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# **Ibadan Adolescent Rebelliousness: Attendant Effects of Self-Esteem, Gender, Age, Family Type, Peer Influence and Socioeconomic Status**

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## **Abstract**

This study examined the psychosocial predictors of rebelliousness among school age adolescents in the Ibadan. Specifically, age, gender, family type, peer influence, socio economic status, and self-esteem formed the psychosocial predictors used in this study. Three research questions were raised and answered in the study; whereas the decisions on the questions were taken, at 0.05 level of significance. The research design used is descriptive survey of ex post-facto type. 421 in-school adolescents were randomly selected from five public secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State. The instruments used for this study were distributed to participants. Multiple regression statistics was employed to analyze the data collected from the participants. The results of the analysis indicated that all the independent variables jointly have 16% variance of rebelliousness of adolescents. Family type, socio-economic status, and self-esteem have significant contribution, whereas age and gender do not contribute significantly to rebelliousness of adolescents. In addition, only peer influence ( $r=.156$ ) have significant relationship with adolescent rebelliousness at 0.05 level of significance. It was recommended that parents should be equipped with adequate parenting skills, whereas peer counselling should be organized for adolescents, as such will provide appropriate ways to respond to significant others that will devoid of rebelliousness.

**Key words:** Rebelliousness, Psycho-Social factors, Adolescent, Self-esteem, Peer influence.

### **Background to the study**

Rebellious behaviour is a stable phenomenon after middle childhood and refers to negativistic, defiant, disobedient, and hostile behaviour directed toward authority figures or rules. (Angold & Costello, 2001). Lyman and Scott (1989) refer to rebellion as 'the flagrant violation of norms'; Pink (1978) sees it as participation in a rebellious peer culture as well as deviant behaviour; to Sanders and Yanouzas (1985), it is the rejection of both pivotal and peripheral norms; and Schwartz (1987) views it as disinterest in the "classic" image of success. Some even view rebellion as a personality trait related to the defiance of rules of social conduct, peer group affiliations, and fashion statements (Bleich et al, 1991). Though these definitions make different assumptions about the motivations, goals and actions of rebellion, they do have commonalities: participation in a peer subculture and the commission of deviant acts.

Neglect of children by their parents is another key factor in family relationship. Parents owe it as a duty to their children to provide them with their developmental needs both physically and psychologically. Failure to do these amounts to neglect and abuse. Saner and Ellickson (1996) found that low parental support and affection predicted persistent hitting and predatory violence in the subjects. The relationship between low parental support and violence was however noted to be stronger in females than males. Research also found that parental victimization of children was significantly associated with their perpetration of violence against their parents and friends. Further analysis using a stepwise multiple regression showed that 39 percent of the variance in the subject's perpetration of violence against parents was accounted by four predictors: sibling victimization, parent's victimization, friend's victimization and witnessing parental aggression. Disrupted family status has been found to be predictive of adolescent's aggression. Bane (1976) found that children from disrupted families more propensity towards delinquent and maladjusted behaviour particularly in schools. Amato (1987) found that children from broken homes where there is only one parents present have less support and more autonomy,

more conflict and household responsibility, which influences their behaviour negatively.

One variable found to have a significant role to play also in adolescent rebelliousness is self-esteem. Self-esteem could be said to be one's attitude towards oneself along a positive-negative dimension. It could also be seen in the evaluation of self; having high self-esteem means that an individual likes himself or herself. On the other hand having low self-esteem means that an individual feels uncomfortable about himself. Usher (2000) found that low self-esteem is an emotional misfit that can develop into behaviour problems which includes delinquency, aggressive behaviour rebelliousness and so on. He notes however, that the seriousness of the problem depends not only on the nature of adolescent's self-esteem but also on other conditions such as difficult school transition and a troubled family life.

