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Influence of Peer Group Relationship on the Academic Performance of Students in Secondary Schools (A Case Study of Selected Secondary Schools in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo State)

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INFLUENCE OF PEER GROUP RELATIONSHIP ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ATIBA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE

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I. INTRODUCTION

a) Background to the Study

Adolescents are categories of children that usually form groups in the schools. Truly speaking, adolescence is the most chaotic and stressful of all stages in human life (Wikipedia). In addition, the complexities of contemporaries' life have made adolescence a major developmental period compared to the ritualized transition; it has been in traditional culture and past generation.

Generally, it has been observed that a group which a child belongs to could influence his learning, studies from various cultures have shown that a child right from infancy to adolescence is faced with urge to belong and to be accepted by the group. A basic human need is to acquire an affiliation to a group in the society. Peer relationships are common in the schools and homes and this plays important roles in the socialization of children in Nigeria.

Students in the midst of their group transformed into the true picture of their behaviour, they feel more comfortable among fellow students but feel morose at home or at the presence of teacher. The most important influence on student behaviour to learning is not always the teacher but the fellow students.

With this, there is need to identify the influence of peer group relationship on learning, although there are other factors that can influence the learning but the

role played by the peer group learning is more than other factors because the attitude of students to learning are not always encouraging. The most common types of peer group to be investigated are the secondary school children who fall into the same group that could have negative influence on their learning.

Manheim (1998) claims that children throughout their school career will be grouped with their contemporaries so they will become accustomed to having the limitations and addition of each age group intensified. Taiwo (2004) wrote that the peer group outside the home from which does not always conform with adult standard, and each child strive to abide with the ethics of the group they takes membership with because rejection by the group may have negative effect on the learning of the child.

Grulund (1990) feel that acceptance by a peer group improved social relation. These have beneficial effects on individual learning insecurity that arises from satisfying emotional tension enables him to concentrate more on his assigned learning tasks.

This indicates that acceptance by the group may have positive effect on the child. A child who is not brilliant enough may do better if he is accepted by a group that is inclined to study. It has been observed that a child learns more easily within his peer group. Where he is wrong, he prefers to be corrected by a member of his peer group than by the teacher.

In support of this view, Ezewu (1992) advised that the school must therefore use peer group energies to promote rather than impede good learning. It is therefore necessary to let students realize the reason why they have to be careful in choosing their friends so that their attitudes toward learning would be improved as the peer group they belong can have effect on their learning negatively and positively. Peers are so critical to an adolescent's should provide boundaries from which teens form their identity, while peers form the cushion of support during the fragile time that identity is being formed. These boundaries that enables him to internalize the values that form his character to foster his

learning that he acts accordingly without generating retribution from authority or rejection from his peers.

b) *Statement of the Problem*

The low academic performance in schools is brought the need to investigate the factors influencing learning. The peer group influence is one of the factors causing low academic performance.

There is need to look into peer group relationship and individual approach to learning, membership of the peer group they belong and find out how factors such as sex, age, social status or ethnicity determine their membership in a group. In addition what influence do parent and teachers have on the group.

c) *Purpose of the Study*

This study is to investigate how peer groups influence academic performance in secondary schools under Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo state.

The study will find out the following:

- i. The positive or negative influence of peer group relationship on academic performance of students. This study is important for students in the secondary school level to be aware of the significant role played by the peer groups in learning and for them to reason and be conscious of the group they join and move with.
- ii. The study will also examine the influence of economic status of peers on the academic performance of students in secondary schools.

d) *Research Questions*

- i. Does peer group influence the academic performance of secondary school students?
- ii. Does the economic status of peer influence their learning and academics?
- iii. Do parents show interest in knowing the peer group association of their children?

e) *Significance of the Study*

The findings of this study will be helpful in determining some of the factors associated to the peer groups in relation to their academic performance. The factors when identified will form a base for proffering appropriate solutions to parents and teachers to beware of the ways they can direct peer group relationship.

The result will also guide counsellors to find the best ways of handling peer groups relationship. The students will also benefit from the study by acquiring knowledge on peers that can hinder their progress in academic.

The result will enable the teacher to know more about the peer group which in turn will continue to enhance teaching and learning process.

It is also hoped that the present research study will at least provide some background information for future study on the topic.

f) *Scope of the Study*

The study will focus on the influence of peer group relationship on the academic performance of students in secondary school. The study will be carried out in the selected junior secondary schools in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo state. The scope will be limited to five (5) secondary schools in the area and the respondents used are junior secondary school students.

g) *Limitations of the Study*

In this study, the researcher is limited to some factors which includes school size and time factor. The finances accompanying researches also confined the study to the selected secondary schools in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo state.

h) *Definition of Terms*

Aristotle said that intelligent discussions must begin with definition of terms. Thus the researcher deems it fit to give operational definition to the following concerned terms in the study.

Peers: This refers to children of same sex and usually within the same age range.

Peer Group: This is the association of close friends of the same sex, which are bound together by common emotional attachment and have a complex social system of which they possess certain code of conduct such as dressing codes.

