

**INFLUENCE OF NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE AND
SUBSTANCE ABUSE ON ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR: THE
MODERATING ROLE OF RESILIENCE AMONG SECONDARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KEFFI, NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the influence of negative peer pressure and substance abuse on antisocial behavior: the moderating role of resilience among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. A sample of two hundred and seventy (270) students was used for the study. The participants' ages ranged from 13 to 18 years, with 52.25% being female and 43.75% being male. The participants were administered the WHO Youth Drug Survey, the Peer Influence Scale Questionnaire-Revised, the Subtypes of Antisocial Behavior Questionnaire, and the Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire. The study used a survey research design and multiple linear regressions for data analysis. The first hypothesis was accepted, indicating a significant prediction between negative peer pressure and antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Also, the second hypothesis was also accepted, indicating a significant prediction between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Furthermore, hypothesis three was also accepted, indicating a joint significant prediction between negative peer pressure and substance abuse on antisocial behaviour. Similarly, Hypothesis four was tested, and the result showed that resilience moderates the relationship between negative peer pressure and antisocial behaviour. Lastly, the fifth hypothesis was accepted, indicating a significant moderation between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour. It is therefore recommended that the government should incorporate resilience-training programmes into the school curricula. Such programmes can include life skills education, emotional regulation training, problem-solving workshops, and peer mentoring schemes.

Keywords: Negative Peer Pressure, Substance Abuse, Antisocial Behaviour, and Resilience

Background to the Study

The increasing rate of anti-social behaviour in the society is alarming. This has become a global phenomenon and the problem is common among youths (Peter, 2018). The increasing rate of this phenomenon in the whole world has put the world on a time bomb. Nigeria is not excluded from the increasing rate of the problems of anti-social behaviour among its youths (Eze, 2019). Anti-social problems include armed robbery, kidnapping, rape, murder, and the number of people who commit suicide, among others. Behaviour is considered abnormal or antisocial if it is uncommon, different from the norm, and does not conform to what society expects. A behavior is considered unacceptable or anti-social if any of these three criteria are met: it prevents a person from functioning effectively with others as a member of society, it does not allow the individual to meet their own needs, or it negatively impacts the wellbeing of others.

Adolescence represents a critical developmental period characterized by increased autonomy, identity exploration, and heightened susceptibility to peer influence. During this stage, peer relationships play a major role in shaping attitudes, decisions, and behaviour. When this influence becomes negative, it often encourages engagement in risk-laden behaviours, such as substance use and antisocial activities (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011). Negative peer pressure—defined as overt or subtle influence by peers to engage in behaviours that contravene social norms or legal standards—has been consistently identified as a significant predictor of adolescents' maladaptive outcomes, including drug use and delinquency.

Substance use and antisocial behaviour frequently co-occur. Adolescents who engage in substance use—such as alcohol, tobacco, or cannabis—are more likely to display externalizing problems, including aggression, theft, truancy, and vandalism (Obando, 2014). This co-occurrence can be attributed to shared risk factors such as low self-control, poor parental monitoring, and impulsivity, as well as to direct pharmacological and social effects of substances that reduce inhibition and promote risk-taking (Moffitt, 1993).

However, not all adolescents exposed to negative peer pressure or substance-using peers develop antisocial tendencies. Individual protective factors, particularly resilience, play a crucial role in buffering. Resilience refers to the dynamic process of positive adaptation in the face of adversity, risk, or stress (Masten, 2001). It encompasses attributes such as self-regulation, optimism, problem-solving, and strong social support. Resilient adolescents tend to demonstrate adaptive coping strategies that mitigate the influence of deviant peers and reduce engagement in risk behaviours (Zinn et al., 2020). The resilience framework posits that resilient individuals can maintain prosocial functioning despite exposure to high-risk environments.