Baron and Byrne (2005) found that the relationship between self-esteem and bullying and other aggressive behaviours tend to suggest that low self-esteem results in aggressive behaviour. Bryant (2006) examined the relationship between self-esteem and dimensions of aggression. He surveyed 68 undergraduate students of Missouri Western State University and found that self-esteem had a weak relationship with general aggression; as well as with physical aggression, but it however showed a strong negative consistent. Boxtel, De-Castro and Goosens (2004) noted that although high levels of aggression have long been assumed to be related to low self-esteem, empirical studies have never demonstrated any relation between low self-esteem and aggressive behaviour.

One other influence on aggressive tendencies is gender-stereotype, which develop out of human values and expectations regarding being male or female. Generally, in our culture, it is believed that men are more aggressive than women. Hence, people learn very early about the specific qualities that distinguish one sex from the other (Mischel, 1977). Gender stereotyping tends to make girls to be conformists and boys to be rebellious. However, with more and more advocacy for females getting involved in roles that were hitherto considered to be reserved specifically for the male species, girls' behaviour has changed towards issues such

as standing up for their right to family violence. They noted that girls exposed to family violence reported higher rates of depression than boys. Leschied, Cummings, Brunshet, Cunningham and Saunders (2004) reported that boys more than girls engage in physical aggression and rebellious act.

It has been observed that to an increasing extent, modern adolescents in urban areas grow up in a world that is different from that of their parent. Consequently, the problem that is experienced by our contemporary youth may be different from those that were encountered by their parents. Most writers on adolescence have expressed similar views. For example, Stone and Church (1989) called adolescence a vulnerable period. According to these psychologists, adolescence is characterised by persistent feelings of exaggerated rebelliousness, emotional volatility, feelings that everybody is against them, and intense idealism. Fortunately, Stone and Stone further concluded that most adolescents have developed 'a tough core of security, and an anchorage in reality, that permits them to withstand and thrive in the stress of this period.

It is also imperative to note that, an exposure to media such like rocky music, aggressive games, internet cultism and gangsters is another area where adolescent rebelliousness are propelled. Most parents do not get enough help in understanding the developmental stages in their child's life; also, some schools lack competent counselling counsellors in remediating this', challenges. Thus, the lack of mediations between these challenges has set in conflict at home, in school and in the society at large. It is therefore needed urgently to carry-out a study such as this, to assess some predictors of adolescent rebelliousness and how it can be mediated. This research shall be of great help to parent and all stakeholders as its result will lead to reliable suggestion upon which some intervention programmes could be based.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study is undertaken to examine the psychosocial predictors of rebelliousness among school age adolescence in Ibadan. The study is therefore designed to find out:

- The existing correlation between age, gender, family type, peer influence, socio economic status, self-esteem with rebelliousness.
- The contributory effect of age, gender, family type, peer influence, socio economic status, and self-esteem of adolescence rebellious behaviour.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the relationship between self esteem, gender, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status on rebelliousness of adolescent?
2. What is the joint effect of self esteem, gender, age, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status on adolescent rebelliousness?
3. What is the relative effect of self esteem, gender, age, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status on adolescent rebelliousness?

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

A descriptive survey research design that made use of an ex-post-facto research design will be adopted for the study. This is a type of research in which the researcher starts with observation of the dependent variable and retrospectively studies the independent variable for their possible effects on the dependent variable (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). Therefore, this design is useful as its aim is to examine the psychosocial predictors of rebelliousness among adolescences, specifically within Ibadan metropolis of Oyo state.

#### **Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure**

The population for the study will be all the adolescents within Ibadan metropolis of Oyo state. Ibadan, the Oyo state capital r. the largest in the south West African Region. It consists of people from various ethnic groups who are Nigerians and Non Nigerian. The study sample comprises of senior secondary school students taken from five Local Government Areas within Ibadan Metropolis of Oyo State. However, the method adopted for the selection of participants is simple random

sampling technique was used.