Peer Group Relationship: This is the form, way and why close friends of the same sex (peers) communicate among themselves whether in public or exclusively.

Academic Performance: This is the level of achievement attained through efforts or skills during the learning processes (theoretical and practical) and has effect on the standard of education.

Influence: This refers to the effect which an element has on another specific element.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In view of the importance of research in various factors of human existence and survival, the publicity of work done on the influence of peer group on the academic performance of students is necessary to expose the researcher to what has already been done on the area of study.

Therefore, this chapter of the research work will focus on giving a clear understanding on the issue of poor performance of students and low achievement in academics. To this end, literatures are reviewed here under the following headings:

1. Concept of peer group
2. The effect of peer groups relationship on learning
3. Parents influence on pupil`s peer group relationship
4. Teachers influence on pupil`s group relationship
5. Summary of literature reviewed
6. Research hypotheses

a) *Concept Of Peer Group*

A peer group consists of people or individuals that are within ages that are close in years, for instance between range of one to four years, the school serves as primary setting for the membership of peer group, they may be in the same class, the same sex and close interaction is of equals.

It is generally observed that peer group has a lot of influence on students. This is seen from the role-played by the peer group in the life and learning of a child, it is believed that students feel more comfortable and relaxed among fellow students. A child who is brilliant and surrounded by dull friends would lose interest in learning. On the other hand, a peer group which inclined to study would have positive effect on a dull member towards learning and stimulate his/her interest on learning. Katz(1960) wrote that the nature of a peer group determines the impact on the motivation of and achievements of its member.

The attractiveness of the group, the nature of conformity demanded by the group and the morals of the group determine whether a group is likely to have positive or negative impact on members' motivation and achievement. If the atmosphere of the group is warm, understanding and supportive, the group influence or motivation, task performance and achievement will most likely be positive.

A hostile atmosphere, constant frustration and frequent conflicts produce a negative impact not only on the member's growth and behaviour but also on his motivation to work and achievement. The kind of person a child is dictates the type of group he/she is in, as children tend to imitate each other.

Festigen (2006) also shares the same view that imitation of behaviour in a group occurs when a person acts in a way that is likely to be joined by the rest of the group.

Bandura (2003) noted that through observing and imitating the behaviour of others, learners can bypass much wasteful random behaviour and come close to reproducing the behaviours of which members are recognized. A child may not be dull but playful. If he is well monitored and he falls into a group of brilliant students who are not playful, he imitates them and this changes his attitude towards learning for better. This is why it is important for teachers to be able to distinguish a playful child from dull one.

Students who are playful but have academic traits should be encouraged to join a study inclined group.

Cressey (1992) found that peers were involved in the socialization of novices, considerable sociable interactions and the maintenance of loose, unwritten code of conduct to be followed by those who wished to remain in the group.

This is more important to the secondary school level. There are students who found to be dull in their

primary school but became brilliant in secondary school because of peer group influence.

Dull students should be identified from playful students. Therefore, attention should be concentrated on students in their first three years of secondary education as these are the most easily influenced by peer groups. This is because most of the time these students do not have a set goal until they get to higher level when they are faced with reality of WAEC and subsequent examinations.

This group also tends to imitate each other easily. They fear rejection by the group. Grulund (1990) feels that acceptance by a peer group improves social relations. Also response rate of students are lower in the junior secondary school. Teachers are more likely to hold the attention of students in the SSS than students in JSS. However, the teachers could use the peer group to get the needed responses in the JSS class.

Bang (1999) wrote that the effectiveness of the school depends on large measures on the development of effective small groups.

b) *The Effect of Peer Groups Relationship on Learning*

Sociologically, peer group is the aggregation of youths of approximately the same age level and status, Bernard (2008) describes a peer group as member of individuals bound together by purpose or abilities. Beckman (1996) viewed that members of a group perceive themselves to be alike in significant ways.

Blake and Davids (1997) support the view that a peer group come into being because its members have common goals, interests and motivations. Wattenberg (1998) also viewed that peer group is a potent force which wields great influence, especially in the school setting.

Dubey (1997) is also in the view that the peer group has come to be recognized as an association of those within the same age group and the concept can apply to both the adult and the young.

In socialization and education, it refers to a group of boys and girls or both belonging to the same age group. It has been found that in most cases, group comprises of people of the same sex and age group. That is, girls are likely related to girls and vice-versa. Case like this tends to have a competitive outlook to life and learning.

This is because some of these boys can read for hours and are inclined to study; the girls also would want to meet up with them and as such, we find in some classes girls are on the lead.

It has also been found that some pupils find it easier to relate more with people who are older than them and this have more natural outlook to life. In such cases, such pupils have knowledge of things in all sphere of life and could easily discuss issue outside the school curriculum. (Brent 2006)

In groups where there are both boys and girls, there is free interaction between sexes, which help to avoid sex discrimination as each is likely to understand other better.

