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**Parental Socio-Economic Status and Peer Pressure as Predictors of Social Adjustment among Secondary School Adolescents in Atibalocal Government Oyo**

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**Abstract**

Numerous scholars have examined the variable of secondary school students' social adjustment. Despite these studies, little is known about the factors that actually predict the aforementioned variable. Past researches have shown that social adjustment among secondary school students as a major challenge which could debar them from making progress in their educational pursuit. This study, therefore, was carried out to examine the peer pressure and socioeconomic status as determinants of social adjustment among adolescents in secondary school in Atiba local government area Oyo. The expo-facto research design was used in this study. Using stratified random sampling, two hundred participants were selected from among the secondary school students in Atiba local government Oyo, Oyo state. Three validated research instruments were used to generate data. The instruments used were Social Adjustment Scale ( $\alpha=0.77$ ), socio-economic status ( $\alpha=0.86$ ), per influence scale ( $\alpha=0.94$ ). Three research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and the t-test. The results showed a strong correlation between students' social adjustment and their parents' socioeconomic position ( $r = .490$   $p < 0.05$ ) and peer pressure ( $r = .320$   $p < 0.05$ ) and social adjustment among the participants. The study showed that socio-economic status had significant influence on social adjustment among students [ $t(198) = 2.72$ ;  $p < .01$ ]. Further, students with low level of socio-economic status ( $X = 64.92$ ;  $SD = 8.24$ ) reported higher level of social adjustment than those with high level of socio-economic status ( $X = 61.99$ ;  $SD = 9.88$ ). Based on this finding, it is recommended that proper use of socio-economic status should be organized to foster social adjustment among students. Positive use of peer influence should be encouraged among adolescents. Also, School Counsellor should intensify their efforts on the social network training of adolescent's so as to enhance social adjustment.

**Keywords:** Social adjustment, Peer pressure, Parental socio-economic status students

**1. Introduction**

Change, tension, and uncertainty are characteristics of the global shift from a familiar environment to a new or unfamiliar one, such as a student transiting from Junior to Senior Secondary School (Fabian, 2012). Adjustment is the process of becoming accustomed to induced changes of life; it is defined depending on how the secondary school students assesses their social adjustment or adaptation as well as its associated changes. Adjustment is a dynamic process that shapes our responses to life's challenges and opportunities (Fabian, 2012). The new and unknown frequently threaten a secondary school student's sense of self (Fabian, 2012). A new set of expectation, problems, and acceptance into a new group are all things secondary school students must deal with. According to Martetts (2013), asserts that students must be able to work independently, build relationships with classmates and staff, and act in a way that is acceptable for their class.

Social adjustment is a critical aspect of secondary school adolescent development, encompassing emotional, social, and behavioural dimensions. Secondary school students encounter numerous challenges as navigate this phase of life, which can significantly impact their psychosocial well-being. Social adjustment, defined as the ability to adapt effectively to the demands and challenges of life, plays a pivotal role in secondary school adolescent development. During the transition in the school setting, secondary school students encounter a myriad of experiences and responsibilities that shape their social adjustment (Fabian, 2012).

Social adjustment or adaptation refers to student's capacity to adapt to the environment, which implies that the secondary school students have sufficient mechanisms to feel good, integrate, respond adequately to the demands of the environment, and achieve his or her objectives (Domitrovic et al., 2019).

The degree of comfort, familiarity, and predictability that secondary school adolescents experience influences their ability to adjust to a new environment. These skills include social competence, problem solving abilities, self-reliance and determination, behavioural control, and the ability to know about "not

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knowing" and what to do about it (Margetts, 2002). Students' ability to follow instructions, take responsibility for their belongings, take turns, control their behavior in response to others, and respond appropriately to frustration are all examples of skills that support adjustment. (Fabian, 2012).

