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INFLUENCE OF COMMUNITY COUNSELLING AND PARENTAL SUPPORT ON PEER PRESSURE AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN ODEDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by increased susceptibility to peer influence. The study investigated the influence of community counselling and parental support on peer pressure among adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State. It examined gender differences in peer pressure, relationship between community counselling, parental support and peer pressure, as well as the joint and relative contributions of community counselling and parental support to peer pressure. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population comprised in-school adolescents in public secondary schools in Odeda LGA. A sample of 300 students (aged 13–19 years) was selected through multistage sampling. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Reliability coefficients were 0.82, 0.79, and 0.86, respectively. Data were analysed using t-test, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and multiple regression analysis at 0.05 significance level. There was no significant gender difference in the level of peer pressure among adolescents; $t(298) = 0.538$. There was no significant relationship between community counselling and peer pressure $r(298) = 0.045$, nor between parental support and peer pressure $r(298) = -0.113$. Community counselling and parental support jointly accounted for only 1.2% of the variance in peer pressure ($\text{Adj. } R^2 = .012$). Parental support made a significant relative contribution ($\beta = -0.131$), indicating that strong parental involvement reduces adolescents' susceptibility to negative peer influence. The study recommends strengthening parental engagement through open communication, supervision and emotional support. Policies promoting community-based counselling and parental education should be incorporated into adolescent development programs to foster resilience and moral responsibility.

Keywords: Young adults; Age groups; Influence, Advice; Parents; Support.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is often recognized as an essential and sensitive stage of the human life. It is characterized by accelerated somatic growth, emotional instability, cognitive immaturity and greater self-identification and social identification (Rimondini & Cosci, 2025). This period of development is marked by a slow loss of connection to parental supervision and the desire of adolescents to find confirmation and acceptance among peer groups that have similar experiences, values and interests (Fung & Browne, 2025). This socialization makes them become more sensitive to the peer expectations and norms, whereby, the need to be accepted, to be admired, or to be affiliated has a determinative effect on decisions associated with academic involvement, fashion choices, communicative styles, leisure activities and even moral judgments (Williams, 2025).

Peer pressure refers to the direct or indirect effect of members in an age-matched group to promote conformity to specific behaviours, attitudes or social norms. It takes a constructive shape, as it leads to cooperation, motivation and achievement, or a negative form, when it encourages delinquency, substance use, or risk-taking behaviour (Zhang & Wang, 2020). The social learning approach assumes that, adolescents learn behavioural patterns by observing and imitating their peers who are rewarded or respected in their social circle (Bandura, 1986). Accordingly, peer pressure has a greater power not just in direct persuasion but also indirectly, through reinforcement through group approval, ridicule, or exclusion (Frank, 2021).

Peer pressure is a salient factor in the development of teenagers and population health

around the world. According to Giletta *et al.*, (2021), peer influence was a leading factor in the majority of adolescents in the world (42%) reporting at least one of these risk behaviours such as early sexual activity, substance use, or truancy. A study conducted in Lusaka established that about 36% of teenagers attested to having started using alcohol or cigarettes mainly because of peer pressure (Mwiinga, 2025). Peer conformity was also related to European studies as more individuals engaged in cyberbullying, underage drinking and online challenges undermining mental and physical health (Milind, 2025). The growing availability of social media has exacerbated the influence and scope of peer influence due to social media serving as a virtual peer community which creates new behavioural phenomenon and pressures. Teenagers often base their self-esteem on online indicators such as likes, comments, or the number of followers, and, therefore, become more susceptible to peer validation and comparison (Jamil, 2024).

Peer pressure continues to be a developmental issue of concern in Africa that is influenced by cultural changes, socioeconomic differences and access to the world. African teenagers used to be the transitional figure between the traditional community-based culture that is focused on obedience and respect, versus the new youth culture, which is focused on independence, materialism and experimentation (Bettache, 2025). According to the estimates provided by Kadio (2025), the prevalence of major peer influence in the social and academic paths of adolescents is almost 60, in sub-Saharan Africa. Mohamed & Ashibi (2025) in Kenya established that peer influence was an effective predictor of drug experimentation and truancy among secondary school learners. Peer pressure in South Africa was associated with early sexual

initiation and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases among the youths (Price *et al.*, 2025). These results highlight the fact that the phenomenon is much larger than an isolated action of individuals; it is a greater change in the society and value contradiction in the youths of the continent.