James (1996) wrote that a person is controlled in his conduct by identification controlled in various groups. The loyalty of the individual to these groups is often a very strong force in his life. Cooley (1992) in support of this wrote that the child in his imagination acquires first in image of himself as he appears to others, he forms an idea of how others judge him and finally he experiences a feeling of pride depending on what he imagines they think of him. Thus, a member of a group puts up behaviour of his own part from the one of the group.

Fatinwa (1974) wrote that age groups in many ethnic societies in Nigeria have been well used for community development educational purposes, citizenship training in general or for purely political activities. It is essential for the continuation of the peer group to sort out the role of leaders and followers.

Landgren (1969) define leadership as the influence that a group member has over the motives and behaviour of other members. Leadership may be agreed upon willingly and quietly accepted or asserted over by one member. It has been observed that most children from high socio-economic status form peer group with children from similar socio-economic status and vice-versa.

Katz (1994) wrote that people of particular status level find themselves attracted to their peers that is those equal to them in status because with them they find themselves more socially and psychologically comfortable.

Dubey (199) also support that social status help to determine membership in most groups. However, there are exceptions of pupils from low or middle socio-economic status homes usually tend to live above their means in schools, this is because of the children from high socio-economic status homes in all ways, most of the time, they want to be seen in the same clothes and shoes with them. And when they cannot get money to do this from the appropriate source (i.e. from their parents) they resort to other means like stealing.

Dubey (2006) also noted that most children from high and middle socio-economic status homes tend to use English as their medium of communication right from home and also have access to textbooks and other necessary materials for learning while most children from poor homes mostly use their native language and lack textbooks and necessary materials.

Therefore, the poor children's English is improved as a result of their relationship with those children from high and middle class who have the textbooks and materials. Also these children may borrow textbooks which they cannot afford to buy from their affluent friends.

Pata (2004) stated that the peer is important because it shelters and protects its members. It gives them psychological substance by meeting emotional needs of affection, understanding and acceptance. It invests individuals with specific status. And since it comprises a small number of people of equal rank, a peer group can operate as a medium of communication. As members can interact directly with one another, equivalence in their status ensures that members have a common basis of meaning which adds to ease off communication. In all these, it is not doubtful that a peer group provides and enhances effective learning. They relate more with each other than with their teachers or parents. In a classroom situation, a pupil may be tongue tied at the sight of his/her teacher and may find it difficult to relate with him/her. This is not because he/she does not know the answer but because of the negative attitude to the teacher. The pupil could easily give these solutions and suggestions in the midst of his/her peers.

Coleman (1981) wrote that peer group in many schools exert a strong influence on academic performance, one of the reasons for this is that, pupils care so much about being liked and respected by their peers and therefore will try to impress them both in academics and other aspects.

Hollander and Hunt (1991) noted that children especially school children do not rush to form groups. They observe and evaluate one another before they form a formal peer group.

In the secondary school, pupils come in contact with peer from different geographical areas, provinces and ethnic groups. The opportunity to mix with young pupil from different social background is likely to readily mix up with another pupil of the same ethnic background Etim (1996).

Peer group should therefore be used for effective teaching and learning in schools. In certain areas of problem solving, the group may do better than any single member. Even if a single member proposes a solution, it is likely to be discussed in the group, supporting this, Brunner (1968) states that discussion is a social aspect in the domain of reasoning, logic and problem solving.

Bary (1995) in support of this write up stated that, in the larger social group, the group as a whole exercise control over the individuals.

Bary (1995) continues that interaction in the group is determined to some extent by the personal characteristics of each group member. The group is influenced only to a degree by its individual members regardless of behaviours exhibited by each individual; the group develops behaviour on its own. He goes further to say that group atmosphere and the morale of the group determines whether the group is likely to have negative or positive effects on the productivity and social behaviour of members. If the group is supportive and conducive and the morale is good, the group's

influence on the development of members will be positive. In a classroom situation, if group works are given, all members of the group would try as much as possible to contribute as they would not want to bring the group down. On the other hand, if the groups told repeatedly that the group is not doing as well as it should, a prolonged anxiety and possibly indecisiveness and difference may result as well as a gradual lowering of morale and as the group morale lowers, each individual is affected negatively. He cannot perform at an optimum level because low morale produces an atmosphere that is not conducive to work.

In essence, if a group inclined, a single member will do all he could to improve learning situation in the group than impede it. It also enables pupils who are not serious towards studying work to buckle up. It has been observed that competition in a group does not facilitate work, as pupils in such a situation tend to withhold information that will aid progress or work to himself alone.

Deatsch (1999) found that when groups are competitive rather than co-operative, a stress situation seemed to occur. On the other hand, competition can also be used to advantage, for instance if a member of a group scores a very high mark in a test, it enables others in the group to aim high in the next test.

c) *Parents Influence on Pupils Peer Group Relationship*

Taiwo (1996) wrote that the first people with whom the child comes in contact with are his parents. They transmit to him their own values of right and wrong at a time when he is not in contact with any other influences. Unless the foundation laid by home is sound and solid, the school has nothing to build upon and the child later becomes a problem not only to his parents but also to the community.