A crucial component of teenage growth is social adjustment, which includes behavioral, social, and emotional aspects. Students in secondary school face several obstacles during this stage of life, which can have a serious effect on their psychological health. A key component of teenage development is social adjustment, which is the capacity to successfully adjust to the rigors and difficulties of daily living. Secondary school kids have a wide range of experiences and obligations that influence their psychological well-being as they adjust to life in the classroom (Domitrovic et al., 2019).

Secondary school students in Nigeria occupy a unique developmental stage characterized by rapid physical, emotional, and cognitive changes. This period, typically between adolescence and early adulthood, is marked by identity formation, peer influence, and increasing academic demands (Santrock, 2021). Given Nigeria's diverse socio-cultural landscape, students face unique challenges, including economic instability, cultural expectations, and peer pressure, all of which impact their social adjustment (Eze, 2018). Social adjustment, defined as the ability to interact effectively within one's social environment, is critical for academic success and overall well-being (Adeyemo, 2010). Studies highlight that inadequate social adjustment can lead to behavioural issues, poor academic performance, and mental health struggles (Ogunyemi, 2019). Therefore, targeted interventions, including counseling and social skills training, are essential to support Nigerian secondary school students in navigating their socio-emotional challenges effectively. Addressing these issues fosters holistic development and enhances their contributions to society.

Parental socioeconomic status is a major determinant of social adjustment. Shittu (2014), affirmed that parental socio-economic status is a comprehensive measure of a person's or family's economic and social standing in comparison to others, based on factors including income, education, and occupation. Therefore, compared to their peers from parents with median or high socioeconomic position, children of parents with low socioeconomic status are more likely to engage in some form of social adjustment.

According to Moslehi and Ahamdi (2013), based on factors including income, education, and occupation, a person's or family's socioeconomic standing is their place in the economy and society relative to others. In general, socioeconomic status is a comprehensive measure of a person's or family's economic and social standing in relation to others that combines biological

and economic factors. Socioeconomic status is commonly determined by an individual's occupation, income, and education, or by combining any two or three of these factors (Adegboye, 2009). Socioeconomic status has been linked to violent behaviour in relation to social adjustment.

Given the correlation between socioeconomic status and social adjustment in students, Moslehi and Ahamdi (2013) highlighted the significance of socioeconomic status on social adjustment. A person's choice about social adjustment may suffer from a lack of resources and restricted access to those that are available (Moosavi, 2012). Moslehi and Ahamdi (2013) asserted that, people with lower socioeconomic status are more likely to struggle with social adjustment than people with higher socioeconomic status. Research has shown that a person's socioeconomic level is a significant predictor of their social adjustment (Moslehi and Ahamdi, 2013). Asikhia (2010) also affirmed that socioeconomic status is a critical factor in students' social adjustment. Socioeconomic status and educational background are significant factors in students' social adjustment and social integration.

Peer pressure's is another major determinant of social adjustment. Peers in schools display patterns of engagement in an attempt to re-affirm their freedom from parents and other adults at the adolescence stage (Raheem, 2009). In every society, there exists groups that are part of the larger society but whose members adhere to norms and values that favour the norms of the larger society. Individuals in society will usually make friends or have their closest associates from among their peer groups (Eze, 2018). Therefore, peer associates have a great influence on the lifestyle of their members. Peer group association as an agent of socialization, determines to a large extent, what social codes an individual learns (Ogunyemi, 2019).

This implies that secondary school students whose core group members believe and act within norms will learn and internalize more of social adjustment codes than those that conform with the norms of the society. Peer groups or associations have their own cultures, sanctions or rituals into which members are socialized and accordingly, members who do not comply with any of these may be ostracized (Eze, 2018). As a result, peer associates greatly impact their members' lifestyles. Members who do not adhere to any of the customs, rules, or traditions of peer groups or associations risk exclusion (Carlson, 2010).