In this context, resilience is expected to moderate the relationship between negative peer pressure, substance use, and antisocial behaviour. Specifically, adolescents high in resilience are likely to experience weaker effects of peer pressure on substance use and reduced translation of substance use into antisocial behaviour. Conversely, those with low resilience may be more vulnerable to these influences. This conceptualization aligns with developmental theories emphasizing that both environmental risks and personal resources jointly determine behavioural outcomes (Moffitt, 1993; Masten, 2001).

Therefore, the present study examines the combined and interactive influence of negative peer pressure and substance use on antisocial behaviour among adolescents, with a specific focus on the moderating role of resilience. Understanding these relationships provides valuable insight into preventive interventions that strengthen resilience to reduce antisocial and substance-related problems among adolescents.

Statement of the Problem

Antisocial behaviour among young people has become a major concern for families, schools, and communities in Nigeria. Reports of substance abuse, cultism, violent behaviour, and disregard for authority among adolescents and young adults highlight a growing social challenge. While research has identified negative peer pressure as a catalyst for risky behaviours (Lawal et al., 2022), and substance use as a predictor of antisocial conduct (Onah et al., 2019), the combined influence of these two factors has not been sufficiently examined in local contexts.

Empirical evidence suggests that many Nigerian youths are initiated into substance use through peer influence. For instance, Lawal et al. (2022) found that over 77% of undergraduates at Ahmadu Bello University who engaged in substance use reported that their initiation came directly from friends. Similarly, Onah et al. (2019) demonstrated that peer pressure significantly predicted alcohol use among undergraduates in Makurdi, which in turn was linked to antisocial tendencies. Yet, these studies often focused on either peer pressure or substance use separately, leaving a gap in understanding their interactive or compounding influence on antisocial behaviour.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the combined and individual effects of negative peer pressure and substance use on antisocial behavior, with a focus on the moderating role of Resilience among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. By doing so, it aims to provide evidence-based insights to inform prevention programmes, school counseling practices, and policy interventions aimed at reducing youth involvement in antisocial activities.

Research Questions

The present study seeks to answer the following research questions;

1. What is the influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria?
2. What is the influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria?
3. What is the moderating effect of resilience on the influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria?
4. What is the moderating of resilience on the influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of negative peer pressure and substance abuse on antisocial behaviour: the moderating role of resilience among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
2. Determine the influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
3. Investigate the moderating role of resilience in the influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
4. Investigate the moderating of resilience in the influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. There will be a significant influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
2. There will be a significant influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
3. Resilience will moderate the influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
4. Resilience will moderate the influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it provides empirical insights into how negative peer pressure and substance abuse contribute to the manifestation of antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. In recent years, antisocial tendencies such as aggression, truancy, delinquency, and disrespect for authority have become pressing concerns within the educational system. By identifying the factors that predispose students to such behaviours, this study contributes valuable knowledge to the fields of educational psychology, guidance and counselling, and youth development.

Specifically, the study will help school administrators, teachers, and counsellors understand the extent to which negative peer influence and substance abuse interact to shape students' behavioural outcomes. It will also highlight the protective role of resilience—a crucial psychological factor that can buffer students against the adverse effects of peer and substance-related pressures. Findings from this research may therefore guide the design of preventive and intervention programmes aimed

at strengthening students' coping mechanisms, fostering positive peer relationships, and promoting resilience-building activities within schools.

Furthermore, the study will provide policy-makers and education stakeholders with evidence-based information for developing more effective school-based policies on drug education, peer mentorship, and behavioural management. For researchers, the study adds to the growing body of literature on adolescent behavioural psychology in the Nigerian context, offering a framework for future studies examining similar variables across different cultural and regional settings.

Ultimately, the study seeks to promote a safer, healthier, and more productive learning environment by addressing the root causes of antisocial behaviour and emphasizing the importance of resilience in adolescent development.

Empirical Review of Literature

Negative peer pressure and Antisocial Behaviour

Ghanima (2022) investigated the effect of peer pressure on antisocial behaviours among students of the Zanzibar School of Health. The objectives of the study were to investigate the causes of peer pressure on antisocial behaviours among students of Zanzibar school of health, to examine the influence of peer pressure on antisocial behaviours among students of Zanzibar school of health and to determine which sex is mostly affected by the consequences of peer pressure at Zanzibar school of health. The study also revealed that pupil gender had a significant impact on peer influence.