Peer pressure is a social and educational problem among the Nigerians. Teenagers in rural and urban areas are getting increasingly bombarded with mixed social messages in the media, peers and social expectations. According to Oyekola *et al.*, (2025), in Nigeria, more than 47% of adolescents said they were influenced by their peers in aspects of academic behaviour, dress style and use of social media. The peer group is often a strong instrument of reference, even overcoming parental influence on the moral and lifestyle decisions (Alfahmi, 2022). Such change of direction has led to an increase in risky behaviours among the Nigerian youths such as cultism, examination malpractice, cybercrime and substance abuse that are currently in the schools and communities.

In Ogun State, south-western Nigeria, peer pressures are directly felt as in the case of secondary school adolescents. Fudolin & Dioso (2025) reported that most students in Ogun State secondary schools claim that peers put them under pressure to dress in a specific way, use slangs, skipping classes and indulging in social vices. Teenagers, who are not emotionally regulated or supported by the family members, are more easily affected by peer-controlled norms, which undermine the academic goals and moral ethical standards. The encouragement of the use of the internet and exposure to western youth culture has enhanced the pressure on the need to replicate lifestyles as seen on the social media. In urban and

semi urban areas like Abeokuta, Sagamu, and Ijebu-Ode, peer groups as strong agents of socialization, sometimes even more so than family or school, come into play.

Peer pressure can be direct, indirect and perceived, in which case an adolescent assumes that they need to conform to fit (even when the coercion is not explicitly applied); indirect, when the adolescent is influenced by observing others engage in a particular activity and emulating its behaviour (Siregar & Karmiyati, 2024). These effects depend on the psychological strength of the person, family background and the social context. Adolescents with low self-esteem, poor parental relationships, or poor access to guidance services are more likely to be influenced by the negative peer influences (Ofodile *et al.*, 2025).

The consequences of peer pressure to society are far reaching. Bad peer influence is a cause of moral decay, low academic performance, school dropout, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, and drug addiction, which imply costs to families and communities in the form of economics and the social baselessness (Bamigboye, 2024). Such consequences jeopardize the coming up of effective, disciplined and socially responsible citizens. The issue comes out worse by the lack of community-based interventions and the undermining of the traditional communal support systems that used to guide the youth towards acceptable behaviour.

To cope up with such challenges, community counselling has become a central strategy in dealing with peer related problems among the adolescents. The concept of community counselling includes collaborative, preventative and developmental services that involve the schools, families, religious groups and the community in ensuring that youths are

well-being (Ekeng *et al.*, 2025). Structured programmes will help counsellors to provide adolescents with coping skills, assertiveness training and decision-making skills that can help them withstand negative peer influence. Community counselling also encourages peer mentoring -in which good characters can help sway others to behave positively-and the communication between the youth and other stakeholders in the community.

Parental support is also vital and this is a buffer mechanism to the impact of peer pressure. Warmth, consistency, and involvement of parents build an emotional safety net that improves the ability of adolescents make independent and responsible decisions (Sitepu, 2024). By actively participating in the life of their children, i. e. following up on their friendship, setting limits, and giving them emotional support, adolescents can better resist deviant peer norms. On the contrary, poor parental guidance or disrupted families can frequently leave adolescents vulnerable to the influence of peers who can support the fact that they want to be accepted and validated (Campione Barr *et al.*, 2025).

Thus, the problem of peer pressure among adolescents cannot be explained and discussed independently. It needs an integrative strategy that engages schools, parents and localities. Through community counselling and parental support, society will be able to create resilience, moral accountability and positive peer pressure in the adolescents. In a developing state like Ogun where young people form a good percentage of the population, integration of measures will be necessary in producing a generation that can make a positive contribution towards the social and economic

development.

Although there is an enhanced understanding of the risks of peer pressure, a large number of teenagers still experience a sense of identity, belongingness, and social approval and become susceptible to adverse peer pressure. The growing cases of involvement of students in cultism, internet fraud, examination malpractice, and substance abuse in Ogun State means that peer influence in influencing behaviour among adolescents is a significant factor. Even as schools and parents strive to inculcate discipline, peer influence often becomes more influential as adolescents seek to have their behaviour endorsed by their peers, thus diluting the influence of the adult. Besides, this is limited by the lack of community-based interventions and poor parental engagement that limits the ability of adolescents to overcome negative peer influence. Many societies do not have organized counselling sessions that would prepare the youths in their decision making and coping abilities. The social-economic issues also undermine the level of parental support available to adolescents and expose them to peer-based socialization. These issues present some important questions as to whether community counselling and parental support can help to control the impacts of peer pressure among the adolescents in Ogun State.

