
INFLUENCE OF PEER INCLINATION ON CURBING SOCIAL VICES AMONG YOUTH IN SOKOTO, KEBBI AND ZAMFARA STATES: COUNSELLING INTERVENTION

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Abstract

The researchers investigated the influence of peer inclination on curbing social vices among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states with a view to providing appropriate counselling interventions. The researchers employed descriptive research design with a total population of 4,472,948 from Sokoto; 3,934,003 from Kebbi and 3,960,981 from Zamfara. The sample sizes of 50 parents and 50 youths from each state were deliberately selected (100 participants from each state); with total number of 300 respondents. The instrument was titled 'Influence of Peer Inclination on Curbing Social Vices among Youths Questionnaire' (IPIQ) designed by the researchers. The instrument went through content/face validation and found significant to the study. It was however subjected to test re-test method of attaining test reliability and it yielded 0.75 through Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics as reliability index which was considered reliable enough for this study.

Descriptive statistics was used and the data was analyzed for final results. One of the findings was that peer inclination is a factor in making an individual to engage or not engage in banditry and its activities in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara. And Government at all levels in collaboration with Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) can sensitize and educate parents on the techniques and skills of parenting through Radio stations, TV stations, social media and during social gatherings such as wedding and naming ceremonies.

Peer inclination refers to association of an individual to a particular group of individuals who are of the same age; the same type of occupation or the same social class (Ganth & Kadhiravan, 2017). This means that, peer inclination is an affiliation of an individual to a particular group whom the individual shares common characteristics with them and they are in most cases living together and spend much time interacting and learning from one another both positive and negative behaviours. However, social vices are bad habits or immoral activities being practiced by the people in the society. In other words, they are bad traits, unhealthy and negative behaviours that are against the morality of a society and frowned at by members of the society (Kanipus & Gorman, 2004). Thus, vices like prostitution, indecent dress, robbery, cultism, banditry, drug abuse, thuggery, rape, pre-marital sexual activities, gambling, smoking etc. are the common examples of social vices in Nigeria. It is against this background that, the researchers intend to examine the influence of peer-inclination in curbing social vices among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of social insecurity in this country is highly alarming to the extent that any time one can fall victim of such situation. There are many cases, for long, of banditry, kidnapping, robbery, cultism, drug abuse, political thuggery, indecent dressing, prostitution, rape and general pre-marital sexual activities in mostly western part of Nigeria, which in one way or the other affect the social, economic, educational wellbeing and health of Nigerians. These cases have started transferring from such places to northern part of Nigeria especially Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states. In consideration of frequent and incessant killings now particularly in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states and mostly people involved in such vices are youths, the researchers intend to find out how peer inclination help to curb banditry, political thuggery, drug abuse as some of the social vices that are peculiar to the youths of these states with a view to providing counselling intervention to parents and youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

To find out the influence of peer inclination in curbing banditry among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States.

To find out the influence of peer inclination in curbing political thuggery among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States.

To find out the influence of peer inclination in curbing drug abuse among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States.

Research Questions

The following questions are to guide the researchers in data collection for the study:

Is there any influence of peer inclination in curbing banditry among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States?

Is there any influence of peer inclination in curbing political thuggery among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States?

Is there any influence of peer inclination in curbing drug abuse among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States?

Literature Review

Studies of this nature may not help the readers and even the researchers if certain concepts and terms are not relatively defined and discussed. In view of this fact therefore, the researchers reviewed the following with a view to helping the readers as well the researchers to have an insight of the concepts they are working on.

Concept of Peer Inclination

Peer inclination refers to association of an individual to a particular group of individuals who are of the same age; the same type of occupation or the same social class (Ganth & Kadhiraivan, 2017). This means that, peer inclination is an affiliation of an individual to a particular group whom the individual shares common characteristics with them and they are in most cases living together and spend much time interacting and learning from one another both positive and negative behaviours.

Concept of Social Vices

Social vices are bad habits or immoral activities being practiced by the individual in the society. In other words, they are bad traits, unhealthy and negative behaviours that are against the morality of a society and frowned at by members of the society. Social vices

include drug abuse, thuggery, cultism, sexual abuse, examination malpractice and are common among Nigerian youths.

