

## **Peer Group Influence as a Correlate of Secondary School Students' Motivation towards Learning in Oluyole Local Government, Ibadan**

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated peer group influence as a correlate of secondary school student's motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government area of Ibadan. The main purpose of this study is to determine the influence of peer group as a correlate of secondary school student's motivation towards learning. In specific terms, the study is designed to determine whether peer group influence secondary school students' motivation towards learning, the factors that can determine student's motivation towards learning, whether peer group influence determines variation in Academic Performance of male and female students, whether age does determine the extent to which peer influence affects Academic Performance of students, just to, mention a few. The researcher employed descriptive survey method for the study. The population for the study was based on all the fifty two (52) secondary schools under Oluyole local government area of Oyo state; consisting of twenty seven*

(27) public secondary schools and thirty two private secondary schools. Sampling techniques used were multistage, stratified and simple random sampling technique. A multistage sampling technique was used due to two stages involved in selecting the sample. At the first stage, schools are stratified into public and private, and simple random sampling technique was used to select ten public secondary schools out of twenty seven and ten private schools out of thirty two which make a total of twenty schools. At the second stage, a simple random sampling technique was used in selecting only ten student's from the selected secondary schools from both private and public secondary schools, five from junior secondary school and five from Senior Secondary School in Oluyole Local Government area in Ibadan making a total of two hundred students. A pilot survey was carried out by administering the research instrument to ten randomly selected students who were not part of the selected respondents after which the instrument was subjected to analysis and a cronbach Alpha value 0.757 was obtained. Descriptive statistical tool such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the obtained data to answer three questions while person product moment correlation was used to analyse Hypotheses 1 and T-test was used to analyse Hypotheses 2 and 3. All analyses were carried out at 0.05 level of significance. The perceived motivation status of secondary school students towards learning is higher through the weighted mean of 3.24. Peer influence on the academic motivation of secondary school students towards learning is high at 2.89. Peer group influence on secondary school students' academic motivation is high at 3.02. There is significant relationship between peer group influence and secondary school students' motivation towards learning at 0.005. There is no significant gender difference in peer group influence of secondary school student's motivation towards learning at 0.958. There is no significant school type difference in secondary students' academic motivation towards learning at 1.97. It is recommended that students should move with peer groups that will motivate them towards learning.

**Keywords:** Peer group, influence, secondary school, students, motivation, learning.

## **Introduction**

Peer group can simply be said to be people of the same age and ability, that is, the peer group is the child's own friends, and equal members of the group often have common characteristics or interests. The peer group

interests are short and temporary. More so, the children change their peer group membership as they go through different stages of development and can belong to a number of peer groups at the same time. In some cases, members' roles are less defined and change frequently in some; it may not be clear who is a member and who is not. In-group, the child holds a certain position and they are expected to think and behave in a certain standard for the group and they also have norms and values they follow.

Peer group influence is more pronounced and noted in secondary schools compared than primary schools, partly because some of the children go away from home and stay in boarding schools where parental supervision and contact is very limited. Another reason is that secondary school students are more mature. The influence of peer group on the child is great, both in and out of the school, because the tendency for members to be comfortable with the group influence may lead to aggressive behaviour (such as rioting in school). In sociology, a peer group is both a social group and a primary group of people who have similar interests. A peer group is a social group that consists of individuals of the same social status who share similar interests and are close in age. A peer group contains hierarchies and distinct patterns of behaviour. Eighteen-year-olds are not in a peer group with fourteen-year-olds even though they may be in school together, just as teachers do not belong to students' peer groups. During adolescence, peer groups tend to face dramatic changes. Peer groups also prompt students to form cliques with nicknames such as, Terror, Shark, Snake, Tempo, Blue Queen, Black Angel and so on. Students are always anxious to initiate their peers whether good or bad, they would want to go to the church or mosque due to their peer influences. Shy children may form social relationships or group networks with similarly shy peers, through which they may provide support and perhaps short-term benefits to one another. Much peer research utilises behavioral situations to assess the quality and type of peer relationships. Akinowo & Nwoha (2011), complemented by children's reports of their peers' social status are filtered through their social-cognitive interpretations of situations, which include motivations, intentions and moral judgments. Peer group could be of positive or negative, depending on the group trying to influence an individual. Peer group is negative when friends or acquaintances of a teen try to make

them do something harmful to their body or against the law. Example of behavior under negative peer includes drinking alcohol, smoking, taking drugs, cutting classes, stealing and vandalising. There are children who would ignore their own commonsense or their better judgment because “everyone is doing it”. Negative peer group cannot be avoided always and it may be a fact of life through childhood, adolescence, even into adulthood. However, peer group can also be positive. According to Broussard & Garrison,(2015) a peer group is defined as a small group of similarly aged; fairly close friends, sharing the same activities. In general, peer group or cliques have two to twelve members, with an average of five or six.

