



---

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEER GROUP INFLUENCE AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' IN SOKOTO METROPOLIS**

**DAHIRU BASHIR**

*Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling School of Education, A.D Rufa'i Collge of Education, Legal and General Studies, Misau, Bauchi State, Nigeria.*

---

**Abstract**

*The behaviors of the senior secondary school students who are mostly adolescents is giving stakeholders in the education sector a sleepless night as to what causes such and who could be responsible. This paper seek to unearth the relationship apparent and influence if any of peer group influence and senior secondary school students' moral development in Sokoto state. The study consisted of all the senior secondary school of Sokoto metropolis purposively and proportionately sampled. An adapted version of Idowu (2002) was used as the instrument of data collection, validity and reliability established. Spearman Brown Rank Order was used to analyze the hypothesis 1 and regression. One research questions was raised, tested and rejected indicating significant relationship between peer group influence and the student's moral development. It was recommended that that parents should closely monitor their wards as find out the kind of company they keep as friends as such if left unchecked could have a devastating effect on heir educational carrier.*

**Keywords:** *Relationship, Peer Group, Influence, Moral Development, Senior Secondary School Students.*

---

**Introduction**

Every society bids to have its growing population descent, nurtured and disciplined through the stages of child development into adulthood, this give reason, for the transmission of the societal norms and value system

from the elderly to the young ones in order to groom them and make them productive and useful to the society within which they live. Moral decadence or indiscipline among adolescent students is becoming a major concern to all, it is a fact born out of daily happenings in our schools. It is a source of worry and concern to everyone including the parents, teachers, guardians, religious leaders, institutions, the government and the students themselves. Isah (2013), opined that one of the most pressing issues in education today is indiscipline in schools. It is such an issue that both school administrators or teachers deals with daily. It ranked top and major in the hierarchy of problems among students at the senior secondary school level.

The adolescent make moral judgments on a daily basis. When they were younger, their family greatly influences their moral decision. They give in to the dictates of their parents, fully conscious of the repercussion of violating. The development of sound moral values in the lives of adolescents is highly dependent on parental upbringing. In situations where parents provide a warm and conducive environment towards the children, caring and listening to their problems and where there is cordiality and harmonious relationship within the family rank, the child will not have problem adjusting at school in terms of obeying school rules and regulations resulting from home parental supervision. But where the home environment is chaotic the child will be swimming in the ocean of such negative values as indiscipline, dishonesty, cheating, violence, cultism, greed, laziness examination malpractice and other forms of corruption. Kegan as cited in Denga (2011), opined that most families are aware of these values and preparing their young children for future lives in the society. The senior secondary school student in whom these negative values are if not checked may just end up having adjustment problems in school. And now in senior secondary school, their peers strive to influence their value judgments.

Peer pressure can exert a powerful influence, because friends play a more significant role in teens. And with the recent technological advancement, globalization and development of information and communication

technology (ICT) which led to certain key inventions as the android handsets, computers laptops, iPods, Ipads, and tablets etc. which provide the growing teen the mean to interact with whosoever they chooses without attracting the attention of the parents, let alone their consents and influences on who they keep as friends. This has turned their preferences from the known physical peers to on-net friends, with whom they interact and relate freely both physically and on the social media. With these, the senior secondary school interact and relate with others freely, chatting and exchanging pictures and videos, gaming and video calling. This could greatly affect or changes the political, educational, religions and moral thoughts in the society. These changes as observed, made the Federal Government of Nigeria to include in the schools' curriculum as contained in the National Policy on Education, a content of moral re-orientation (Obilam, 1989). Hart and Carlo (2005), stated that understanding and eventually controlling the influences acting on the adolescent adult moral character development can be set on a correct path.

Behavior is an integral function which derives its existence, form and meaning from the total setting of the life situation. The setting is the product of relationships, learnings and experiences which begin to exert themselves from the beginning of the child's life and towards that which a child has form his own accepting or rejecting, aggressive or submissive reaction tendencies. They begin to form attachments and friendships emerge through their play. These relationships influences behavior. Using the social media web sites is among the most common activity of today's growing child and an important aspect of their relationships with peers as such sites offer today's youth a portal for entertainment, communication and relationships with peers and like minds. Engaging in various forms of social media is a routine activity that research have shown to benefit children and adolescents by enhancing communication, social connection, and even technical skills. (Ito, Horst & Bitani, 2008). Because of their limited capacity for self-regulation and susceptibility to peer pressure, children and adolescents are at some risk as they navigate, surf and experiment with the social media. O'keeffe (2010) stated that recent

researches have shown that there are frequent online expressions of offline behaviors such as bullying, clique forming and sexual experimentation. The difference is that with social media, senior secondary school students not only consume information, they also produce it.

