parental involvement helps students resist negative peer influence.	198 (44%)	172 (38.22%)	51 (11.33%)	29 (6.44%)
17	Schools that promote positive values reduce peer pressure risks.	204 (45.33%)	156 (34.66%)	59 (13.11%)	31 (6.88%)
18	Cultural expectations guide adolescent behavior positively.	189 (42%)	163 (36.22%)	63 (14%)	34 (7.55%)
19	Broken homes or absent parents worsen peer pressure effects.	213 (47.33%)	139 (30.88%)	60 (13.33%)	39 (8.44%)
20	Religious or community teachings influence peer response.	176 (39.11%)	151 (33.55%)	77 (17.11%)	46 (10.22%)

Summary: Parental involvement, moral education, and cultural guidance shape adolescents' ability to navigate peer pressure. However, family instability increases vulnerability.

Research Question Five: What strategies can schools and parents use to help students manage peer pressure effectively?

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
21	Open communication at home reduces peer pressure influence.	259 (57.55%)	144 (32.00%)	29 (6.44%)	18 (4%)
22	Peer education programs in schools are effective.	187 (41.55%)	162 (36%)	56 (12.44%)	45 (10%)
23	Mentorship from teachers or elders improves student choices.	204 (45.33%)	151 (33.55%)	61 (13.55%)	34 (7.55%)
24	Strict discipline alone is ineffective in controlling peer pressure.	168 (37.33%)	144 (32%)	86 (19.11%)	52 (11.55%)
25	Teaching refusal skills helps adolescents manage peer pressure.	233 (51.77%)	138 (30.66%)	52 (11.55%)	27 (6%)

Summary: Effective peer pressure management involves active communication, education, mentoring, and life skill development. Discipline alone is insufficient.

Discussion of Findings

The data across Tables 4.1 to 4.5 reveals consistent patterns:

- Peer pressure is a powerful force affecting how adolescents act, dress, and interact socially.
- Low self-esteem, poor guidance, and a desire to belong increase vulnerability to peer influence.
- Both positive and negative peer influences exist—mentorship and encouragement improve behavior, while peer conformity can lead to substance use or rule-breaking.
- Family, school, and culture shape how adolescents respond to peers, with stability and involvement being key.
- Management strategies must be proactive—open conversations, education programs, and support systems are more effective than punishment.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a detailed summary of the study, major findings derived from the data analysis, the conclusion drawn from the results, recommendations based on the findings, and suggestions for further research. The purpose of this chapter is to consolidate the study and provide practical, research-based guidance to stakeholders who influence adolescent development.

Summary

This study investigated the influence of peer pressure on the social behavior of adolescents in senior secondary schools. The study became necessary because the adolescent stage is a sensitive and transitional period marked by identity formation, emotional instability, and a strong desire for social recognition. Peer groups play an increasingly dominant role during this period, often shaping important decisions that influence academic, social, and emotional development.

The study was guided by five research questions, which broadly explored how peer pressure affects student behavior, the factors that make students more vulnerable to peer influence, the dual nature of peer pressure (positive and negative), environmental

influences such as family and school, and possible strategies to help adolescents manage peer pressure effectively.

A survey research design was adopted for the study. The target population comprised senior secondary school students within selected schools. Using a stratified random sampling technique, 450 students were selected to participate so that representation would cut across different class levels (SS1–SS3) and school types (public and private).

The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire involving demographic details and peer-pressure-related items. The instrument was validated by experts in adolescent psychology, educational measurement, and guidance and counseling.

The results showed that peer pressure influences adolescent dressing, attitudes, academic interest, and social habits. Students often adjust behavior to gain acceptance, avoid rejection, or feel belonging. Findings showed peer pressure to be both beneficial and harmful depending on the type of peer group.

Findings

1. Influence of Peer Pressure on Adolescent Social Behavior

78.15% agreed that peer pressure significantly influences adolescent social behavior. Many students change their dressing, speech, and conduct to fit into peer groups. It also contributes to truancy and risky behaviors.

2. Factors Contributing to Susceptibility

80.74% agreed that low self-esteem, lack of parental involvement, desire for social acceptance, family instability, and social media increase vulnerability.