Social vices affect the society as a whole and the individual in particular. The mental, physical, academic, moral aspects of an individual are negatively affected. Youths divert their time to these vices instead of being serious with their personal and more important businesses.

Some Common Types of Social Vices

There are some social vices that are more common in the society especially in the northern part of Nigeria as identified by (Abubakar, 2011; Pew, 2014; Aiyeyika, 2010).

Drug Abuse: This is regarded as taking of drugs without the prescription of competent medical practitioners, adjusting the dosage of drugs to suit our medical conditions contrary to prescriptions; and or taking of substances that affect physical, social and psychological well-being of those concerned. Drug abuse is not only immoral but also harmful to self and others. It may also be referred to as consumptions of drugs for reasons other than medical treatment or in quantities that exceed the requirements of such treatment.

Thuggery: This is referring to violent behaviour in which people fight and attack others the problem of football, elections/politics etc. The violent, criminal acts that are associated with thugs and/or the fashion, manner of speaking, and demeanor associated with them.

Banditry: This is used to refer to acts of robbery and violence in areas where the rule of law has broken down. It is mostly practice by robbers, especially those who rob at gunpoint or operate with guns, terrorize people, cheat, exploit and confiscate their belongings including women and children. This group of people is well armed with sophisticated weapons and they normally operate in villages that are far from the urban cities so that when they finish their operations they will have their exits through bushes and island surrounding the villages of the victims.

Cultism: This is a ritual practice by a group of people whose membership, admission, policy and limitation formalities as well as their mode of operations are done in secret and kept secret with their activities having negative effects on both members and non-members alike. Cult members display lethal and expensive weapons ranging from knives to pistols which they use in terrorizing members of the community thereby making life unbearable in the society. This is as a result of video film watch and browsing immoral phonographic and polluting sexual contents. These and other attitudes amiable from the use of internet are what Daniel called *Gains* and *Pains* of internet among youths.

Rape: Rape is a heinous act performed when one party wishes to exact complete power and control over another. The definition of rape, according to the Rape, Abuse and Incest

National Network in Abubakar (2011) is a forced sexual intercourse, including vaginal, anal, or oral penetration. Penetration may be by a body part or an object. Rape is often known as "sexual assault" or "sexual abuse," particularly in the law. However, sexual assault and sexual abuse are defined more broadly whereas the term rape specifies intercourse. Threats of violence or weapons may be used during rape but in about 8-out-of-10 cases, nothing but physical force is used. Weapons or threats are not required for an act to be considered rape. It is important to know that either gender can be the perpetrator or the victim of rape. Additionally, both heterosexual and homosexual rapes take place both inside and outside of relationships.

Pre-Marital Sex: Pre-marital sex is a sexual activity practiced by people who are unmarried. It is sexual relations between two people prior to marrying each other. It can be any sexual relations a person has prior to marriage. Historically, premarital sex was considered a moral issue which was taboo in many cultures and considered a sin by a number of religions. But since about the 1960s, it has become more widely accepted especially in western countries.

According to a study conducted by Pew on global morality cited in John and Catherine (2003), it found that premarital sex was considered particularly unacceptable in "predominantly Muslim nations", such as Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan and Egypt, each having over 90% disapproval, while people in Western European countries were the most accepting with Spain, Germany and France expressing less than 10% disapproval.

Indecent Dress: This is another form of social vices among youths in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara. It is generally agreed that human beings as social animals are blessed with high degree of intelligence. One of the things that our mental ability allows us to, is ability to cover our nakedness. The materials used to carry out this coverage is called dress (i.e cloth), while the act of covering is dressing. Therefore, decent is the quality of being or appearing in a respectable and polite dress. That is putting on something (clothes, shoes, etc.) in order to appear decent and not appearing in a behavior that is thought to be morally offensive. That is putting on cloth that shows parts of the body that are usually offensive. In most of the societies nowadays youth have different forms of dressing which are indecent and contribute to the low rate of discipline in the society. These forms of dressing as identified among youth include:

Indomie/Hand Spaghetti = Half tops that expose more than half of the breast region and the navel.

Net = Tops made with net which expose the inner wear like brazier and the body.

Off Shoulder = Tops that expose the shoulder and some parts of the breast.