The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire to the participants and also explained to them how to fill the questionnaire. The participants were adequately informed of confidentiality and the need to be precise and truthful in filling the questionnaire. After completion and collection, the researcher expressed his gratitude to the respondents. Four hundred and thirty seven questionnaires were administered to the participants. However, among these, only 452 were returned, whereas 421 were valid for this study. Thus, about 93.1% returns of questionnaire were achieved.

### **Instrumentation**

The researcher used questionnaire as the research instrument. Questionnaire has been found to be more sophisticated in design, making it more reliable and valid extending its applicability to a myriad of problems (Terence & Marvin, 2010). The instrument comprises of section A, B, C, D & E. However, section A is demographic data such as age of the students, gender and family type as relate to the respondents for this study. The remaining four sections measures Authoritarianism Rebellion, Peer Influence, Parent Socio-Economic Status and Student Self-Esteem. Authoritarianism-Rebellion Scale: Adolescents rebellion behaviour was measured using the Authoritarianism-Rebellion Tendency adapted from Kohn (1972). It has 30 item scales utilizing the Likert scoring format ranging from disagree strongly (1 point) to agree strongly (5 point). The higher the respondent's score in the scale, the higher the authoritarianism-rebellion tendency of the respondent. It has a coefficient of 0.71. All the items are coded from 1-5, except items 1,3,6,8,14,15,16,19,23,25,28,29 which are coded from 5-1. Section C - Peer Influence Scale: This instrument is a such scale of Learner's Aggressive Questionnaire developed by Velistwe (2005). It contains 14 items out of the total items of original scale. These 14 items structured as strongly disagree (1 point) to strongly agree (5 point). Pilot testing was carried out on the 14 items of this subscale and yielded 0.74 alpha coefficient value whereas the original scale has 0.74 Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient. All items are scored Directly from 1-5, except items 11,12,13 that are

scored from 5-1. Section D-Socio-Economic Status Scale: The parent socio-economic status of adolescents was measured by socioeconomic status developed by Salami (2000). It was developed to measure the educational, occupational and social status of adolescents. The items in this scale covers parents' occupational (10 marks), parent level of education (12 marks), parents residence (5 marks), parents possession of necessary and luxury items (29 marks) giving the total of fifty marks maximum score 56, the least score is 6. It has reliability coefficient of .73. Section E- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale: This scale is commonly used measure of global self-esteem, an important element of mental health. It was developed by Rosenberg (1965). The scale is a 10 items, structured on a 5-point Likert scales ranging from 1- Strongly disagree to 5- Strongly agree. The scale showed adequate internal consistency with alpha coefficient of 0.83. Items on this scale are scored from 1-5, except items 2,5,6,8,9 that are scored from 5-1.

#### **Method of Data Analysis**

Multiple regression statistics was used to analyse the data collected in order to answer the research questions.

#### **Results**

The results of the data analysis were presented in tabular forms; which were followed by the interpretation of the result showed in the tables.

**Research Question 1:** What is the relationship between self-esteem, gender, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status on rebelliousness of the adolescents?

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics and Correlations among**

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Rebelliousness	86.10	10.32	1						
Gender	1.50	.546	.027	1					
Age	1.23	.480	.002	.010	1				
Family Type	1.42	.641	.014	.119	.070	1			
Peer Influence	35.77	8.70	.156*	.010	.107	.028	1		
Parent Socio-economic Status	29.97	8.93	.032	.011	-.059	.026	.086	1	
Self-esteem	32.98	7.07	.038	-.041	.022	.001	.109	.135*	1

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 showed the correlation coefficients of the relationship of all the independent variables and adolescent rebelliousness. The result showed that only peer influence correlated significantly with adolescent rebelliousness, at 0.05 level of significant. Other variables had no significant relationships with adolescent rebelliousness.

**Research Question 2:** What is the joint effect of self-esteem, gender, age, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status on adolescent rebelliousness?