This study reviewed related literatures. Bolanle (2005), examined how secondary school plays its role as a custodian of moral values in the society, using six secondary schools of Sokoto metropolis, a descriptive survey type, using questionnaire as the research instrument of data collection designed for both the teachers and students being the population of the study. Data collected was analyzed using simple frequency percentage and came up with finding as insufficient fund, absence of dual curriculum where classical idealistic knowledge will be combine with leisure, inappropriate forms of teacher and students as some of the factor militating against proper morality in schools. The sampling technique was on the basis of researcher's interest in line with Ujo (2000) and used Kreycie & Morgan (1970) to come up with his population of the study.

Maiwada (2011), investigated the relationship among parental socio-economic status, peer group influence and deviant behaviour of SS1, secondary school students in sokoto metropolis. It was a descriptive type of research which employed deliberate sampling method to draw samples from the population. Three (3) questionnaires were used as instruments of data collection. Pearson moment correlation coefficient was used to test the three (3) hypothesis of the research and multiple regression analysis employed for the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) hypothesis. Peer group and defective home discipline were found to be major influences on deviance and call for increase parental attention and supervision as the type of friends their subjects keep.

Moller (2009) investigated morals as they relate to the ability to treat others nicely and to facilitate a greater understanding of moral development in order to identify whether age differences could be found of importance for this development. He cited the initial theoretical investigations of the different approaches to the understanding of moral development which were conducted. He stated that moral development

was presented as: a global staged approach (by Piaget and Kohlberg respectively); a social-domain model postulating moral, social-conventional, and personal reasoning as coexisting; and an intuitionists post-hoc approach to morals. He investigated the suggested developmental tracks and the theoretical inconsistencies by conducting a qualitative investigation, which was then quantified in a statistical analysis (a representative sample) in order to investigate any typical developmental progression.

The empirical study was designed to investigate children's moral judgments (using exclusion to foster moral arguments). The 'perpetrator effect' (testing arguments when authority/ peers were excluding) was measured on targets (being excluded on the basis of their gender or immigration status). He interviewed 307 middle-class children from 7 participating schools, with equal numbers of children from three age groups (app. 8, 10 and 12). The overall findings indicate that children using more moral arguments are less willing to exclude. These findings suggest that the less group-focused children are, the more moral arguments they use, signifying that morals come from an individual ability (willing to challenge the group or authority).

### **Statement of the Problem**

There has been accusation and counter accusation by education stakeholders regarding who takes the blame and responsibility for the dwindling and decaying nature of morality in our societies. Teachers have been complaining about the frequent nature by which students misbehave pointing at homes and parents in particular. The parents, accuses the free environment school provide for interaction among its students. They see such as being instrumental to their subject's deviation. The researcher personally observed the indiscriminate possessions and ownerships of ICT related gadgets as android handsets, tablets, iPhones, Ipad and Ipods among the teaming adolescents, thus, giving them unhindered access to unknown individuals and cultures as peers and friends they keep away from the monitoring influences of their parents or teachers. The children

chat, exchange, download and share voices and videos whose content may be corrupt and violent and unwholesome.

The main thrust of this work therefore, is to examine the relationship between peer group influence as it relates to moral development in students of Senior Secondary Schools of Sokoto metropolis.

### **Objectives of the Research**

The objective of this research are:

1. To assess the relationship between peer group influence and Senior Secondary School students' moral development.

### **Research Questions**

The major research questions this study will seek to address are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between peer group influence and Senior Secondary School students' moral development?

### **Research Hypotheses**

As it is conventional with researches, that statement of research hypotheses follows the research questions. Thus:

Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant relationship between social media and Senior Secondary School students' moral development.

### **Scope and Delimitation**

The study covered both male and female adolescent students of some selected Senior Secondary Schools in Sokoto metropolis. It is however not within the scope of this research work, any Junior Secondary Schools in Sokoto metropolis or other senior secondary school outside Sokoto metropolis, so also were adults or minor children. It is also not in the focus of the research the academic performance of the adolescents as the research is only concerned about their moral development.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