It is therefore the home that the child comes from that determines type of group the child would join. In essence a child from home that well disciplined would find it difficult to be in a group that comprises of delinquents and if he finds himself in such group, he would refuse to be influenced by their behaviours. In a case where such a child is influenced by the group behaviour, the situation at home does not allow him to exhibit it and thus he pretends and become meek in the presence of his parents. It is important for the parents to know a child's friends both at home and at school, in order to achieve this, parents should make themselves more accessible to their children.

Hake (2006) wrote that parents must be properly educated on matters of discipline since it is dangerous to be too permissive or too strict. The content of parent education should include the rather special treatment required by the child at the adolescent stage. At the secondary school level, parents should be made to realize that the child is no longer toddler at this stage because he is experiencing a new awareness of

the world and he is struggling not only to make a place for himself in his own age group but in the world at large. It is also the task of parents to continue to well and to give good examples to the children. This is important because pupil's imitation rate as discussed earlier is very high and thus copy behaviour from the adults.

Thus, it is likely that parents who smoke or keep late night find such behaviours in their children. And as such, the child would not resist such behaviours in their children. And as such, the child would not resist joining or forming a group of smokers or late night keepers. This also invariably would have a negative influence on his learning.

Furthermore, findings showed that delinquent children were more in homes characterized by parental conflicts that often end up in divorce. It might also lead to absence of pro-social standard of behaviour in the parents as evidenced by high rates of parental delinquency or failure to communicate stand in behaviour to the child (Hirsch 2009)

One of the most consistent findings of extensive research on the origins of delinquent behaviour was that the delinquent child was more likely to come from a home broken by divorce than non-delinquent child (Anderson 2002). However, the key factor related to the development of delinquent behaviours was not divorce; rather it was the absence of adequate parental control of the child's behaviour. (Gluock and Chueck 2006), according to them, the child failed to develop appropriate standards of behaviour because these were neither taught nor modelled in the home.

Greztel (2004) also asserts that the effect of divorce felt much by children from nuclear family. He feels that separation or divorce to them would like a loss of the father when he has travelled out of the country or the loss of the mother as in death. The needs, nurture and love that were provided by any of the two parents would be missed by them. They may lead them to "frustration and anxieties" which are signals to concentration and the application of one's energies to serious academic work"

Children from broken homes are mostly associated with cases of serious conflicts and disunity. They tend to emulate their parents by resorting to constant fighting and quarrelling with friends, classmates and brothers or sisters at home and in the other hand of forming bad gang in the school.

Juvenile delinquency is a common societal ill among our young people. Nowadays, it is a bi-product of divorce, in this case creates problem to the law enforcement agents. According to some research experiences in Oyo state, a peer group who pays truancy, who are aggressive, drug addicts and other social vices, are mostly from broken home. The American child welfare specialist see broken home as the worst kind of abuse on the child, worst in the sense

that the effect could go deeper and could seriously threaten the child's mental health, which is very difficult to heal in comparison to physical injuries.

Many cases of peer group forming armed-robbery gang, drug addicts, alcoholism, prostitution and juvenile delinquency could be attributed to parents.

Peter (2006) wrote that there are more broken homes today than there were in the past. As large percentage of maladjusted and delinquent children comes from broken home, they have no flag to follow and so fall among those adrift in the society. This could happen where both parents are working and do not come home until very late in the night and is even more rampant in cases where the child is not enrolled in a lesson after schools so that his time is not fully engaged into beneficial activities.

In a single parent home where responsibility of taking care of the child falls on either the mother's or father's shoulder and where they are busy working for means of survival, the child could also be influenced to a large degree by his peers.

Coleman (2006) wrote that the adolescent society is a reflection of a highly industrialized society in which the family has lost many of its former characteristics, especially those that made it self-sufficient economic unit. In turn, the family has little to offer the child in the way of training him/her for his/her place in the community. Since the parents are not available to relate to, he finds his level with peers.

However, in home where both parents are still together, they endeavour to know their child and inquire about the home background and academic ability of the child's friends; because they know the great influence a child's peer could have over his learning. In a situation where both parents work, they came home early enough to meet their children with their peers and monitor their movements with such and they try to engage their child's time with useful activities. Children from such homes find it difficult to mix with bad peers because they get instant discouragement from their parents and even the fear instilled in them by their parents guide them in choosing their peers at school. The parents who work late to meet up with the second time find it difficult to know their children's peer group in school.

Robinson (2008) wrote that parents once concerned with the achievement of their children try and train them for independent action and initiative. Such parent would do everything in their power to see that their children mix with the right type of groups so as to see them grow responsible adults. Thus, parents motivate their children into learning by making the home environment conducive for learning and by providing the child with learning materials.

Mussen (2007) is of the view that parental influence is more powerful than peer influence among the adolescence whose parent express affection, interest, understanding and willingness to be helpful.

