



INFLUENCE OF PEER GROUP INVOLVEMENT ON THE ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES OF YOUNG ADULTS LEARNERS IN JANLINGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF TARABA STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study determined: Influence of Peer Group Involvement on Academic Activities of Young adults Learners in Janlingo Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. For the purpose of this study, four objectives were raised, four research questions were answered. This study was based on model of Weidman's (1989) model of socialization in learning institutions is perhaps the most appropriate theoretical model with which to investigate and interpret peer group influence. My adaption of Weidman's model. The study adopted descriptive survey design, the design involved the collection of data through self-reported answers about situations, attitudes and opinions. The population for this study comprised all young adults' learners who is in Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State. Who was enrolled into literacy programme with total of (2,258) male and female young adults learners in Janlingo L.G.A, out of the total population (225) was drawn as sample size, using convenient sampling technique. The research instrument for this study was be self-developed questionnaire with reliability index of 7.05. Four likert type scale with response mode of "Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagreed (D), with assigned values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively was employed. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, the validated version of the instrument was administered on a sample of twenty copies (20) of the validated instruments were administered to the Maiduguri literacy centre young adult's learners, who have similar characteristics with the population of the study. Data collected were subjected to Cronbach alpha for reliability test, which revealed the index 7.05 Data collected for this study was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage, mean and standard deviation to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents and to answer research questions. The result showed among others that; there is effects of peer

group influence on the academic activities of young adults learners; there is that effects of peer group influence on the academic activities of young adults learners; .The studies therefore recommended among others; The chief Inspector of Education and Deputy Inspector of Education in Janlingo L.G.A of Literacy classes should give awareness to students on how peer group influence have effect on the activities of students; Government should provide some incentivest for the young adults learners to motivate them to attend their classes.

Keywords: *Influence, Peer, Group, Academic, Activities Young, Adults, Learners*

INTRODUCTION

Peer influence started long ago since human creation because it is in innate tendency, peers have been influencing themselves while playing or carrying out activities. Some influence others in singing, dancing, dressing etc. (UNICEF, 2012). Peer influence studies existed since the ancient epoch of Greeks. Plato believed that self-reflection enables one to converse with reason. He advocated the play way method for early childhood education thus to him the child's interest and play are valuable to his or her education and growth. The oxford advanced learner's dictionary (2001) define peer group as a group people of same age or social status. The peer group is the first social group outside the home in which the child attempts to gain acceptance and recognition. Peer group is an important influence throughout one's life but they are more critical during the developmental years of childhood and adolescence. It's also the same thing for any other individual to have peer group to socializes together in a community. Young adults learners always emulate their mates in whatever form of behavior they exhibit, particularly that which interest them thus, since socialization only refers to changes in behavior, attitudes having their origin in interaction with other persons and those which occur through integration, a child learn more through interaction with peers.

The term "peer groups" usually indicates social interaction of children or young young adultss with people of similar age, rather than broader neighbourhood effects of interactions with superiors, family or teachers. Peer influence is when you choose to do something you wouldn't want to do, either negative or positive,

because you want to feel accepted and value by your friend (s), it is not just or always about doing something against your will. Peer group and social influence plays an important part throughout one's life. It is more crucial during the developmental years of pupils, students or young adults learners. The child peer group consists of people or individuals that are within an age bracket. The school learning centre serves as the primary setting for the membership of a peer group, while other community social clubs such as association club, tribal meeting clubs, cultural club etc. is also influence young adults's learners as other discourage them due their age at that particular period Allen in Steinberg (2005).

Academic activities refer to excellence in all academic discipline. Steinberg (2005) posits that academic activities encompasses students' ability and activities; it is multi-dimensional; it is intricately associated to human growth and cognitive, emotional and social physical development. Academic activities also refer to how well a student is accomplishing his tasks and studies. There should be an interrelated relationship between peer group and academic activities. It was believed that student's academic activities correlate with the group he or she belongs. Peer Influence can be either positive or negative. If a student is influenced negatively by peer, it affects his or her academic activities. Nevertheless, stronger student does have an impact on their peers and actually help improve their overall academic activities. Conversely, positive peer influence on academic activities depends on person's self-identity, self-esteem and self-reliance. Peer influence can as well inspire student's academic vigor and motivation for achievement (Lashbrook,2000).