Friends can encourage each other to strive for higher grades in school as well as for better performance in sports and creative activities, which is another example of positive peer group influence. When children suffer peer rejection they often feel lonely and socially dissatisfied. Rejected children also have lower self-esteem and may feel more depressed than others. Peer rejection can also lead to problems later in life, such as juvenile delinquency, mental health problems and dropping out of school, which is a frequent outcome. Despite the current effort by the current government to provide more qualified teachers, sustainable learning environment, and learning facilities needed for the pedagogical process, the Nigerian education sector is still losing its value because of some bad peer group influence. Ajibade, (2015).

Motivation is the reason for people’s actions, desires and needs. It has also been described as what causes an individual to repeat a certain behavior. Simply put, motivation is the drive that energises behaviour towards a goal. Motivation to learning is defined as the meaningfulness, value and benefits of academic tasks to the learner, regardless of whether or not they are intrinsically interesting. Adekeye & Aremu, (2012), Students’ academic motivation towards learning is not completely a new term. What is interesting about it is that, it is commonly assumed to be a good thing that significantly influences an individual’s behavior and performance at work. Student motivation naturally has to do with the teachers, parents, the influence of peer group and also student attitude to work. It has to do with students’ desire to participate in the pedagogical process within the school environment. It has to do with students’ interest in discipline and control, particularly in the classroom. Therefore, it could

underlie their involvement in academic and non-academic activities, which operate in school.

Motivation is difficult to define. The word “motivation” comes from a Latin word “movers” which means to move; thus motivation can literally mean the process of arousing movement in individual. It is a very important factor which determines how successful we are at what we do. It serves as a driving force that gives us the will to accomplish tasks and eventually succeed in reaching an ultimate goal. Castrogiovanni (2002) Motivation also drives us to stick to the low fact selections and recipes required to keep our progress moving. Motivation is an influential factor in teaching and learning process. The success of learning depends on how high or low the motivation of students is. Tracy (2014) defined motivation and academic achievement as all those inner striving conditions, described as wishes, desire, urges to stimulate the interest of a person in an activity. It is therefore an inner state that stimulates and triggers behaviour. Yvonne & Kola (2015) defined motivation to learning as a competence acquired through general experience but stimulated most directly through modeling, communication of expectations, and direct instruction or socialisation by significant orders (especially parents and teachers). Student motivation naturally has to do with the level of peer group influence with the students’ desire to participate in the learning process. But it also concerns the reasons or goals that underlie their involvement or non-involvement in academic activities. Self-Determination Theory based on quality of motivation differentiates between Autonomous Motivation (AM) that originates within an individual and controlled Motivation (CM) that originates from external sources. To determine whether Relative Autonomous Motivation (RAM), a measure of the balance between AM and CM affects Academic Performance through good study strategy and higher study effort and compare this model between subgroups.

Motivation has been shown to positively influence study strategy, academic performance, adjustment and well-being in students in the domains of education over their own personal decision making. Studying motivation, particularly in secondary school students, is important because secondary school students are easily confused and influenced through their peers. There are different theories of motivation; some focus on quantity of motivation and others on quality of motivation. Quality of

motivation depends on whether the source of motivation is internal or external (peer group). In the study conducted by, Sattar (2012) in an high school in Mojokerto which shows that the group of students who have high achievement motivation earn better learning outcomes than the group of students who have low achievement motivation. Williams & Williams (2011) Found that academic motivation significantly affected academic achievement. Likewise, Dagostino. (2015) reported a positive correlation between academic achievement and different aspects of motivation.

Learning is a relatively permanent change in behavior due to practice and experience. For learning to said have taken place, there must be the presence of learning environment. Learning environment refers to the diverse physical locations, contexts and cultures in which a student learns. Learning environment is defined as a place where teachers impact knowledge of the various subjects to students, thereby bringing them morally and guide them as regards career choice. Going by this description, it is safe to assume that peer group influence constitutes a large, if not the whole aspect of a student's learning environment.

A student success or educational outcome is influenced by the type of peer group that such student is associated with. The peer group that a student is associated with sets the perimeters of a student success and learning experience. Depending on the peer group influence, the group can either open or close the doors that lead to academic success. There are some important functions that peer groups plays which greatly influence the Academic Performance of students, they are as follows; they provide the peer group with a considerable degree of emotional security, which help in the intellectual development of the child, the peer group provides the students with a wide variety of experiences which can boost their academic performance, they also provide the opportunity for the development of loyalties that goes beyond the immediate family e.g. political and social loyalty, which are important for future adjustment, they provide opportunities for interpersonal operation, the peer group facilitates pre-adolescent transition from the family to peer orientation.