Tube = Tops that cover only the breast region, exposing the stomach and shoulder regions.

See my Navel / Belly = Tops that expose mainly navel region and upper pubic hairs.

Show Back = Tops with no hand but have tiny ropes that are tied round the neck and are open at the back.

My Bra is Cute = Tops with very tiny hands that expose the brazier.

Look but don't Touch = Tops that expose three quarters of the breast, usually worn with the type of brazier that pushes up the breasts some times to reach the neck level.

See me through/ Show Glass = Transparent wears that expose the inner body showing the complexion of the body.

Hot Midi/ Skin Tight = Very tight long skirts that reveal the exact contours of the buttocks with slits on both sides.

Micro/Miniskirt = Extremely short skirts that stop many inches above the knee.

I am aware Jeans = Jeans trousers that expose some parts of the buttocks and even the line of the buttocks.

Millennium Trousers = Trousers made with light materials and worn showing all contours of the buttocks including the line of the buttocks.

Causes of Social Vices

It is very rare to find a society void of social vices. This depicts that they are present in every society being it rural or urban. However, these vices are created and introduced by the following factors as identified by Abubakar (2011):

Peer Pressure

Broken Home

Lack of Parental Care

Unemployment

Drop Out

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design involving parents and youths from Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states with total population of 4, 472, 948; 3, 934, 003 and 3, 960, 981 respectively (FRN, 2019). Therefore, in the first place, 100 parents and youths were deliberately selected from each state making total number of 300 participants. This is because of the assertion of Olayiwola (2007) that, deliberate sampling technique is characterized by the use of judgment and deliberate effort of the researcher to obtain representative sample from a study population especially if it is not feasible or necessary to use the entire population due to logistic and economic factors. Moreover, Achara (2001) opined that, to overcome the problem of cost and loss of participants due time lag that researcher rarely study the entire population; rather a sample is drawn from the population

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and conduct the study. Therefore, based on these assertions the researchers considered it valid to select 100 participants from each state in as much as it can provide the information or data required in the study.

However, in selecting the respondents to the questionnaire, accidental sampling technique was employed in the selection of 50 parents and 50 youths in each of the three states visited. This is also in consideration of the assertion of Salawu (2009) that accidental sampling can be used when your subjects are not easy to reach then a researcher can conveniently use the available people that he can easily reach and they can serve the purpose.

The instrument is researchers' designed questionnaire titled "Influence of Peer Inclination on Curbing Social Vices Among Youth Questionnaire" (IPIQ). The instrument went through series of scrutiny by experts in Test and Measurement in the Department of Educational Foundations, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto which made it to have both content and face validity. A test retest was employed using different set of parents and youths from Kano state in order to obtain the reliability index of the instrument. During the process, 50 parents and 50 youths were given the questionnaire to fill; after an interval of 3 weeks, same respondents were given the same questionnaire to respond. The responses were finally correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics and a reliability index of 0.75 was obtained which was sufficient enough to make the instrument reliable. During the data collection 4 research assistants were employed to collect data. After which descriptive statistics was used and analyzed the data for the final results. In other words, simple percentages and mean were used to answer research questions.

Results

The results of the study are shown in two levels below. The first level was the general or demographic data of the respondents across the three states such as participants' sex, marital status, age, and state of origin. In the second level, it was the main data collected on the influence of peer inclination on curbing social vices among youth in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States.

Level One: Demographic Data of the Participants across the Three States

Table 1: Sex of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	178	59%
Female	122	41%
Total	300	100%

The above table shows the sex of the respondents i.e. the male and female who participated in the study across the three states. The result indicates higher number of male respondents with about 60%. This indicates that, male participated more and expressed their opinion in the study than their female counterpart of both parents and youth who were the target respondents.

Table 2: Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	150	50%
Single	150	50%
Total	300	100%

The table above shows the marital status of the respondents across the three states. Although, the percentage is 50% for both married and single respondents. This is not unconnected with number of parents (married) and youth selected from each state. That is 50 parents and 50 youth from the three states, each. Thus, the result indicates 50% for both across the three states.