Every society has organizations that are a part of the broader society but whose members follow values and norms that encourage social adjustment to the broader society's norms. Peer groups are typically where people in society make friends or have their closest companions. As a result, peer associates greatly impact their members' lifestyles. As a socialization agent, peer group connection greatly influences the social codes that people acquire (Nsofor, 2013). This implies that

persons who are a part of a core group that upholds and believes in social standards would be more likely than those who only follow the rules to learn and absorb social integration. Members (especially new members) who do not adhere to the customs, rules, or traditions of peer groups or associations risk exclusion (Carlson, 2010).

Peer pressure affects every group, more precisely, peer influences refer to the group of colleagues who are acquainted with one another and can be compared or referenced by one another (McCarthy, 2018). Peer influences are the different ways that people of comparable ages, and occasionally similar heights, classes, and statuses including adults in the community relate to and adapt to one another (Oladipupo, 2012). Additionally, even though teenagers may have friends in a different town or neighborhood, the peer influence that directly affects them is the one that predominates in their everyday environments.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

All over the world, students have been reportedly faced with the problem of adjustments in secondary school which affect their wellbeing in recent. Many students face challenges in social adjustment, impacting their academic performance and well-being. Issues such as peer pressure, bullying, loneliness, and cultural differences hinder their ability to adapt. Additionally, poor communication skills, low self-esteem, and difficulty in forming relationships contribute to social struggles, affecting their confidence and school engagement. The consequences of this challenges is quite alarming causing poor academic performance, academic failure, truancy, gangsterism, cultism, and bullying. Most of the students transiting to secondary school are finding it difficult to adjust to the school system.

Despite the effort of previous researchers there is paucity of social adjustment of secondary school students. The lack of adequate social adjustment lead to several negative outcomes, such as academic underachievement, behavioural problems, and mental health issues like anxiety and depression. Research indicates that social adjustment issues are prevalent among secondary school students, affecting their school engagement and overall happiness. For instance, students who struggle to fit in socially are more likely to experience feelings of isolation and loneliness, which can impede their ability to concentrate and perform well academically.

Several factors contribute to the social adjustment challenges faced by secondary school students; including individual characteristics such as personality traits, peer pressure, socio-economic status and emotional intelligence, family dynamics. It is on this basis that, this study investigated the influence of parental socio-economic status and peer pressure on social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atiba local government area, Oyo, Oyo State.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of parental socio-economic status and peer pressure as predictors of social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atibalocal government Oyo. Specifically study are to:

- I. Establish if the parental socio-economic status have any significant influence on social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atibalocal government Oyo.
- II. Find if the peer pressure have any significant influence on social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atibalocal government Oyo.
- III. Examine if the male secondary school students from higher socio-economic class differ from those from the lower socio-economic class in the rate of social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atiba local government Oyo.

### 1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- I. There is no significant relationship between parental socio-economic status and social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atibalocal government area, Oyo.
- II. There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atiba local government area, Oyo.
- III. There is no significant difference between children from higher socio-economic class and those from the lower socio-economic class on the rate of social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atiba local government area, Oyo.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Research Design

This study adopted an ex-post facto descriptive survey research approach. This is used because the researcher is not interested in manipulating the variables.

### 2.2 Population

The study's target population comprised of all secondary school adolescents who were in (SSS1, SSS2 and SSS3) in Atiba local government, Oyo state.

### 2.3 Sample and sampling technique

Two hundred (200) Senior Secondary School students were randomly selected from five schools located in Atiba local government area, Oyo State.

### 2.4 Instruments

Three research instruments were adapted and validated to elicit information from respondents.

#### 2.4.1 Social Adjustment

Ridge (2011) created this social adjustment measure, which contains ten items and a five-point Likert response format with strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5) as the extremes. Cronbach alpha was 0.89, according to Mitchell and Allen (2012). The researcher found an alpha coefficient of 0.86 after subjecting the scale employed in this study to item total analysis. Guttman split – half = 0.72, part 1 alpha = 0.77, and part 2 alpha = 0.82. This suggests that this portion is trustworthy for this research as well.