The educational foundation of any one starts right from the home. It starts with informal education which have being with parents when the child is of age were sent to school for final education. At school the child is expose to so many people like the teacher, classmates and health personals of the school, e.t.c. All the people associated with the education of individual. (Samrt,2000) define peer group as equal or in the usual meaning as friends of about the same class members of the same society such as social club can form peer group. The peer group influence students' academic activities depends greatly on the skills and potential of the young adults learner. Understanding the nature, magnitude, significance and

implication of peer group influence in education, is very crucial and important for the “productivity” of educational processes, and the organizational design of school systems in our Nigerian Educational sectors and around the globe. Peer group is an important influence throughout one’s life but they are more critical during the developmental years of childhood and adolescence.

The Taraba state Agency for mass education Jalingo was created on the 29 August 1991 out the deformed Gongola state. The Federal establish the Agency under edit 81 to cater for the under privilege citizens in the country. Before any organization is set up, there must be the need for it, the federal government saw the need and shoulder the responsibilities on the states and local government in the country for proper planning, execution, supervision, and evaluation of young adults education programme. In January 2006, there are one hundred and fifty-one (151) staff in the agency as 80 staff are from literacy department, 32 staffs from home economics 39 staffs are admin and financial supplies. Young adult’s education in Taraba State was established in the year 1952, with about six units. However, with the recent development and demand in education, the mass literacy centres were increase to 9 as follows: Dawaki “A” and Dawaki “B”, Turaki “A” and Turaki. “B”, Majidadi “A”, Sintali “A”, Sintali “B”, Kona Ward, Wuro Musa Ward, Trak “A”, and Dawak “A”. It’s against background that the researcher is determine influence of social and peer group involvement on academic activities of young adults learners in Jalingo Local Governed Area of Taraba State.

Understanding learning in young adulthood like piecing together a puzzle, there are many parts that must be fitted together before the total picture emerges. In Jalingo Local Government Area, must young adultss are taking charge of their learning and development to meet the demands of their daily lives. This has become necessary due to the pressures from a fast changing socio-economic world that sometimes impact their employment.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Young adults socializes with the people they associate with through interaction over many years, acceptable social customs are taught and fostered. Other children as well as young adultss can have a great impact on a broad range of issues in child’s life including achievement in schools. The research geared towards have a proper understanding on the way social interaction influence affect academic activities or achievement and

it's very important for parents, educators and policy makers. Society views young adults learners as latecomers struggling to fit learning into their already busy schedules despite their aspirations. Similarly, prevalent societal perceptions of older young adults and aging often depict worn-out images. The immediate environment, including peers, family, school, religion, and other factors, significantly influences whether students are encouraged or discouraged in their academic pursuits.

The major problem of peer and young social group influence include; school dropout, unemployment, educational wastage and time wastage, financial wastage on the part of the government, parents, and supporters. It is important to find the reason for a learner's poor academic activities and come up with a treatment plan early so that the young adults learners can perform up to full potential, the parents/supporters can be proud of them.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to determine:

- i. To determine whether peer group influence has any effect on academic activities of young adults learners
- ii. To know Whether peer group influence determine variation in academic activities of male and female youngadults learners

Research Questions

To guide this study, the following research questions were answered

- i. Does peer group influence have any effect on academic activities of young adult's learners?
- ii. Does peer group influence have varying effect on academic activities of male and female young adult's learners?

Literature Review

Peer Group Affecting Academic Activities Among Young Adult Learners

Most literature often refer the shared institutional settings as 'common shocks'. For instance, all students in the same classroom doing well academically may reflect nothing but the high quality of the teacher. A shared characteristic is the other part of correlated effects which arises when individuals tend to self-select into a group with members sharing similar behavior. For example, families that are very supportive of children's education are more likely to sort themselves across schools in order to seek for better peers.