Then the parents continue to provide a highly personal and emotionally involved relationship, which may be characteristics of peer group influence. However, it should be noted that peer group influence increases in the secondary schools partly because many go away from home and stay in boarding institutions where the parental contact is very limited but the main reason for peer group influence is the location of the adolescent as marginal person who is not a child and not adult.

The only reference group that meets his requirement is peer group identical.

d) *Teachers Influence on Pupils' Peer Group Relationship*

The effectiveness and success of the academic achievement of the school depends on a large measure of the development of success of small group. It supersedes working with youngsters individually. Teachers need to help the work group build its own cohesion and continually resolves the group's internal problems. The teacher's job despite the myriad requirements and changing conditions that affect him is to help each learner form his optimum level. In order to do this, the teachers must create an effective learning environment; understanding of group characteristics and social interactions makes the teacher more knowledgeable and behave in productive ways.

Bary (2007) wrote that in schools, interpersonal relationships occur within the bounds of groups. And the first thing one should examine in a classroom group is the awareness of a child's social position in the classroom has great deal of implication for his school work. Schoolwork demand regular interaction between students and teachers.

Boocook (2006) maintained that there are some evidence that the teacher-students relationship is strong by providing teacher with information on their students' abilities, home, environmental problems, emotional problems and encourage them to use his information in planning their work.

Rist (2005) wrote that much of the difficulties which culturally different pupils encounter in the schools may be attributed to how a teacher views the pupils. Therefore, it is important that the teacher use peer group for effective teaching and classroom interaction. This above view is also supported by Mannhet (2007) that these physical relationships are important because they give the very often unexamined basic framework on which classroom relationships and the teacher-pupils work attitudes are built up.

Moreover, the personality of the teacher is very important because pupils view the teacher personality before they relate on associate with them.

Dollard (2009) supported that this how pupils achieve in schools, how they behave and particularly how they view themselves is to a remarkable degree function of teacher's personality.

Miner (2008) is also of the view that a pupil's academic performance is not just simply a function of his innate ability or environmental factor but also of the teacher's personality variables. The teacher's personality is an aspect of his behaviour in groups. Teacher can resolve by centralizing the independence of students (decentralizing authority) and the social access of members.

The later can be accomplished if the teacher talk less and provide more time for giving attention to student's comments and questions. By spreading verbal participation and using students idea whether they are pertinent or off the subjects, he increased the leadership and prestige of the students.

Barnes (2004) said that there is a great need for teachers to understand how their communicative behaviour influences their pupils. The teacher must know that he/she is the centre of attention in the class, as such; he should be a good model to his pupils. He should not note their error or desist from correcting their mistakes right in the class. He should rather help them to develop their recognition and production skills that is listening, speaking, writing and reading.

Getzels (2009) wrote that group action is facilitated when teacher uses indirect rather than direct influences. If the teacher is accommodating, creative and intelligent, there will be active participation from the pupils during class work and extra-curricular activities. It is believed that a teacher directs learning and the degree in which he does this determines the total level of effectiveness.

The teacher should be aware that not all the students who are in a group work facilitate or participate in the work, in support of this, Aldridge (2011) proposed the theses that some youths joins the group not to achieve but to avoid responsibility and confrontation of life since other group members will sort the work out. They have no idea of what they want to do, so they find unity in a free for all achievements. Aldridge therefore suggested that the antidote for these is a dialogue/discussion and in short, interactive teaching influence. Also, a teacher according to John (2009) may capitalize on group function by getting pupils to discuss group weakness.

Dinkoneyer (2009) stated that one of the teacher's difficulties in the ordinary classroom approach is that, it permits some pupils to feel like their voice is flat and is of no consequence. Ebuka (2009) stated that, once pupils realize that their presence and opinion is important, they became very involved in class activities.

Oliver (2006) is also of the view that there is no sure fine technique for generating effective decision but class involvement is facilitated when pupils feel that the group is theirs and they are more likely to feel this when they have been allowed to make some suggestions and decisions. There are considerable evidences that group method promote problem-solving skills, consolidate

learning and encourage freedom of thought, a spirit of inquiry and independence.

Grumwald (2008) therefore suggested that more emphasis should be given to the process of inquiry and discovery. In a situation where there is a stubborn pupil in a group who may impede the group participation or classroom learning, the teacher should endeavour to have private moment with the child.

Woolf (2009) asserted that, there is evidence that giving the distributed pupils any kind of attention may be helpful. In support of this view Ceane (2009) asserted that the key to successful teaching resides in acceptance, applause and attention to pupils need. In case where a teacher identifies a brilliant pupils in a group that is not incline to study, efforts should be made to encourage him thus will improve his learning where teacher no longer dominates.

e) *Summary of Literature Reviewed*

The researcher has examined various items and factions that are necessary for effective and meaningful research into the factors that are responsible for low academic performance through the peer group.

The review started with concept, the effect of parents and teachers on the peer group and analysis in relation to the contemporary of ethnicity and socio-economic status that determine membership in groups.