It is through these peer groups that cultures are established which will provide variations in standards of education and so on. While in their respective groups, the individual members are prepared for performance of specific tasks such as leadership role, spirit of active participation,

submissiveness, in this way, the students learn to lead and follow. These are vital requirements for effective citizenship.

On the other hand, the influence could be geared towards positive aspect of students' academic performance. For instance, the students could be influenced socially, psychologically, intellectually, and all these boost academic performance. The need for affection or closeness is often greater than the need to do the right thing. For some students who feel isolated and abandoned by members of their family, belonging to a peer group provides an individual with acceptance and security not available at home. In the Nigerian society today, the influence of peer group cannot be over-emphasised in the child's life. Peer groups are an important influence throughout one's life but they are more crucial during the developmental years of childhood and adolescence. In school, the extent to which these objectives have been achieved is determined by their level of peer group, time management as student success is reflected in their academic performance. Several factors have generally been identified as causes of poor academic performance. One of these factors may be due to peer group influence.

In conclusion, therefore the influence of peer group on the academic motivation of secondary school students towards learning cannot be over emphasised. The peer group forms the main basis through which the child learns lot of empirical facts about his physical and social environment, acquisition of skills and values as well as attitude for a better future.

### **Hypotheses**

**Ho1:** There will be no significant relationship between peer group influence and secondary school student's motivation towards learning in some selected secondary schools.

**Ho2:** There will be no significant gender difference in peer group influence of secondary school student's motivation towards learning.

**Ho3:** There will be no significant school type difference in secondary school students' academic motivation towards learning.

## **Methodology**

This was a descriptive survey method for the study. Descriptive survey design was used in conducting this study since the study attempts to investigate and describe the influence of peer group as a correlate of secondary school student's motivation towards learning.

Sampling techniques used were multistage, stratified, and simple random sampling technique. A multistage sampling technique was used due to two stages involved in selecting the sample. At the first stage, schools are stratified into public and private, and simple random sampling technique was used to select 10 public secondary schools out of 27 and 10 private secondary schools out of 32 which make a total of 20 schools. At the second stage, a simple random sampling technique was used in selecting only 10 students from the selected secondary schools from both private and public secondary schools, 5 from junior secondary school and also 5 from Senior Secondary School in Oluyole Local Government Area in Ibadan making a total of 200 students.

A set of questionnaire items was structured to collect data for the study. The instruments used contains four (4) sections, A, B, C and D. Section A requires Demographic data of the participant such as Name of School, Class, Gender, Age, Number of students in the class, School type. Section B contains five (5) structured items on the perceived identical factors that can influence peer group on their academic motivation among secondary school students. Section C contains ways in which peer groups influence the academic motivation of secondary school students within Oluyole Local government area of Ibadan, and Section D contains items on the level of peer group influence. The response to the items would be based on likert's four rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. A pilot survey was carried out by administering the research instrument to ten randomly selected students who were not part of the selected respondents. The instrument was subjected to analysis and a Cronbach Alpha value 0.757 was obtained. Descriptive statistical tools such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions while Pearson product moment correlation was used to analyse hypotheses1 and T-test was used to analyse hypotheses2 and 3. All the analyses were carried out at 0.05level of significance.



## Results

**Hypothesis One:** There will be no significant relationship between peer group influence and secondary school students' motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State.

**Table 4.6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing the Relationship Peer Group and Secondary School Student's Motivation towards Learning**

Variable	Mean	Std Deviation	N	R	P Value	Remark
Peer Group Influence	18.090	3.31312	200	0.197	0.005	*Sig
Student's Motivation towards Learning	14.450	3.13314	200			

*Not Significant at 0.05 level of significance*

Table 4.6 presented the analysis of hypothesis one, testing the relationship between peer group influence and secondary school students' motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State. The result showed that there is significant relationship between peer group influence and secondary school student's motivation towards learning, ( $r = 0.197$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). Therefore the hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that peer group influence has relationship with secondary school student's motivation towards learning.

**Hypothesis Two:** There will be no significant gender difference in peer group influence of secondary school students' motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State.

**Table 4.7: T-Test table Showing Gender Difference in Peer Group Influence of Secondary School Student's Motivation towards Learning.**

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	Df	Sig	Rmk
Gender: Male	113	14.752	2.96868	1.452	197	0.958	Not. Sig.
Female	86	14.1047	3.30073				
School Student's Motivation towards Learning	199	14.450	3.13314				

*Not Significant at 0.05 level of significance*

Table 4.7 above showed the t-test table of analysis of the Hypothesis Two on gender difference in peer group influence of secondary school students' motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State. The table showed that there is no significant difference in peer group influence of secondary school students' motivation towards learning, ( $t = 1.542$ ;  $df = 197$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ), then, the hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is no significant gender difference in peer group influence of secondary school student's motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo state. The mean values of male and female respondents are 14.752 and 14.1047 respectively while the standard deviation values for male and female respondents are 2.96868 and 3.30073 respectively.