Accordingly, research work on peer influence usually models the behavior (outcomes) of an individual (Manski, 2000). Operationally, peer group influence is a force exerted by people that is pressured by ideas, values and behavior either positively or negatively and always associated with adolescents. Studies have shown that students who do not manage their activities with peer group make lower grades than less socially accepted adolescent, (Hartney, in Manski, 1993). Peer influence studies existed since the ancient epoch of Greeks. Plato believed that self-reflection enables one to converse with reason. He advocated the play way method for early childhood education thus to him the child's interest and play are valuable to his or her education and growth. He used fables as aspects of thoughts rather than theory of ideas during lectures based on the concept of dialectic and analysis of knowledge. Cultural knowledge was encouraged with the use of fables. Dasen, P.R. (2019) So from Plato's point of view, we can see that a child learns best following his or her interest and through play. A child cannot play alone, he/she plays with friends of like interest, age, gender. In the course of playing the child is influenced to engage into other practices by friends which definitely enacts a change in character either positively or negatively. The term 'peer-groups' usually indicates social interactions of children or young young adults with people of similar age, rather than broader 'neighbourhood' effects or interactions with superiors, family or teachers.

Variation in Academic Activities of Male and Female Young adults Learners

World Bank (2019); argues that young adults learning is an important channel to help read just workers skills to fit in the future of work and suggests ways to improve its effectiveness. Alfred, Mary V. (2021); in their addition, young adults education includes initiatives in the workplace. While Rowell, Elizabeth, Robinson, Jennifer L (2021) agree with the view of Alfred and Mary that, it is part of extension education which is aimed at educating young adults including educating at workplace. As of (2021); the International Literacy Association (U.S.A); sees literacy as the "ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, compute and communicate using disciplines and in any context". And other organization might include numeracy skills and technology skills separately but alongside of literacy skills. According to Kress, Gunther R. (2003); emphasize

the increasing involvement of computers and other digital technologies in communications that necessitates additional skills. While Seidenberg Mark (2017); concerns over the perceived diminishment of traditional instruction in reading. Rhodes and Robnolt (2009); say that the concept of multi-literacies has gained currency, particularly in English language arts curricula, on the grounds that reading is interactive and informative. And the belief history of quantitative literacy (2021); say literacy is center about reading and writing. In addition, since the 1940s the term literacy is often used to mean having knowledge or skills in a particular field e.g. computer literacy, statistical literacy, critical literacy, media literacy etc.

A study by Bankole and Ogunsakin (2015), investigated the influence of peer group on the academic activities of secondary school students in Ekiti State where a total of 225 secondary school students were randomly selected from five mixed secondary schools. The instrument used in the study is the Peer Group and Adolescent's Academic Activities (PGAAP) questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-re-test method. The finding showed that peers relationship influences academic activities of secondary school students. Relying on longitudinal panel data from estimate substantial peer effects on student achievement by comparing the idiosyncratic variation in adjacent cohort's race and gender composition within a grade within a school. The author argues that the identification strategies are credibly free of selection biases because the between-cohort peer variations are beyond the easy management of parents and schools. Another study by Sacerdote, (2001) uses very similar strategies to Hoxby's to examine classroom level peer impacts, and find that a high proportion of a female classmates improve both boys and girl's academic activities. Both studies avoid simultaneity bias by only examining only predetermined peer characteristics such as peer race and gender.

The peer group is a source of affection, sympathy, understanding, and a place for experimentation. It is always possible for parent to talk with school counselors and professionals to help with the problem Allen, Porter, McFarland, Marsh, and McElhaney (2005), reported that adolescents who were well-likely by many peers

displayed high level of ego development and secure attachment, as well as better interactions with their best friends. It was found that associating with students who have a positive affect toward enhanced student's own satisfaction with school whereas associating with friends who have a negative affect toward school decreased it Ryan, A. M. (2000). From a social competency perspective, it is likely that students who have difficulty establishing themselves in a peer group may also have academic difficulties in school Wentzel, K. R, Barry C. M, & Caldwell, K. A. (2004). While the differences are more observed between adolescents that are neglected and those who are rejected.

Experiencing peer rejection can produce heightened anxiety (e.g. worry over being teased or left out) which interferes with concentration in the classroom and impedes children's acquisition and retention of information. The finding emphasizes the importance of which elements are most important in affecting the academic arrivals. However, the percentage of young adults learners friends with academic orientation itself is not predictive of academic achievement which may be an evidence of lack of lack peer influence academic achievement, or a need to investigate other aspect of friendship beyond the similarity in academic success.