This study is a descriptive survey design type, using the correlational design method. It is thus, a survey research which lends itself to the use of

questionnaire schedule as to enables the researcher to obtain the opinion of the representative sample of the target population as to be able to infer the perception of the entire population.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of this research covered the entire Senior Secondary School students (both male and female) as well as the Senior Secondary School teachers (both male and female) as well as from both public and private secondary schools of Sokoto metropolis. The population of the study was heterogeneous. There are forty (40) Senior Secondary Schools in Sokoto metropolis with a total number of seventeen thousand, one hundred and thirty eight (17,138) students and one thousand eight hundred and fifty six (1856) teachers. The sample for the study was drawn from Senior Secondary School Two (SS II) involving only ten (10) selected Senior Secondary School in Sokoto metropolis. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the ten (10) schools. The total population of SS II students and teachers in the ten (10) sampled schools was 5437 and four hundred and eighty one (481) respectively. Krejcie and Morgan table Research Advisor (2006) version was used to determine the sample size of 357 for the students and 196 for teachers. The sample sizes of both the students and teachers were proportionately determined across the ten (10) schools. The respondents (both students and teachers) were randomly selected or picked through lucky-dip technique.

### **Instrumentation**

The instruments of data collection for this research was the adapted version of Idowu (2002) deviant behavior scale. The adapted instrument consisted of two sections A & B, The teachers' model i.e Adolescents' Moral Development Instrument (AMDI}'s 'B' section sought the opinions of teachers on adolescents' moral development, it consisted of a total of ten (10) items in all. The personal profile information of the respondents constituted the first section i.e. section A

The Students' Model of the adapted instrument i.e Adolescents Moral Behavior Assessment Instrument (AMDRAI) is also a two-section design,

i.e. sections A and B. the section B consisted of ten (10) items, peer group influence with ten (10) items. The personal profile data of the respondent constituted the first part (section A) of the instrument. The items were responded to either 'Yes' or 'No'.

### **Validity of Research Instrument**

Idowu (2002) exposed his instrument to scrutiny by some experts of educational measurement and evaluation in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria for assessment. These 'specialist' valuable contributions helped in shaping the instrument to confirm, with standard and was adjudged to be useful having attained content validity of the researcher thus, adopted it for the purpose of this research. The validity of the adapted instrument was also ensured and assessed by experts in the Department of Educational Foundations of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University as well as other experts in other institutions. Their valuable contribution and criticism aided in shaping the instrument as to agree with Ujo (2000)..

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

A test re-test reliability method was employed to test the reliability of the adapted instrument on a sample of 60 students and 12 teachers randomly selected from three secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. The three schools for the pilot testing of the instrument were not among the schools sampled for the original research. Two weeks interval was given in-between. The scores of the two tests were then correlated using Pearson's Product Moment. A correlation of .73 was obtained, thus confirming the reliability of the instrument for this research.

### **Method of Data Collection**

Data was collected through direct delivery and personal administration of the instruments with the assistance of the management and teachers of the sampled schools who were trained on how to administer the instruments. They served as the research assistants.

### Procedure of Scoring the Instruments

The Adolescent's Moral Development Relationship Assessment Instrument (AMDRAI) required the students to express their level of agreement or otherwise with each item on the structured questionnaire using a two-scale rating format of yes and no; the score ranges from two (2) or Yes and one (1) No. The adolescent moral development instrument (AMDI) required the teacher to express their level of agreement or disagreement with each item on the structural questionnaire using two rating format. Responses were 'Yes' for agreement and 'No' for disagreement. The score ranged from two (2) for each affirmation (Yes) and one (1) for disagreed (No) response. The scores of each respondent was then summed up and recorded accordingly, all respondents' scores were collated for statistical computation and analyses.

### Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were in a form of survey study, That is to say, the data was in frequency count. In that case, a simple frequency percentage was used to present and interpret the researcher's questions. Spearman Brown's Rank Order Co-efficient was used to measure hypotheses 1 while, Regression Analysis was employed to measure hypothesis 4.

### Results

#### Test and Interpretation of hypotheses

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between peer group influence and senior secondary school students' moral development.

**Table 1: Spearman Brown's Rank Order Correlation on the Relationship between Influence of Peer Group and Senior Secondary School Students' Moral Development**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	rho-Cal	P-value	Decision
Influence of Peer Group	357	14.95	1.68	.429	.000	Significant
Moral Development	196	15.44	1.71			

From the result of table 1, influence of peer group and Senior Secondary School students' moral development were positively related and significant, Spearman's  $\rho = .429$ ,  $p = .000$ . This indicates that there was significant relationship between influence of peer group and Senior Secondary School students' moral development because the p-value is less than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the influence of peer group and Senior Secondary School students' moral development was rejected. This means that influence of peer group is an important determinant of Senior Secondary School students' moral development.