The researcher further takes a cursory look at some empirical studies on the topic as evident from home, teacher relationship in schools and how teacher could use the peer group for effective teaching and learning process. This review is relevant to bring to focus what the study seeks to find out.

f) *Research Hypotheses*

- ✓ The impact that group relationship has on the academic performance of secondary school students.
- ✓ The impact that economic status of peers has on the academic performance of secondary school students.
- ✓ The impact that parents have on the peer group that their wards belong to and how it affect their academic performance.
- ✓ The extent to which socio-cultural background of peers affects the membership of peer groups and how it affects academic performance of students.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The chapter describes the procedure for conducting this study, specifically; the chapter provided detailed information on research design, the target population, the sample and sampling technique, instrumentation and standardization procedure. The chapter also presented the procedures followed in collecting data, scoring and method of data analysis.

a) *Research Design*

The study is a descriptive research study. The study design seeks descriptive information on the influence of peer group on the academic performance of secondary school students. This type of descriptive research employed in this study is the survey research design.

The survey is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current (performance of peer group) status of the population with respect to one or more variable(s)

b) *Area of Study*

The study covered Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo state; it is surrounded by other local governments like Oyo West, Afijio, and Oyo East e.t.c. The population of this study consist of all J.S.S III students in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo state.

c) *Sample and Sampling Technique*

Random sampling technique was adopted and used to select schools for the study. Out of the existing public secondary schools in Atiba Local Government Area, five (5) were randomly selected for this study which are

- Oranyan Grammar School II, Saabo, Oyo
- Oke-Olola Grammar School, Oke-Olola, Oyo
- Alaafin High School, Oyo
- Community Commercial Secondary School, Isale-Oyo
- Oba Adeyemi High School, Durbar, Oyo

The researcher made use of only J.S.S III students because this is where the influence is fully manifested considering their age range between 12 and 16 years, which falls under adolescent stage.

By using five above listed schools, it afforded the researcher the opportunity to direct information from the subject that has direct impact on them with the theme of the study in all the places used.

The spread of the subjects across the places used were given below.

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1	ORANYAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL II	10	10	20
2	OKE-OLOLA GRAMMAR SCHOOL	10	10	20
3	ALAAFIN HIGH SCHOOL, OYO	10	10	20
4	COMMUNITY COMM. SEC. SCH. ISAALE-OYO	10	10	20
5	OBA ADEYEMI HIGH SCHOOL, OYO	10	10	20
	TOTAL	50	50	100

d) *Instrumentation*

The main instrument used for the study was questionnaire, which was prepared in two parts. Part one contained questions on personal data about each

respondent while part two contained other set of items on different factors which can influence the respondents in reference to their peer group.

The questionnaire was scaled on the 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D). The respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with the given items.

e) *Validity of the Instrument*

The instrument used for data collection was validated by the researcher's supervisor to check the face and content validity of the instrument. Her criticisms and recommendations were effect to produce a final draft of the instrument.

f) *Reliability of the Insturment*

The split-half method of testing reliability was used to ensure the reliability of the instrument. The scores gotten were correlated using Person Product moment correlation co-efficient and a co-efficient reliability of 0.69 was arrived at.

g) *Administration of the Instrument*

The administration of instrument for the study was carried out by the researcher by taking the questionnaires to the respondents concerned with the instruction on how to fill them.

Each subject was told the aim of the research, which is to ascertain the influence of peer group on their academic performance.

The students filled the questionnaire independently and later retrieved individually.

h) *Method of Data Analysis*

The data collected from the subjects will be analysed using Percentage based on the 4-points scale. To analyse the responses from the subjects, Simple Percentage method will be used.

IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter analyse the data collected from administration of questionnaire with simple percentage method of data analysis and the findings are discussed below in the tables.

A. Does peer group influence the academic performance of secondary school students?

Table 1 : I prefer to study with my friends

Option	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	43	43
Agree	24	24
Disagree	18	18
Strongly Disagree	15	15
Total	100	100

Table 1 above shows that 43 of the respondents strongly agreed, 24 Agreed, also 18 and 15 disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that secondary school students prefers to study with their friends.

Table 2 : I Discuss My Learning Problems with Friends

Option	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	38	38
Agree	28	28
Disagree	20	20
Strongly Disagree	14	14
Total	100	100

In table 2 above, 38 strongly agree, 28 agreed and 20 disagreed while 14 strongly disagreed with the statement which shows that students prefer to discuss their learning problem with peers

Table 3 : The group work helped me to boost my grades

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	30	30
Agree	22	22
Disagree	18	18
Strongly Disagree	30	30
Total	100	100

From table 3 above, where 30 strongly agreed, 22 agreed and 18 disagreed while 30 strongly disagreed which shows that group work help to improve students' grades.

Table 4 : I love to make friends with intelligent students

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	30	30
Agree	30	30
Disagree	18	18
Strongly Disagree	22	22
Total	100	100

From table 3 above, where 30 strongly agreed, 30 agreed and 18 disagreed while 22 strongly disagreed which shows that group work help to improve students' grades.