According Hoxby (2000) exploits exogenous variation in peer composition in adjacent years at the school grade level in elementary schools in Texas. The findings showed that peers effects in education ranging from close to zero to about 0.50 standard deviations. In studies where it was possible to identify classmates are possibly being missing out on information on the real reference group of a student. The critical point in measuring the influence of peers is to identify the real peers. Keeping in mind that students spend a relatively big part of their time in class and it seems to be a credible assumption that their classmates are a good proxy of their group peers. However, in some cases there can be significant variation between classes within school- grades and hence the assumption that school grade peers are a good proxy of classmates can be quite strong.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The design involved the collection of data through self-reported answers about situations, attitudes and opinions from a particular population on specific variables. Alamu and Olukosi (2008) stated that descriptive survey research deals with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions, prevailing practices, beliefs, attitudes and ongoing processes. The population for this study comprised of all young adults learners who are in Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State. Who are enrolled into literacy programme which comprises of (2,258) two thousand two hundred and eighty eight male and female young adults learners in Jalingo L.G.A. A sample of (225) two hundred and twenty-five young adults male and female learners were selected to represent 10% using convenient sampling technique to draw the sample size. Convenient sampling as the name implies is a specific type of non-probability sampling method that relies on data collection from population members who are available at the time of data collection. According to Obazi and Okpala (1994), when a population of the study is large (up to 1,000), 10-30% of the population can be sampled and used in survey research.

The research instrument for this study were self-developed questionnaire named Influence of peer group involvement on academic activities of young adults learners (IPGAPYAL) in Jalingo Local Government of Taraba State, Nigeria. Data collected for this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation, using SPSS (statistic package for social and sciences) to analyzed research question

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question one: How Peer Group Affect Academic activities of Young adults learners?

Table 4. 1 Effects of Peer Group on Academic Activities of Young Adult Learners

S/n	Response	<i>n</i> =224				M
		Frequency/percentage		SD	D	
		SA	A			
1.	I no longer attend literacy classes punctual as the result of my peer group	66(29.5%)	44(19.6%)	39(17.4%)	75(33.4%)	2.5
2.	Some of my peer group usually laugh at me when seeing me going to literacy classes so it affect my activities	29(12.9%)	169(75.4%)	26(11.6%)	00(0.0%)	3.0
3.	My family also discouraged me sometimes	77(34.3%)	106(49.3%)	41(18.3%)	00(0.0%)	3.1
4.	I no longer pay attention whenever my peer groups called me old students	22(9.8%)	85(37.9%)	83(37.0%)	34(15.1%)	2.6
5.	I usually miss some classes because of my social activities engagement	92(41.0%)	91(40.6%)	22(9.8%)	19(8.9%)	3.1
					Total mean	2.86

Key: SA=Strongly Agreed, A, =Agreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, D = Disagreed

Table 4.2 contains information on the effects of peer group on academic activities of young adults learners, item seven revealed that 66 (26.5%) of the respondents were strongly agreed on the statement, 44 (19.6%) were agreed, while 39 (17.4%) were strongly disagreed and 79 (35.2%) disagreed with the statement. Item eight above showed that 29 (12.95) of respondents were strongly agreed, 170 (75.6%) of the respondents were agreed, while 26 (11.6%) strongly disagreed and 0 (0.0%) were disagreed with the above statement. Item nine above also showed that 77 (34.3%) of the respondents were strongly agreed, 106 (49.3%) were agreed, and 46 (20.5%) were strongly disagreed while 0 (0.0%) were disagreed. This showed that, there is effects of peer group influence on the academic activities of the young adults learners best the statement above. Item ten above revealed that, about 22 (9.8%) of the respondents were strongly agreed, 85 (37.9%) agreed and 83 (37.0%) were strongly disagreed, 13 (5.8%) were agreed. Item eleven above revealed that, 92 (41.0%) of the respondents were strongly agreed, 91(40.0%) were agreed and 22 (9.8%) strongly disagreed while 20 (8.9%) were disagreed. The result revealed in general that, there is effects of peer group influence on the academic activities of young adults learners in Jalingo Taraba State.

Research Question Two What are the Variation Effect of Peerl Group on Academic Activities of Young Adults Learners?