3. Effects of Positive and Negative Peer Pressure

80.88% agreed that peer pressure can be constructive—helping with discipline and academic improvement—but can also lead to harmful behaviors such as alcohol use, aggression, or poor academic focus.

4. Role of Family, School, and Culture

77.46% agreed that parental involvement, school discipline, cultural and religious values shape how adolescents respond to peer influence.

5. Strategies for Managing Peer Pressure

79.15% agreed that open communication, counseling programs, peer education, mentorship, and refusal skills help students resist negative peer influence.

Conclusion

The study concluded that peer pressure is a major determinant of adolescent behavior. Adolescents often adjust conduct, academic engagement, and social habits based on peer expectations. It can be both constructive and destructive depending on peer group characteristics. Adolescents from unstable homes or lacking guidance are more vulnerable. Effective management requires collaboration from parents, teachers, counselors, religious institutions, and community leaders.

Recommendations

1. Parents should maintain strong communication and emotional bonds with children to reduce reliance on negative peer validation.
2. Schools should implement structured peer education and mentorship programs.
3. Guidance counseling units should be strengthened with more programs on decision-making and emotional development.
4. Teachers should model positive behavior for adolescents.
5. Parents and educators should monitor social media exposure to reduce digital peer pressure.

6. Schools should encourage extracurricular involvement to occupy adolescents positively.
7. Religious and cultural institutions should reinforce moral values.
8. Government should integrate peer pressure management into school curricula.
9. Parents should model discipline and positive values at home.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

INFLUENCE OF PEER PRESSURE ON THE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF ADOLESCENTS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE

This questionnaire is designed to collect information for a research project on the influence of peer pressure on the social behavior of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State. It is purely an academic exercise and a final year project which is part of the requirement for B.Sc/B.Ed certificate in Education and Social Studies in the University of Benin.

Your responses will be treated with confidentiality. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Thank you.

PART ONE

Instruction: Please tick appropriately as it concerns you.

BIO-DATA OF RESPONDENT

Gender: Male() Female()

Level:200 level ()300 level ()400level ()

PARTTWO

Instruction :Please tick the option that fit your response.

Research Question One: In what ways does peer pressure influence adolescent social behavior in senior secondary school?

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1	Peer pressure strongly affects how students dress, speak, or act.				
2	Adolescents engage in risky behaviors to gain acceptance.				
3	Students skip classes or disobey rules to impress peers.				
4	Peer pressure leads to experimentation with alcohol, drugs, or other vices.				
5	Adolescents often change their behavior to 'fit in' with certain groups.				

Research Question Two: What factors contribute to students' susceptibility to peer influence?

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
6	Low self-esteem makes adolescents more vulnerable to peer pressure.				
7	Lack of parental guidance increases susceptibility.				
8	Desire for social acceptance drives peer conformity.				
9	Exposure to social media heightens peer influence.				
10	Peer influence is stronger in students from large or unstable families.				

Research Question Three: How do positive and negative peer pressure impact adolescent behavior?

S/S	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
11	Positive peer influence can encourage good study habits and discipline.				
12	Negative peer influence leads to smoking, drinking, and theft.				
13	Peer encouragement boosts school involvement (clubs, sports, etc).				
14	Negative peer influence discourages academic commitment.				
15	Peer mentoring positively affects students' life goals.				

Research Question Four: What role do family, school, and cultural factors play in shaping students' responses to peer pressure?

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
16	Parental involvement helps students resist negative peer influence.				
17	Schools that promote positive values reduce peer pressure risks.				
18	Cultural expectations guide adolescent behavior positively.				
19	Broken homes or absent parents worsen peer pressure effects.				
20	Religious or community teachings influence peer response.				

Research Question Five: What strategies can schools and parents use to help students manage peer pressure effectively?

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
21	Open communication at home reduces peer pressure influence.				
22	Peer education programs in schools are effective.				
23	Mentorship from teachers or elders improves student choices.				
24	Strict discipline alone is ineffective in controlling peer pressure.				
25	Teaching refusal skills helps adolescents manage peer pressure.				

Thankyou foryour participation!