**Hypothesis Three:** There will be no significant school type difference in secondary school student's academic motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State.

**Table 4.8: T-Test table showing the School Type Difference in Secondary School Student's Academic Motivation towards Learning.**

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	T	Df	Sig	Rmk
School Type: Public	100	18.0825	3.58140	1.868	197	0.180	Not Sig.
Private	100	18.0980	3.07178				
School Student's Motivation towards Learning	200	14.450	3.13314				

*Not Significant at 0.05 level of significance*

Hypothesis three was tested on significant school type difference in secondary school student's academic motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State and the result is presented in table 4.8 The table showed that there is no significant school type difference in secondary school student's academic motivation towards learning, ( $t = 1.868$ ;  $df = 197$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ), then, the hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that school type, (private or public) has no significant difference in the secondary school student's academic motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State. The mean values of public and private school are 18.0825 and 18.0980 respectively, while the standard deviation values for public school is given as 3.58140 and that of private school is given as 3.07178.

## **Discussion**

The results of the study were discussed based on the hypotheses stated:

H<sub>01</sub>: From hypothesis one, result showed that there is significant relationship between peer group influence and secondary school student's motivation towards learning. This indicates that peer group influence has a relationship with secondary school students' motivation towards learning. That is, when students are influenced with the right mind of peer group, there will be a positive influence on their academic motivation towards learning thereby enhancing their learning outcomes. The finding of the study is in line with the submission of Sattar (2012), who discovered that there is significant relationship between peer group influence and secondary school student's motivation towards learning.

H<sub>02</sub>: Based on the result gotten from hypothesis two, there is no significance gender difference in peer group influence of secondary school student's motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State, result shows that it doesn't matter whether a particular student move with the same gender or not. That is, a male student is moving with a female students, a female moving with male students, or male students moving with male students and so on. This implies that there is no significant gender difference in peer group influence of secondary school student's motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State.

H<sub>03</sub>: From hypothesis three, results showed that there is no significant school type difference in secondary school student's academic motivation

towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State. This implies that school type (private or public) has no significant difference in the secondary school student's academic motivation towards learning in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo state. The finding of this result is in line with the submission of who discovered that there is no significant school type difference in secondary school student's motivation towards learning. He later went further by saying that the school a student attend as nothing to do with the academic motivation of student (public and private), it is left for such student to choose the type of peer group he or she wants to keep or belong to.

## **Conclusion**

Peer group influence plays a major role in the motivation status of secondary school student towards learning.

The following purposes are found to be factors influencing student's motivation towards learning as well like environmental factor, family factor, to mention a few. It seems that the peer group a student interacts with has either negative or positive influence on their academic performance. Another conclusion made by the researcher is that when students mix with their peers, they tend to be greatly influenced with their behaviour thereby having a change of mind and behaviour. Keeping friends that will add good value to secondary students is another way at which students can be motivated to learn. Students' motivation is therefore anything done to make student happy, satisfied, dedicated, and committed in such a way that they bring out their best in their various learning activities. A student who is intrinsically motivated may be observed to undertake a task for its own sake, for the satisfaction it provides or for the feeling of accomplishment and self-actualisation.

There are different theories of motivation; some focus on quantity of motivation and others on quality of motivation. Quality of motivation depends on whether the source of motivation is internal or external (peer group).

Peer group influence could be geared towards positive aspect of student learning performance, for instance, the student could be influenced socially, psychologically, intellectually and all these boost learning performance of the student. Examples are, forming reading group, going to the library, anxious to join others in answering questions

in the classroom and making friends with brilliant students especially in the area of mathematics, English Language, Social Studies and so on. For some students who feel isolated, rejected and abandoned by members of their family, being a member of a peer group provides such individual with acceptance and security not available at home.

Understanding the nature, magnitude, significance and implication of peer group influence in education is very crucial and important for the productivity of educational processes and the organisation design of school systems in our country's educational sector and around the globe. As a result of the various attitudes, skills and knowledge are acquired through role-play.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made that:

1. students should move with peer group that will add positive value to their life and motivate them towards learning.
2. students should always have people of like mind in their group that can help them to improve their academic motivation towards learning.
3. parents should always take note the type of the peers that their child (ren) keep at school so as to enhance their academic motivation status towards learning.

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