**Table 2: Model Summary of regression analysis between predictor variables and adolescent rebelliousness**

R	=.174				
R <sup>2</sup>	=.300				
ADJR <sup>2</sup>	=.160				
Standard Error of Estimate	= 10.23688				
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1359.60	6	226.600	2.162	.046(a)
Residual	43384.59	414	104.794		
Total	44744.19	420			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), family type, self-esteem, age, gender, parent socio-economic status, Peer Influence
- b. Dependent Variable: Authoritarianism Rebellion Scale

Table 2 revealed the multiple regressions R of .174 and R<sup>2</sup> of .300, as well as an adjustment R<sup>2</sup> of .160. This implies that 16% of the total variance of adolescent rebelliousness was accounted for by the independents variables used in this study, the rest 84% may be due to variables not considered in this study. Furthermore, the analysis of variance of the multiple regressions yielded f-ratio of 2.164, the f-critical level is 0.46 at 0.05 levels of significance. This result showed that the independent variables used in this study have joint significant prediction of adolescent rebelliousness.

**Research Question 3:** What is the relative effect of self-esteem, gender, age, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status and rebelliousness on adolescent?

**Table 3: Relative contribution of the independent variables to the prediction of adolescent rebelliousness**

	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t-ratio	Sig.	Remarks
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Peer Influence Scale	.198	.058	.167	3.400	.001	S
Parent socio-economic status	.044	.057	.038	.781	.435	S
Self-esteem	.077	.072	.053	1.076	.282	S
Gender	.561	.922	.030	.608	.544	S
Age	-.360	1.051	-.071	-.342	.732	NS
Family Type	-.351	.787	-.022	-.446	.657	NS

- a. Dependent Variable: Authorisation Rebellion Scale

From the results presented in table 3, each of the independent variables contributed significantly to the prediction of adolescent rebelliousness in varying degree, except for age and family type that are not significant in this study. The beta weights of each independent variable in descending order are as follow: peer influence ( $B = .167$ ,  $t = 3.400$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), self-esteem ( $B = .053$ ,  $t = 1.076$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), parent socio-economic status ( $B = .038$ ,  $t = .781$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), gender ( $B = .030$ ,  $t = .608$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), age ( $B = -.017$ ,  $t = -.342$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), family type ( $B = -.022$ ,  $t = -.0446$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

### **Discussion of findings**

**Research Question 1:** What is the relationship between self-esteem, gender, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status on rebelliousness of adolescent?

Peer influence had significant relationship with adolescent rebelliousness, other independent variables had no significant correlation with adolescent rebelliousness. The result of this study showing significant relationship between peer influence and adolescent rebelliousness, confirm the previous empirical studies by Hartup (1996), Akers et al (1998), Hogue and Steinberg (1995), Goff and Goddard McFarlane (2000), Schwendinger and Schwendinger (1985). This study is valid because as most scholars agreed that peer influence associated most to predicting rebelliousness or any other forms of problem behaviours at adolescence stage, unlike childhood stage. Even, as Gottfrenbourg assert that self control is the most important mediator of delinquency and other problem behaviours, it is of great important to maintain that since self-control could achieve such, its mediating role in-between peer influence and rebelliousness could be minimal. Furthermore, adolescent seeks independent out of home, thereby accepting the standards of any group he/she belongs to, which are mostly contradictory to the family norms and standard. This makes adolescent to be in more conflict with parents and even the so called "moral standard" of the society. Indeed parental influence, though could mediate adolescent rebelliousness, it is of minimal effect.

Therefore, it is concluded here that the influence of peers should be check-mated by all stakeholders concern.

**Research Question 2:** What is the joint effect of self-esteem, gender, age, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status on adolescent rebelliousness?