Thus, the significant results of the procedure indicated that social media was able to account for significant amount of variance in the dependent variable (Senior Secondary School students' moral development). Although parental attitude and influence of peer group are related variables to Senior Secondary School students' moral development, Analysis of Regression Coefficients indicated that social media,  $\beta = .504$ ,  $t = 11.224$ ,  $p < .05$  emerged as the more predictor of the Senior Secondary School students' moral development than parental attitude and influence of peer group. Thus, this adequately answered research question four and it is concluded that social media is more related to Senior Secondary School students' moral development than their parental attitude and influence of peer group.

### **Research Findings**

Research hypothesis two which states that there is no significant relationship between peer group influence and moral development in Senior Secondary School students was rejected, as the findings revealed that the influence of peer group and Senior Secondary School students' moral development are positively related, thus significant relationship was established as the rho-cal of .429 is greater than the P-value of .000 meaning that there was significant relationship between the two variables influence of peer group and moral development in Senior Secondary School students in Sokoto metropolis. This findings also agrees with other findings

for example Barbour & Barbour (2010) who posited that whenever children leave the home setting, their self perception and socializing skill will be at the mercies of their peers as they become keen and influenced by how the peers view them, these peers could have an even stronger influence than that of parents. This according to Maiwada (2011) is so because the adolescent (senior secondary school students) spend large quality of their times in fixed groups regardless of their opinions of such groups, within which according to Oswalt (2005) teens peer groups become increasingly important as they experience more closeness and intimacies in their friendships and more gratifying relationship. They now turned to one another as first line of support in times of need instead of their families.

The findings have all confirmed the beliefs of Piaget's two-stage theory that moral development was the result of the child's interaction or attachment to a group, where interactions are free and reciprocal. He believed morality to be both a development process as well as inherited.

### **Conclusion**

The conclusion drawn from this study indicated that:

1. There is significant relationship between peer group influence and moral development of Senior Secondary School students in Sokoto metropolis.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Parent should take to closely monitor their subjects as to monitor the kind of companies they keep both at home and school, as some of those friends may be so inimical to the children's development.
2. Parents should also rise up to their responsibilities and roles for the effective upbringing of their children, as well as guide them through life and not to leave them at the mercies of their peers who have now found another mean of interaction in the social media away from

the eyes and monitoring of the parents, capable of exerting unlimited access to the children and control and this could as well hampers his/her overall development and affect his/her studies and training.

## REFERENCES.

- K.M & Micheal, H. (2010). Users of the World United, the Changes and Opportunities of Social media. *Business Horizon*. 53(1) pp 61.
- Boyd, D. (2008). *Taken out of Context: American teen Socially in Network Public*. CA.
- Daegg de Mott, (2015). Psychology. Encyclopedia Jrank.Org> *Child development*. Retrieved on July 2, 2015
- Denga, D.I. (2011). The Nigerian Adolescent in the New Millennium: Challenges and Roles. *The Nigerian Adolescent in Perspective*. 1(2), 1-7
- Hart, D., & Carlo, G. (2005). Moral Development in Adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*. Pp 225-233
- Hodges A; Morgan N. & Jones G, (2012). Social Media: The Complete Guide to Social Media by Social Media.Guys.State of the Media, *The Social Media Report*.
- Idowu A. I (2002) *Deviant Behavior Scales*. Ilorin. University of Ilorin
- Ito M, Horst H. Bitani M. (2008) Living and Learning with New Median Summary of Finding from the Digital Youth Project Chicago *MCAtir Foundation Reports*
- Isah, A.M. (2013). Indiscipline in Schools. The Role of Educational Psychologists. *Sokoto International Journal of Counseling Psychology*. Maiden edition. Pp 69-79.
- Kietzmann, H.J., & Herman, K. (2011) Social Media? Get serious understanding, the functional Building Blocks of Social Media. *Business Horizon*. 54: 241-251
- Maiwada, R.M. (2011). *Relationship among Parental Socio-economic Status, Peer group Influence and Deviant Behaviors of Senior Secondary School Students of Sokoto metropolis*. Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. Unpublished Dissertaion
- Moller, J.S (2009). *Moral Development, Why Care? A Theoretical and Empirical study in Moral Development*. Aalborg. Aalborg University.
- Nations D. (2004) [www.webtrends.about.com](http://www.webtrends.about.com) retrieved on 11/01/2015
- Obilam, J.E,C (1989). *Issues and Trends in Religious Education in Nigeria*. Jos. Government Printers.
- O'keeffe GS (2010), *The impact of social media on children Adolescents and families*. Pediatric oapublicaitons.org retrieved on July 8.
- Research Advisors. (2006). *Sample size Table*. Retrieved from Research Advisors Website: <http://www.researchadvisors.com/tools/samplesize.html>
- Ujo A. (2000) *social Research: A Non-Quantitative Approach Nigeria*. Anyaotu Enterprises and publishers Ltd.