Table 5 : My friends' assistance in group discussion assisted to improve my grades

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	20	20
Agree	38	38
Disagree	14	14
Strongly Disagree	14	14
Total	100	100

Table 5 above shows that 20 strongly agreed, 38 agreed and 14 disagreed while 28 strongly disagreed.

Hence, it can be concluded that assistance by peers in group discussion assisted in improving students' grades.

Table 6 : The upper grade of my friends encourages me to work harder.

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	40	40
Agree	30	30
Disagree	20	20
Strongly Disagree	10	10
Total	100	100

From table 6 above where 40 strongly agreed, 30 agreed and 20 disagreed while 10 strongly disagreed, it can be deduced from the results that secondary school students are encouraged to work harder because of upper grade of their friends.

B. Does the economic status of peers influence their learning and academic performance?

Table 7 : My friends' parents are educated

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	5	5
Agree	5	5
Disagree	20	20
Strongly Disagree	70	70
Total	100	100

From the table above, 5 of the respondents strongly agreed that their friends' parents are educated while 5 also agreed with the statement but 20 of the respondents disagreed while 70 of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Table 8 : I hate to make friend with students from poor family

Option	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	5	5
Agree	10	10
Disagree	55	55
Strongly Disagree	30	30
Total	100	100

Table 8 above shows that 5 of the respondents strongly agreed that they hate to make friends with students from poor family, 10 of the respondents agreed with the statement, 55 of the total respondents disagreed while 30 strongly disagreed.

From table 9 above where 35 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 40 agreed and 20 disagreed while 5 strongly disagreed, it can be concluded that students like to associate with friends from rich family.

Table 10 : I borrow textbooks from my rich friends

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	30	30
Agree	40	40
Disagree	15	15
Strongly Disagree	15	15
Total	100	100

Table 10 above shows that 30 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 40 agreed and 15 disagreed while 15 also strongly disagreed which indicated that students borrow textbooks from their rich friends.

Table 11 : I have every necessary textbook

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	5	5
Agree	10	10
Disagree	35	35
Strongly Disagree	50	50
Total	100	100

From table 11 above where 5 of the respondents strongly agreed to having every necessary textbooks, 10 agreed with the statement and 35 disagreed while 50 strongly disagreed with the statement, thus it can be concluded that secondary school students does not have every necessary textbooks.

Table 12 : My intelligent friends are from rich homes

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	10	10
Agree	30	30
Disagree	25	25
Strongly Disagree	35	35
Total	100	100

From table 12 above where 10 and 30 strongly agreed and agreed respectively to the statement while 25 disagreed and 35 strongly disagreed with the statement, it can be concluded that peers intelligent friends are not from rich homes.

Do parents show interest in knowing the peer group association of their children?

Table 13 : My parents know many of my friends

Option	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	25	25
Agree	35	35
Disagree	20	20
Strongly Disagree	20	20
Total	100	100

From table 13 above, 25 of the total respondents strongly agreed that their parents know many of their friends, 35 also agreed to the statement and 20 disagreed while 20 also strongly or totally disagreed with the statement.

Note: The greater percentages of agreed and strongly agreed were in relation to the female's responses.

Table 14 : My parents do not like my movement with friends

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	10	10
Agree	35	35
Disagree	40	40
Strongly Disagree	15	15
Total	100	100

From table 14 above, 10 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement above, 35 also agreed and 40 of the respondents disagreed while 15 strongly disagreed with the statement, which all in all indicate that parents like their children movement with friends.

Table 15 : My parents love to have many friends

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	50	50
Agree	30	30
Disagree	10	10
Strongly Disagree	10	10
Total	100	100

From table 15 above where 50 of the total respondents strongly agreed that their parents love them to have many friends, 30 of the respondents also agreed to the statement and 10 of the respondents disagreed while, 10 strongly disagreed that their parents love them to have many friends.

Hence, it can be ascertained from the figures that parents love their children to have many friends or associate with peers.

Table 16 : My parents encourage me to move around with students who are intelligent

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	40	40
Agree	30	30
Disagree	15	15
Strongly Disagree	15	15
Total	100	100

From table 16 above which shows that 40 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 30 of the respondents also agreed and 15 of the respondents disagreed while 15 also strongly disagreed with the statement.

It can thus be concluded that parents encourage their children in secondary school to move around with intelligent students.

Table 17 : My parents' encourages me to study

Option	Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	42	42
Agree	32	32
Disagree	10	10
Strongly Disagree	16	16
Total	100	100

The observation from table 17 above shows that 42 of the respondents strongly agreed that parents encourages them to study with friends, 32 also agreed but 10 disagreed while 16 strongly disagreed

Finally, the researcher concluded that parents encourage secondary school students to study with friends based on the data presented in table 17.

Table 18 : My parents teach me how to relate with friends

Option	Responses	Percentage(%)
Strongly Agree	21	21
Agree	38	38
Disagree	31	31
Strongly Disagree	10	10
Total	100	100

Table 18 above shows that 21 of the total respondents totally agree that parents teach them how to relate or associate with friends, 38 also agree to the statement and 31 disagreed while 10 of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

It can thus be concluded that parents teaches students on how to relate with friends.