The result of this study showed that 16% of the total variance of adolescent rebelliousness was accounted for by the independents variables used in this study. Furthermore, all the independent variables (self-esteem, gender, age, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status) had significant joint prediction on the adolescent rebelliousness. This study confirmed the result of previous studies conducted by Albert Cohen (1955), Jaffe et al. (1988), Lewbank et al. (1993), Borland and Rudolph (1975) and Zucker et al. (1996) where psycho-social variables jointly predicted anti-social behaviours. This result might find its theoretical backing from the assertion that adolescents tend to be influenced by psychological and sociological variables than do biological variables.

**Research Question 3:** What is the relative effect of self-esteem, gender, age, family type, peer influence and socioeconomic status and rebelliousness on adolescent?

The result of this study showed that peer influence, parent socio-economic status, and self-esteem have relative effect on the exhibition of rebelliousness by the adolescents. However, and family type has no relative effect on rebelliousness. The result showed that peer influence had the most predictive effect on adolescent rebelliousness which is in line with some previous studies where peer influence was found to be potent factors that push adolescent into various degrees of anti-social and problem behaviours, including rebelliousness (Goff & Goddard in McFarlane, 2000; Childers & Rao, 1992; Bishop & Inderbitzen, 1995; Mounts & Steinberg, 1995; Wenzel & Caldwell, 1997; Urberg et al., 1997; Bleich, et al., 1991; Schwendinger & Schwendinger , 1985; and so on). Akers et al. (1998) and Hogue and Steinberg (1995) opined that adolescents choose friends with similar behaviours, attitudes, and identities. Many adolescents tend to spend more times with their peers/friends, than their parents and siblings.

They would want to mix with people of same age range and learn to conform to values, norms, and culture of the group(s) they belong to. In fact, the influence of peers, either positive or negative, cannot be over-emphasized.

Self-esteem (second to peer influence) also showed a potency of predicting rebelliousness in adolescence. This result supported findings by McGee and Williams (2000) where self-esteem did predict self-reported problem of eating, suicidal ideation, early sexual activity and involvement in various health risk behaviours, such as cigarette smoking, alcohol use or cannabis use. Also, Abernathy, Massad and Romano-Dwyer (1995) found self-esteem as a potent factor predicting smoking behaviour of adolescents.

Furthermore, parental socio-economic status took the third position as predictor of adolescent rebelliousness. The result of this study supported Lewbank et al. (1993), Borland & Rudolph (1975), Green et al. (1991), Chen, Pederson Lefcoe (1992), who at various times and using different participants and settings found that parental socio-economic status predicts problem behaviours. However, the result of this study negates the study by Farkas et al (1999) who found that neither father's education nor family income was significantly associated with adolescent smoking, after parental smoking status and other, variables (e.g. age, gender etc.) have been controlled for. It has to be noted at this juncture that parental socio-economic status is very important in African setting, as it is the major yardstick to measure one's level of importance in the society. Adolescents from low socio-economic status are discriminated against, but most of them could not find executive employment which could help move them to higher level. All these could make these adolescents to be at-risk of engaging in rebelliousness.

Gender, is the next significant predictor of adolescent rebelliousness. This study found support from previous studies. Frey et al. (2003) opined that evidence abound to show that male adolescents are more quick to engaging in aggression and rebelliousness. Yahoo Canada (2012) opined that females are less likely to retaliate in a violent way because of their high moral sense and emotional control, in addition Earls (1994) found that boys showed more behavioural disorder than

girls; but Mehrangiz and Sahim (2000) reported that prevalence of hyperactivity is 9% for boys and 3% for girls. There could even be cultural explanation for this result, as most female children are well monitored and stereo-typed towards domestic affairs. They tend to stay at home and devoid of extensive peer orientation, that prone their male counterpart to more problem behaviours.

Age takes the fifth position, its effect on prediction of rebelliousness was not significant. This result negates previous studies by scholars which maintained that rebelliousness vary across different stages of adolescent (Santrock, 2001; Cornell, 2006; Olweus, 1993). It has to be noted that cultural difference might account for the result of this study, but maintaining that these previous studies used both children and adolescents in their studies, unlike exclusive use of adolescents in this study. In addition, since these adolescents live in similar environments, there might not be any influence of age on their expression of problem behaviours.