Objectives of the Study

- i. Determine the significant difference in the level of peer pressure of male and female adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State.
- ii. Determine the significant relationship between age, socio-economic status perceived community counselling, parental support and peer pressure among adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area

of Ogun State.

- iii. Determine the joint and relative contributions of community counselling and parental support to the prediction of peer pressure among adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State.

METHODOLOGY

This research was a descriptive study using the survey research design. It was considered to be appropriate as the design will help the researcher gather data of a huge number of respondents in their natural settings without interfering with the variables. Stantcheva (2023) explains that the descriptive survey design is appropriate when the researcher is interested in describing the current state of affairs, perceptions, or connection between variables. To test the effect of community counselling and parental support with regard to peer pressure among adolescents living in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, the design was used in this investigation.

Study Population

This study included population that was all in-school adolescents studying in the public secondary schools in the Odeda Local Government Area in Ogun State. It comprises both male and female students aged 13-19 years, which is a period of development when peer pressure and conformity to the groups are the most intense.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study adopted a multi stage sampling method in the selection of respondents. Six (6) public secondary schools which were located in the local government were selected using simple random sampling in the first stage. The second stage entailed the selection of classes in which JSS 2 and SSS

2 students were selected purposely in junior and senior secondary schools respectively. The third stage was the selection of the respondents where 50 students were taken out of every school to make the total sample of 300 respondents by simple random sampling (balloting). This strategy provided equal representation of schools, gender and classes in Odeda Local Government Area.

Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire created by the researcher was used in the study. The instrument was separated into four parts:

Section A: Demographic data including age, gender, level of classes and parental background.

Section B: The Peer Pressure Scale developed by Brown *et al.*, (1986) was designed to measure the degree of social influence adolescents experience from their peers in various behavioural domains. The scale assesses conformity tendencies, social acceptance, and susceptibility to peer norms. Reported reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) range between 0.78 and 0.85, indicating high internal consistency. Sample items include statements such as "*I go along with my friends even when I disagree with them*" and "*My friends influence the kind of clothes I wear.*"

Section C: The Community Counselling Scale was self-developed by the researchers and it was aimed to assess the perceived effectiveness and accessibility of counselling services provided within community settings. It evaluates dimensions such as awareness, participation, and perceived benefits of community-based counselling programs. The scale demonstrated good internal reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82. Sample items include "*Community counselling helps resi-*

dents to solve their personal and social problems” and “Counselling services are available for youths in my community.”

Section D: The Parental Support Scale by Procidano and Heller (1983) was developed to measure the extent to which individuals perceive their parents as supportive in emotional, informational, and instrumental aspects. It captures the level of parental involvement and encouragement in a child’s social and academic life. The reliability coefficient for this scale is approximately 0.88, indicating strong internal consistency. Sample items include “*My parents are good sources of emotional support*” and “*I can count on my parents when I need advice.*”

Validity and Reliability

To achieve the content and face validity, the questionnaire was checked by the experts in Counselling Psychology and Tests and Measurement. The professionals evaluated the questions concerning their clarity, relevance and the study objectives. Their comments led to changes in wording and sequence of items. The tested instrument was considered to be appropriate to be used in the field.

The instrument reliability was determined by carrying out pilot-test on 30 adolescents in two secondary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government Area that were not included in the area of main study. Internal consistency was established through the use of the Cronbachs Alpha that was used to analyze responses. The resultant reliability coefficients were $\alpha = .82, .79$ and $.86$ of peer pressure, community counselling and parental support respectively. These values are above the minimum acceptable level of reliability of 0.70 suggested

by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), and this implies that the tool was reliable to be used in the primary study.

Data Collection

Data collection was performed in collaboration with the school counsellors and class teachers. The instruments were administered only after Ogun State Ministry of Education gave its official consent and principals of chosen schools consented to it. The researchers visited the respective schools and discussed the intention of the research with the students and the school management and were able to get informed consent. The questionnaires were given at the free time so as to avoid interfering with the normal school operations. A high response rate was ensured by assuring the respondents of confidentiality and anonymity and the completed instruments were retrieved on the same day.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected in the field with the help of SPSS version 27. Demographic characteristics and answers to research questions were summarized by means, frequency counts, and standard deviations in the form of descriptive statistics. Research questions one, two, and three were answered using inferential statistics, specifically, the independent samples *t* -test, Pearson Product -Moment Correlation (PPMC), and multiple regression analysis, respectively, at a significance level of 0.05.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics were used to study the demographic features, and the *t* -tests, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis were used to study the research questions.