Table 3: State of the Respondents

State	Frequency	Percentage
Sokoto	100	100%
Kebbi	100	100%
Zamfara	100	100%
Total	300	100%

The table above indicates state of origin of the respondents. Each state has a deliberate representation of 100 participants (50 parents and 50 youth) which gives the total percentage of 100 for each state. The number is felt adequate to give the information required regarding the influence of peers towards curbing those social vices among youth in the affected states.

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Table 4: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-27	35	12%
28-37	127	42%
38-47	106	35%
48 and above	32	11%
Total	300	100%

The table above indicates the age ranges of the respondents across the three states. From the result it can be seen that, respondents of age range between 28-37 with 42% participated most in the study followed by 38-47 with 35%. Overall, 77% of the respondents are within the ranges of being a full parent or full youth. This indicates the maturity level as well as parenthood of the respondents to participate in this study.

Level Three: Influence of Peer Inclination on Curbing Social Vices across the States

Table 5: Mean Score of the Influence of Peer Inclination on Curbing Banditry among Youth in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States

S/N	Statement	S	A	D	S	N	4	3	2	1	E	\bar{X}	Decision
1	Associating with people who always want to confiscate people's property influences one to engage in banditry activities	240	60	-	-	300	960	180	00	00	1140	3.8	Influencing
2	Having a disciplined and God-fearing friend influences one to be responsive and merciful to people	240	60	-	-	300	960	180	00	00	1140	3.8	Influencing
3	Aggressive and hostile friends teach one how to cheat people and intimidate people	200	100	-	-	300	800	300	00	00	1100	3.7	Influencing
4	A shy, responsible and mannered person teaches one how to intimidate people, attack them and confiscate their possessions	300	-	-	-	300	1200	00	00	00	1200	4.0	Influencing
5	Associating with people who do not have work doing influences one to engage in banditry activities	200	100	-	-	300	800	300	00	00	1100	3.7	Influencing
6	Associating with corrupt peers prevents one from involving into banditry activities	300	-	-	-	300	1200	00	00	00	1200	4.0	Influencing

The table above shows the influence level of peer inclination on curbing banditry across the 3 states. The results reveal that, peer inclination is very critical in making an individual good

or otherwise. In this case, peers have a good role in making an individual not engage in banditry activities. This is evident when look at the mean score of each item measuring peer inclination on curbing banditry which is more than 2.5 as the cutoff point for judging whether the peer inclination is influencing or not influencing. Thus, from this result, peer inclination is a factor that influence one to engage or not engage in banditry activities.

Table 6: Mean Score of the Influence of Peer Inclination on Curbing Thuggery Among Youth in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States

S/N	Statement	S	A	D	S	N	4	3	2	1	E	\bar{X}	Decision
		A			D						x		
1	Having friends that are thugs influences one to involve into thuggery activities	160	110	30	-	300	640	330	60	00	1030	3.4	Influencing
2	Following boys of politicians during campaigns and rallies cannot influence one to be thug	300	-	-	-	300	1200	00	00	00	1200	4.0	Influencing
3	Associating with drug abusers influences one to involve into thuggery activities	200	100	-	-	300	800	300	00	00	1100	3.7	Influencing
4	Following friends to attend political meetings of any kind teaches one thuggery activities	300	-	-	-	300	1200	00	00	00	1200	4.0	Influencing
5	Enjoying spraying of money by politicians with friends do not influences the acts of thuggery	300	-	-	-	300	1200	00	00	00	1200	4.0	Influencing
6	Following friends who wear political party identity such as t-shirt, facing cap, carrying banners and fosters can teach one thuggery activities	300	-	-	-	300	1200	00	00	00	1200	4.0	Influencing

From the above table, the result reveals influence level of peers from Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara on curbing the thuggery activities among youth in the states. In almost all the items measuring peer inclination’s influence on curbing thuggery among youth in the states, none is below 2.5 which indicates peer inclination’s influence on peers in a bid to control the practice of thuggery among them. In other words, peers have a significant role in making themselves disciplined and law abiding and shun a way from social vices such as thuggery.