#### 2.4.2 Socio-Economic Status Scale

Socioeconomic Status (SES) developed by Salami (2000a). It was developed to measure the educational, occupational and social status of individual. These items included parents' occupational type, parents level of education, parents residence parents possession of necessary and luxury items giving the total maximum score of 56. The highest score obtainable is 56 while the least is 6. The test-retest reliability of the scale when administered among adolescents was 0.73 with an interval of three weeks. The author reported an internal reliability co-efficient (alphas) ranging from .84 to .87

#### 2.4.3 Peer Influence Scale

The peer pressure scale developed by Garret (1981). This consists of 28 items with and 3 sub-scale (yielding to peer pressure, resistance to peer pressure and peer encouragement) with a response format ranging from Strongly Disagree = SD to Strongly Agree = SA. The author reported an internal reliability co-efficient (alphas) ranging from .94 to .97.

#### 2.5 Method of Data Analysis

The analysed the data using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Demographic data was analyzed using simple percentage, and hypotheses were analyzed at the 0.05 level of significance using multiple regression analysis and Pearson product moment correlation.

### 3. Results

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant influence between parental socio-economic status and social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atiba local government Oyo.

Table 1 results indicate a substantial correlation between students' social adjustment and their parents' socioeconomic status ( $r = .490$   $p < 0.05$ ). This suggests that the socioeconomic standing of parents had a big impact on how well senior secondary school pupils adjusted to social situations. Thus, among senior secondary school students in the Atiba Local Government Area in the study, family socioeconomic position significantly influenced social adjustment.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant influence between peer pressure and social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atiba local

government Oyo.

Result from Table2 shows that there was significant relationship between peer pressure and social adjustment ( $r = .320$   $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that peer pressure had significant influence on the social adjustment of senior secondary school students. Hence, peer pressure had an influence on social adjustment among students in Atiba Local Government in the study.

**H03:** There is no significant difference between children from higher socio-economic class and those from the lower socio-economic class in the rate of social adjustment among secondary school adolescents in Atiba local government Oyo

Table 3 presents results on the difference between high and low socio-economic class on social adjustment among students. It is shown that socio-economic status had significant influence on social adjustment among students [ $t(198) = 2.72$ ;  $p < .01$ ]. Further, students with low level of socio-economic status ( $X = 64.92$ ;  $SD = 8.24$ ) reported higher level of social adjustment than those with high level of socio-economic status ( $X = 61.99$ ;  $SD = 9.88$ ). The hypothesis was confirmed.

### 4. Discussion of findings

According to the first hypothesis, teens in secondary school in Atiba local government Oyo do not significantly differ in their social adjustment based on their parents' socioeconomic situation. Parental socioeconomic level significantly impacted social adjustment among senior secondary school pupils in the Atiba Local Government Area, according to the findings. This claim validates the findings of Jacquelynn and Eccles, and Pamela Daviskean (2005), who claimed that the relationship between a parent's education and their children's social adjustment depends on a number of very particular attitudes and actions. Therefore, the socioeconomic level of parents does have a significant impact on how well their children adjust to social situations. The mother's education is more significant since she has a stronger link with her children than the father does. But fathers also need to get an education because they are the family's breadwinners and bear the burden of socioeconomic status. Research by Kai, Schnabel, Corinne Alfeld, and Jurgen Baumert (2002) found that socioeconomic status indicators and parents' educational attainment have a significant correlation with students' social adjustment.