Table 4.2 Variation in Effect of Peer/Social Group Among Male and Female Young adults Learners

n = 224

S/ N	Response	SA	A	SD	D	M
1.	My girl/boyfriend/husband/wife discouraged me from literacy classes	56 (25.0%)	89 (40.2%)	40 (17.9%)	39 (17.4%)	2.9
2.	My opposite sex peer group mostly make me not to feel comfortable with my classes	78 (34.8%)	79 (35.3%)	27 (12.5%)	40 (17.9%)	2.9
3.	I feel ashram whenever I meet with my opposite sex peer partners after classes	79 (35.3%)	78 (34.8%)	27 (12.5%)	40 (18.7%)	2.6
4.	I feel uncomfortable whenever I meet my opposite sex peer partners when going to class	44 (20.0%)	93 (41.5%)	39 (17.4%)	48 (21.4%)	2.7
5.	My opposite sex peer group encourage me to always study hard.	47 (21.0%)	105 (46.9%)	31 (13.8%)	41 (18.3%)	2.9
					Total mean	28

Key: SA=Strongly Agreed, A, =Agreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, D = Disagreed

Information contains on; item twenty-one above showed that, 56 (25%) of the respondents were strongly agreed, 90 (40.2%) were agreed, while 40 (17.9%) were strongly disagreed and 39 (17.4%) of the respondents were disagreed with the statement in item twenty-one above. Item twenty-two above revealed that, 78 (34.8%) of the respondents were strongly agreed, 97 (35.3%) agreed and 28 (12.5%) strongly disagreed while 40 (17.9%) were disagreed with statement above. Item twenty –three above showed that, 79

(35.3%) of the respondents were strongly agreed, 78 (34.8%) were agreed and 28 (12.5%) were strongly disagreed while 40 (17.9%) were disagreed with the statement above. Item twenty-four above revealed that, 45 (20.0%) of the respondents were strongly agreed, 93 (41.5%) were agreed, while 39 (17.4%) were strongly disagreed and 48 (21.4%) were disagreed with the above statement. Item twenty-five above revealed that, 47 (21.0%) of the respondents were strongly agreed, 105 (46.9%) were agreed and 32 (14.3%) were strongly disagreed while 41 (18.3%) of the respondents were disagreed with item twenty-five above.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study revealed the following

- i. . The result revealed in general that, there are effects of peer group influence on the academic activities of young adults learners in Jalingo Taraba State.
- ii. The result showed that, there is variation on the effect of peer/social group influence among male and female young adults learners in Jalingo L.G.A, of Taraba State.

DISCUSSION

The study investigated the "Influence of Peer group Involvement on the Academic Activities of Young adults Learners in Jalingo Local Government Area, Taraba State." The findings demonstrated a significant impact of peer group influence on the academic activities of young adults learners in Jalingo, Taraba State. This aligns with research conducted by Hartney (cited in Manski, 1993). The results generally showed that, there is positive effect of peer group also on the academic activities of young adults learners in Jalingo L.G.A of Taraba State. According to study conducted by McElhaney, (2005) reported that adolescents who were well-likely by many peers displayed high level of ego development and secure attachment, as well as better interactions with their best friends. It was found that associating with students who have a positive affect toward enhanced student's own satisfaction with school whereas associating with friends who have a negative affect toward school decreased it. From a social competency perspective, it is likely that students who have difficulty establishing themselves in a peer group. The findings revealed that, there is variation on the effect of peer/social group influence among male and female young adults learners in Jalingo L.G.A, of Taraba State. The study is in support with Hoxby (2000) estimate substantial peer effects on student achievement by comparing the idiosyncratic variation in adjacent cohort's race and

gender composition within a grade within a school. The author argues that the identification strategies are credibly free of selection biases because the between –cohort peer variations are beyond the easy management of parents and schools. Another study by Sacerdote (2001) uses very similar strategies to Hoxby's to examine classroom level peer impacts, and find that a high proportion of a female classmates improve both boys and girl's academic activities. Both studies avoid simultaneity bias by only examining only predetermined peer characteristics such as peer race and gender.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- i. The chief Inspector of Education and Deputy Inspector of Education in Jalingo L.G.A of Literacy classes should give awareness to students on how peer /Social group influence have effect on the activities of students
- ii. Government should provide some reward incentives for the young adults learners to motivate them to attend their classes regularly
- iii. Young adults learners should also be oriented on how to focus on their academic activities in order to improve on their activities
- iv. Society at large should educate to avoid distriacting/discouraging young adults learners from going to their school
- v. Also to anyany that come into contact with the young adults learners should encourage them to an if possible help them in their area they are experiencing difficulty in their learning

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