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Table 7: Mean Score of the Influence of Peer Inclination on Curbing Drug Abuse among Youth in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States

S/N	Statement	S	A	D	S	N	4	3	2	1	E	\bar{X}	Decision
1	Associating with a friend who takes cigarette can influence one to be involved in drug abuse	270	30	-	-	30	1,080	90	0	0	1170	3.9	Influencing
2	Dissociating with a friend who takes <i>Marijuana</i> cannot prevent one from involving into drug abuse	240	60	-	-	30	960	180	0	0	1440	3.8	Influencing
3	Associating with a friend who does self-medication can influence one into drug abuse practice	160	110	30	-	30	640	330	60	0	1330	3.4	Influencing
4	Having a friend who does not take alcohol can prevent one from involving into drug abuse	300	-	-	-	30	1200	0	0	0	1200	4.0	Influencing
5	Associating with a friend who takes drugs indiscriminately can influence one involve into drug abuse	200	100	-	-	30	800	300	0	0	1100	3.7	Influencing
6	Avoiding a friend who is always in smell of smoke on breath and clothes can prevent one from involving into drug abuse activities	300	-	-	-	30	1200	0	0	0	1200	4.0	Influencing

The above table presents the influence level of peers on curbing the practice of drug abuse among youth in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states. This is evident looking at the mean score (above 3.0) of each item measuring the influence of peer inclination on curbing the menace of drug abuse. The results show great influence of peer inclination in preventing and discouraging drug abuse among youth in the states. Thus, selection of good friends assists in discouraging drug abuse practice among youth.

Summary of Findings

1. Peer inclination is a factor in making an individual to engage or not engage in banditry and its activities in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara.
2. Peer inclination is a factor in making an individual to engage or not engage in thuggery and its activities in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara.

3. Peer inclination is a factor in making an individual to engage or not engage in drug abuse and its activities in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara.

Counselling Intervention

Counselling is a professional discipline practiced by professionals and psychologists. This study investigated the peer inclination on curbing some social vices such as banditry, thuggery and drug abuse among youth in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states. The variables involved in this study both dependent and independent are issues of counselling and counselling intervention.

The finding of the study, in the first place, indicates that, environment and peer group in particular have their own role to play in terms of child socialization. Psychologically, after home, peer group or age mate is the next agent of socialization of a child. This category of people makes a significant impact on the life of an individual morally, socially, educationally and it is very hard to change more especially at adolescence stage at which the individual is in critical stage – full of surprises and the individual is gradually leaving behind the period of protective childhood and is becoming independent, capable of going out to fend for him or herself. It is a period characterized by rapid physical growth, changes in the child's physique and the maturing of primary sex characteristics. It is mysterious, boisterous, turbulent, venturesome and very unpredictable stage. This period needs a gentle push. If you push off too soon, you hurt yourself.

Thus, a professional counsellor has an ample knowledge, skills, techniques and theories that can be used to intervene and handle such an individual more especially in selection of good friends and running a good life relationship. Every professional counsellor is exposed to, especially marital counsellor, certain ways of choosing a good friend such as friend with similar values, a friend with common goals, a friend who can bring balance in areas where you are weak, a friend that encourages and motivates you, a friend with similar interests, a friend that has thirst for knowledge, a friend that can celebrate your success, a friend who is “get it” people, a friend of give-and-take etc. all these are issues of counselling which a professional counsellor can adequately communicate to our youth so as to have good friends and behave in an accepted way of life in one's society.

Therefore, with this kind of information to be given to our youth, they will greatly change to better life and avoid social vices in the society. Counsellors, Government and Parents have to put hands together, each contribute its own quota with a view to assisting this category of people (youth) to have the required information, knowledge and training that will make them useful members to themselves and society at large.

Recommendations

1. Peer inclination is a factor in making an individual to engage or not engage in banditry and its activities in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara. The individuals should be made to be aware of engaging with bad friends in their doings, especially in the act of indiscipline and other forms of social behaviors.
2. As the finding indicates, peer inclination is a factor in making an individual to engage or not engage in thuggery and its activities in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara. Thus, government at all levels in collaboration with Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) can sensitize and educate parents on the techniques and skills of parenting through Radio stations, TV stations, Social Media and during social gatherings such as wedding and naming ceremonies against the menace of all thuggery activities.
3. A radio programme can also be sponsored by a philanthropist, community or any NGOs in which youths can be sensitized and educated on best selection of good benefits of running a good life.

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