According to the second hypothesis, peer pressure and social adjustment among adolescents in secondary school in Atiba local government Oyo do not significantly affect one another. The findings demonstrated a strong correlation between peer pressure and social adjustment among pupils in Oyo State's Atiba Local Government. This assertion is in line with research by Chung and Steinberg (2006), who

Table 1: The summary table showing significant influence between parental socio-economic status and students' social adjustment

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Df	R	P	Remark
Social Adjustment	78.2334	6.22187	200	198	.490	.05	Sig.
Parental socio-economic status	64.2125	6.18844					

Table2: The summary table showing significant influence between peer pressure and students' social adjustment

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Df	R	P	Remark
Social Adjustment	78.3375	6.75743	200	198	.320	.000	Sig.
Peer pressure	64.4321	6.42617					

\*\*Sig. at 0.01 level

Table 3: T-test table showing the difference between higher and lower class in social adjustment

DV	SES	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	P
Social Adjustment	Low	100	64.92	8.24	2.72	198	< .01
	High	100	61.99	9.88			

According to the second hypothesis, peer pressure and social adjustment among adolescents in secondary school in Atiba local government Oyo do not significantly affect one another. The findings demonstrated a strong correlation between peer pressure and social adjustment among pupils in Oyo State's Atiba Local Government. This assertion is in line with research by Chung and Steinberg (2006), who found that children begin to depend more on their peers than their parents for approval as they approach puberty. At this stage, it is harder to resist peer pressure, and peer opinions usually trump those of parents (Santor, 2000). In a study on the association between delinquency and social adjustment in adolescents and community violence, Zinzow (2009) discovered that teenagers are more likely to engage in the behavior themselves when they develop relationships with individuals who exhibit social adjustment.

According to the third hypothesis, it was shown that socio-economic status had significant influence on social adjustment among students. Further, students with low level of socio-economic status reported higher level of social adjustment than those with high level of socio-economic status. The findings showed that students with low socio-economic status reported a higher degree of social adjustment than those with high socio-economic status, supporting the conclusion of Sirin (2015), who reported correlation between a household's socio-economic standing and a child's social adjustment. Low socio-economic status is deemed to affect an individual's social adjustment adversely as a result of limited access to resources (Fergusson, Boden, and Horwood, 2006). Additionally, a family's financial struggles are frequently inadvertently passed on to the children, which may be the cause of their general poor social adjustment. According to Shea (2000), socioeconomic status typically remains constant throughout generations.

Parents who have a poor socioeconomic position are more likely to experience parenting disruption, family conflict, and depression (Eamon, 2015). Parental income is therefore a crucial factor to take into account when assessing socioeconomic position.

### 5. Conclusion

Social adjustment involves adapting to social norms, relationships, and environmental changes. It requires emotional stability, effective communication, and problem-solving skills. Flexibility, resilience, and self-awareness help individuals cope with challenges. Positive social interactions, empathy, and cooperation foster better adjustment, enabling individuals to integrate smoothly into society and maintain psychological well-being. As a result, this study has established that a relationship existed between a few characteristics and secondary school students' social adjustment. These include the effects of family socioeconomic status and peer pressure on secondary school students' social adjustment. The results indicated that parents' socioeconomic status, peer pressure had significant influence on the social adjustment of senior secondary school students. It was shown that socio-economic status had significant influence on social adjustment among students. This study has advanced the understanding of how peer pressure and parental socioeconomic status affect secondary school students' social adjustment.

Peer pressure and parental socioeconomic position have a substantial impact on secondary school pupils' social adjustment, according to this study. Additionally, compared to pupils from high socioeconomic status home, individuals with low socioeconomic status reported higher levels of social adjustment. However, more replication and improvement of this study is required. The information already available on students' social adjustment as a factor that needed an urgent solution has been further

detailed by this study. Additionally, focus should be placed on the methods or elements that the researcher has discovered that can impact students' social adjustment through socioeconomic status and peer pressure.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made

- I. The school management should organize seminars, workshops and orientation for students on social adjustment.
- II. School management should establish youth-friendly centre to positively engage the students on social adjustment.
- III. The government should build entrepreneurship jobs, give social amenities, and teach secondary school pupils how to be creative and innovative so they can become more economically capable and adapt to their social and personal circumstances.

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