Finally, family type is the least predictor of adolescent rebelliousness, whereas the result also showed that it is not a significant predictor. This result negates the study conducted by Demuth and Brown (2004) where broken homes are associated with juvenile delinquency and rebelliousness. Also, Hagan and Foster (2001) maintained that family environment predict juveniles to engaging more in delinquent activities. The reason for the result of this study may be because other family factors (e.g. income, parental employee, etc.) account for rebellious behaviour, other than whether a family is monogamous, polygamous, or single parenting.

### **Implications of the findings for Counselling Practice**

The result of this study has implication for both counselling and non-counselling programmes. This result implies that counselling programmes for adolescent has to focus more on peer counselling, as peer influence exert a great pressure on adolescents. Indeed peer counselling should involve more adolescent in order for them to use their egoistic energy to achieve positive things and avoid negative ones. In addition, this study has implication for school counselling, as peer interact most in schools perhaps than any other place, So school counselling

programme could focus more on how to help adolescent manage any form of problems they may be having when passing through adolescent stage.

Furthermore, this study has implication for parenting style. Counselling for parents should be on how they could help their adolescents and form a good relationship with the adolescents. In the same vein, this study implies that parent should rather strive not only to know the friends their children keep, but they should invite such children and jointly talk to them. In fact parents need to engage in adolescents on critical thinking, rather than attempting to indoctrinate them as if they are still in childhood stage. Counsellors need to explain the concept of "generational gap" and its influence on parent-adolescent relationship to parents.

Parents need not repel the adolescents, but should rather engage them in critical reasoning, as they are already in formal operation stage. Parents should give adolescent some reasonable level of freedom, as such could make them to feel responsible and "adult", where parents' guide and readily available to mentor their children and try as much as possible to answer any question they might want to raise. Parents should never shout an adolescent down, when he/she attempt to answer any question as such could have negative effect on his/her morale, self-esteem and overall development, making such adolescent to wanting to seek comfort and help from his peers who are immature.

Counselling programme also need to focus of development of; positive and robust self-esteem by the adolescents. Adolescent that lack positive self-judgement and evaluation is more prone to be influenced most by the wave of peer influence. Counselling psychologist should develop and implement programmes that could help adolescent to have a positive perception and strong self-belief, as all these form a strong mediating factor on the rebelliousness of adolescents. This study also has effect on socio-economic system of the country. Economic conditions should be improved upon in order to afford parents of ability to find good employment and have strong family finance. Also, access to education should be improved upon, by developing and implement sound educational programmes that take care of both old and young. This is to

reduce level of illiteracy in our society. Effort needs to be geared towards the provision of both qualitative and quantitative education, especially to take of children from low socio-economic families.

### **Recommendations**

In order to reduce the incidence of adolescent rebelliousness, the following recommendations are made:

1. Programmes that would train parents on good parenting skills should be organized and spread across the country. This will equip parents on the best practices of mentoring their adolescent children and manage any conflict that may want to arise. Also, such programme would help them to understand how to communicate and interact best with their adolescent children.
2. Secondly, peer counselling should be organized for adolescents, as such would help them to rub mind together and discuss their problems, and a Guidance Counsellor is available to serve as guide. In addition, such programme would help them to channel their energy towards positive thinking and ideas, thereby ensuring overall healthy development of the adolescents. In addition, adolescents should be trained on how to be assertive and relate positively with their peers.
3. Guidance Counsellors should develop programmes that will enhance positive self-esteem of the adolescents. This is very crucial as such will help them to have positive evaluation about themselves and even other people. They will be able to resist any negative peer influence and have a good self-worth.
4. Finally, programmes for adolescents should be gender sensitive, as adolescent males are more prone to rebelliousness than adolescent females. When organizing group counselling (Guidance Counsellor should try to organize sessions that will be for male or female alone.

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