This chapter is concerned with conclusion, educational implications for further studies and summary of the study. It gives priority to the details of major finding of this study as earlier postulated in the research questions.

V. CONCLUSION

Learning does not occur in isolation but through interaction with certain factors one of which is the peer group. It can therefore be said that the peer group, which a child interact with will definitely affect learning. On the peer group ensures positives or negative learning of a student.

The extent to which the peer group determines the academic ability of students had been investigated in this study revealed that a dull student may become study inclined when he finds himself in a group that encourages effective learning. The study also revealed that when students are not well monitored they fall in bad groups. However, the study has revealed the fact that students associated in groups with other students of the same age and ethnic background. The study has also shown that a high percentage of the students are more interested in relating to their friends than to their teachers and parents.

This may be as a result of the attitude of the parents and teachers. It is indicated in the finding that teachers may be able to use the peer group effectively for classroom interaction and participation. The peer group could also be used in a group to motivate student's class achievements.

a) Educational Implication

The findings of this study revealed the following on education:

1. In order to change students performance positively, more attention should be devoted to their relationship with their classmates both in classroom and outside.
2. A child who is not brilliant my do better in school if he is accepted by a group that is study inclined.
3. Most students from high and middles socio-economic status home have high standard of education performance and they should be encouraged to associate freely with children from poor home in order for this poor children to gain and have access to what their elites children have to improve their education performance.

b) Recommendation

Based on the findings from the study, a number of recommendations could be made as follows:

- i) Teachers should understand that the peer group is an important factor in child's learning and therefore should use it encourage learning.
- ii) Teacher should use the peer groups a study group to bring about effective classroom interaction. The teacher must neither be too strict nor too permissive so as to encourage good teacher-student relationship.
- iii) Students should endeavour to form or join groups that are study inclined and encourage learning so

that their learning would be effective or affected properly.

- iv) Parents should make sure their children are well monitored and they should encourage them to have friends that would have a positive influence on their learning both at home and at school.

The peer group influence is a very important consideration in learning, so further efforts must be made both by teachers, parents and students alike to ensure that it is effectively used to improve learning.

c) Suggestions for Further Studies

Consequent on the limitations of this study, the following areas of further research were suggested:

1. The study should be further extended beyond Atiba Local Government Area. If this could be done, it would make further revelation on the peer group relationship and its influence on the academic performance of students in schools.
2. That the study should be replicated using interview and observation techniques for data collection, because it was observed that in few of the questionnaire items, some of the respondents declined true comments.

d) Summary of the Study

The study was designed to find about peer group relationship and its influence on the academic performance of students in school. The researcher has three research questions and questionnaires were

Emmanuel Alayande College of Education Oyo School of Vocational and Technical Education
Department of Business Education Questionnaire for Students

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for my research work titled "Influence of Peer Group Relationship on the Academic Performance of Students in Secondary Schools" A Case Study of Selected Secondary Schools in Atiba Local Government Area.

Your sincere response to the questions will be highly appreciated and every information will be given a confidential treatment.

Yours sincerely,
Ajibade Basit O.

SECTION A:

Fill the gaps with your information

Date:..... Age:

Sex: Class:

Religion: Tribe:

SECTION B:

Tick (✓) any of the 4-points rating scale to indicate your level of agreement: 4-points scale -

(SA) - Strongly Agree (A) – Agree (D) – Disagree (SD) – Strongly Disagree

To Be Filled By Students

administered to the Junior Secondary School III students in the sampled schools in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo state.

The result of data analysed can be summarized thus:

- It is evident that the peer group that a child forms or moves with influence his/her performance also feels free to discuss their problems with their peers.
- Also, through the research questions, it was discovered that students are pleased to make friends with other students from rich home and the rich students are also pleased to associate with fellow students from poor homes.
- Finally, the result findings also show the interest of the parents in monitoring the peer group association that their children move with especially the female children.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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A. Does peer group influence the academic performance of secondary school students?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1.	I prefer to study with my friends				
2.	I discuss my learning problems with friends				
3.	The group work helped to boost my grades				
4.	I love to make friends with intelligent students alone				
5.	My friends assistance in group discussion assisted to improve my grades				
6.	The upper grade of my friends encourage me to work harder				

B. Does the economic status of peer influence their learning and academic performance?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1.	My friend's parents are educated				
2.	I hate to make friend with students from poor family				
3.	I like to associate with friends from rich family				
4.	I borrow textbooks from my rich friends				
5.	I have every necessary textbooks				
6.	My intelligent friends are from rich homes				

C. Do parents show interest in knowing the peer group association of their children?

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1.	My parents know many of my friends				
2.	My parents do not like my movement with friends				
3.	My parents love me to have many friends				
4.	My parents encourages me to move around with students who are intelligent				
5.	My parents encourages me to study with friends				
6.	My parents teach me how to relate with friends				



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