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Out of 300 respondents, 47.3% of them were between the age of 12 and 15 years while the remaining 52.7% of the respondent were 16 years and above (Table 1). 48% of them were males, while 42% were females. 6% of the respondents were Hausas, 28.7% Igbos, 60.7% Yoruba while 4.7% were from other ethnic groups. Regarding

their family structure, 64% were from nuclear families, 28.7% were from extended families while 7.3% were from single parents. The parents of 1.3% had no formal education, 10% had primary education, 80% had secondary education while parents of 8.7% had tertiary education. On the socio-economic status of their parents, 3.8%, 88.7% and 7.6% were from low, middle and high socio-economic status. respectively (Table 1).

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 300)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age Range	12–15	142	47.3%
	16 and above	158	52.7%
Gender	Male	174	48%
	Female	126	42%
Ethnicity	Hausa	18	6%
	Igbo	86	28.7%
	Yoruba	182	60.7%
	Others	14	4.7%
Family Structure	Nuclear	192	64%
	Extended	86	28.7%
	Single Parent	22	7.3%
Parental Educational Level	No Formal Education	4	1.3%
	Primary	30	10%
	Secondary	240	80%
	Tertiary	26	8.7%
Socio-Economic Status of Parents	Low	11	3.8%
	Middle	258	88.7%
	High	22	7.6%

Source: Field survey

Research Questions

Research question 1: What is the significant difference in the level of peer pressure of male and female adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State?

There was no significant difference between the level of peer pressure experienced by male and female respondents; $t(298) = .538$ (Table 2). Therefore, there was no significant difference in the level of peer pressure exerted by male and female adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Table 2: T-test of significant difference between the peer pressure of males and females

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	df	sig	P
Peer Pressure	Male	174	20.56	6.95	.538	298	.541	>.05
	Female	126	20.13	6.90				

Source: Field survey

Research question 2: What is the significant relationship between age, socio-economic status of parents, perceived community counselling, parental support and peer pressure among adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State?

There was no significant relationship between peer pressure and community counselling; $r(298) = .045$ and parental support $r(298) = -.113$ (Table 3). Thus, community counselling and parental support had no relationship with peer pressure among adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Table 3: Correlation matrix of relationship between perceived community counselling, parental support and peer pressure

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	1	4	5
Peer pressure	300	20.38	6.92	298	1.000		
Community Counselling		26.89	5.52		.045	1.000	
Parental Support		24.18	5.32		-.113	.242**	1.000

Source: Field survey

Research question 3: What is the joint and the relative contributions of community counselling and parental support to the prediction of peer pressure among adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State?

There were significant joint and relative contributions of community counselling and parental support to the prediction of peer pressure (Table 4). When combined, the outcome produced multiple regression coefficient of $R = 0.018$ and multiple R-square value of 0.012. The adjusted R square (Adj.R²=0.012) value indicates that

the combined effect of community counselling and parental support explained 1.2% variation in the prediction of peer pressure. The additional elements that contribute to the residual variation were outside the scope of this study. The ANOVA result of the regression analysis indicates that community counselling and parental support had no significant contribution on the peer pressure of adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, $F_{(2,297)} = 2.759$.

Regarding the relative contribution, parental support; $\beta = -.131$, $t = -2.218$, $P < 0.05$) factor was a potent predictor of peer pressure

(Table 4). This implies that parental support among adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State by 13.1% (Table 4).

Table 4: Regression for the joint and relative contributions of community counselling and parental support to the prediction of peer pressure.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	261.440	2	130.720	2.759	.065 ^b
	Residual	14073.240	297	47.385		
	Total	14334.680	299			
Models		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1.	(Constant)	21.945	2.413		9.094	<.001
	Community Counselling	.096	.074	.076	1.287	.199
	Parental Support	-.171	.077	-.131	-2.218	.027
R = .135 ^a ; R Square = .018; Adjusted R square = .012; Std. Error = 6.88365						

Source: Field survey

DISCUSSION

The present research examined the effects of peer pressure on adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria in relation to community counselling and parental support.

To the question of whether there is any significant difference in the experience of peer pressure in male and female adolescents, it was found that there is no significant gender difference in perceived peer pressure, which implies that there is no difference in the vulnerability of male and female adolescents to peer pressure in the study area. This is similar to the study of Watts *et al.*, (2024), which concluded that there are no gender differences in peer influences as a result of the same social and developmental experiences at the adolescent stage of life. It is also similar to the study of Samaila (2025), who concluded that there is no gender difference in peer conformity among secondary school students in south-western

Nigeria. On the contrary, Tian *et al.*, (2022) found out that male adolescents were more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviour than female adolescents due to peer influence, which was not the case in the current study. The absence of gender effect could be associated with a changing social context given both genders are exposed to the same peer interactions through school and media and community channels (Koester & Marcus, 2024).

To the investigation of the correlation between community counselling, parental support on the one hand, and peer pressure on the other hand, findings showed that there was no significance between community counselling and peer pressure and parental support and peer pressure, indicating that both community counselling programmes and parental support do not have a significant effect in the experience of peer pressure among adolescents in Odeda Local Government Area. The lack of effects can be ex-

plained by a low level of access or effectiveness of community counselling programs. According to Hewitt *et al.*, (2022), in Nigeria, a significant number of community-based counselling programmes are not well structured and do not involve adolescents on a regular basis, which decreases the preventive effects on the social and behavioural issues. Albeit, despite a common view that parental support is a protective factor against deviant peer influence (Novak *et al.*, 2023), the obtained findings suggest that its level might not be sufficiently high or stable to moderate peer pressure in this community, which aligns with the finding of Ambhore *et al.*, (2022) that urbanization and the hectic working schedules of parents decrease the quality of parent-child communication.

About the evaluation of individual and combined effects of community counselling and parental support to peer pressure prediction, community counselling and parental support would together explain 1.2% of peer pressure. There was no significant contribution of the parents support but the relative contribution of the parental support was significant. This finding suggests that it is true that the more parental support, the less likely that adolescents will fall prey to peer pressure. The observation supports Monika *et al.*, (2023), who opined that adolescents who get emotional, moral and social support by their parents are in a better position to overcome negative peer pressure. Comparatively, community counselling was not a significant predictor, which may be explained by the poor implementation or lack of adolescent interest. Fish *et al.*, (2025) also indicated that most community interventions have failed to deliver desired behavioural change whenever they are not youth-based and sustained.

The research has highlighted the critical nature of the family in socializing adolescents and recommends that despite the usefulness of community based programmes; active and regular parental engagement is a better and more effective shield against peer influence. As proposed under the theory of the ecological systems of Bronfenbrenner (2000), teenagers are affected by various systems, but the microsystem, especially the interaction with parents, has a direct impact on the behavioural outcomes.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The paper has investigated how peer pressure among adolescents living in Odeda Local Government Area in Ogun State can be affected by community counselling and parental support. It is established that there is no significant difference between the degree of peer pressure in male and female adolescents, and both genders are equally subjected to the influence of the peer. There is no significant correlation between both community counselling and peer pressure, parental support and peer pressure, implying that current community counselling programs and the parental support could be too weak to counter the peer pressure among adolescents in the research community.

Combination of community counselling and parental support to peer pressure do not significantly contribute, but parental support had a significant relative contribution. Effects of sustained and efficient parental contribution are more crucial in preventing peer pressure as compared to community counselling interventions.

There is the necessity of more designed community counselling programmes with youth-oriented intervention that can be used in addition to parental involvement in teach-

ing teenagers to become good social citizens.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study findings the following recommendations were made as follows:

Open communication, supervision and emotional support of children should be done by parents. Frequent deliberation on values, decision-making, and peer pressure can empower adolescents with resilience to attack the negative influence by peers.

The government and non-governmental organizations ought to work together to enhance community counselling programs through hiring professional counsellors, conducting awareness programs, and ensuring that the adolescents are reached through regular involvement in the programs.

School systems should also include counselling services, in which trained school counsellors would offer group and individual counselling sessions regarding the aspects of peer influence, social skills, and positive coping mechanisms.

To make interventions more effective, regular workshops and seminars should be held to train community and school counsellors on adolescent psychology, peer pressure management and participatory counselling techniques.

The leaders in the community and faith-based people should actively participate in mentoring of the adolescents, organizing youth forums and supporting moral and social values that do not encourage the unhealthy peer conformity.

Introduction of parental education pro-

grammes to educate parents on effective parenting skills, emotional communication, and monitoring of effective methods to support their adolescents should be promoted by both government and civil society organisations.

Educational policy makers should focus more on the mental health and social development of adolescents, by means of incorporating the community-based counselling paradigm in the local education and youth development policies.

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