Additionally, Gershon (2021) examined the negative peer influence on youth antisocial behavior. The study aimed to examine the association between negative peer influence and youth antisocial behaviours in group homes. Participants were 875 youth aged 10 to 17 at baseline (2010–2011). Findings indicate that negative peer influence predicts youths' risk of antisocial behaviour (at baseline). The risk increased almost fivefold in 3 years. At baseline (OR = 1.65) and (OR = 4.90) after 3 years. Generally, findings suggest that negative peer influence underscores youth antisocial behaviours in group homes.

Substance Abuse and Antisocial Behaviour

Aminu et al. (2015) investigated drug use and antisocial behaviour as correlates of secondary school students' achievement in Biology in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. The study adopted the ex-post facto method, and a sample size of 375 Senior Secondary Two (SS II) students was drawn. Based on these findings, the study concluded that indiscriminate drug use and antisocial behaviour indulged in by both male and female students are strong indices of academic performance.

Also, in a study conducted by Ndu et al. (2024), who investigated Substance Abuse and Antisocial behaviour of Youth in Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria. The study is anchored on containment theory and bases its analysis on quantitative data obtained from a randomly selected sample of five hundred

and ninety-four (594) youth, and qualitative data obtained from purposively selected nine (9) interviewees. The study found a significant positive correlation between the extent of substance use and degree of indulgence in antisocial behaviours. Property-related antisocial behaviours like theft, armed robbery, and vandalism were all found to relate to different forms of substance abuse. Measures like youth empowerment, access to counselling services, public sensitization, police border patrol, and increasing the cost of regularly abused substances could be improved to reduce youth drug abuse.

Resilience, Negative peer pressure, and Antisocial Behaviour

Wang and Dishion (2012) conducted research on Resilience as a Moderator of the Effects of Peer Pressure on Antisocial Behavior. The population involved adolescents aged 12-18 years (N=1,200). The instruments used were the Peer Pressure Scale, Antisocial Behavior Questionnaire, and Resilience Scale for Adolescents. The study found that resilience significantly moderated the relationship between negative peer pressure and antisocial behavior. Higher resilience levels diminished the influence of peer pressure on engaging in antisocial actions.

Similarly, Smith and Wiggins (2018) conducted a study on The Role of Resilience in the Relationship between Peer Pressure and Antisocial Behavior among Adolescents. The study population consisted of high school students (N=800). The research concluded that resilience acted as a protective factor, reducing the likelihood of antisocial behavior in adolescents exposed to negative peer pressure. The findings suggest that resilience-building interventions may mitigate the negative effects of peer influences.

Resilience, Substance Abuse, and Antisocial Behaviour

Ungar and Liebenberg (2011) conducted a study on resilience as a Protective Factor against Substance Abuse and Antisocial Behavior. The population used was Adolescents aged 12-18 years (N = 1,200). Instruments used were: Resilience Scale for Adolescents, Substance Abuse Screening Inventory, and Antisocial Behavior Questionnaire. The study found that higher levels of resilience were associated with lower rates of substance abuse and antisocial behavior. It suggested that resilience acts as a protective factor, helping adolescents cope with stressors that might otherwise lead to substance use and antisocial behaviours.

Similarly, Smith and Wiggins (2018) conducted a study on Resilience and Its Role in Substance Abuse and Antisocial Behavior among Adolescents. The study population consisted of high school students (N = 800). Instruments used were: Resilience Assessment Scale, Substance Abuse Assessment Tool, and Antisocial Behavior Inventory. The research concluded that resilience significantly reduced the likelihood of substance abuse and antisocial behavior. Adolescents with higher resilience scores were less likely to engage in substance use and related antisocial activities.

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey. This design was used because the variables would not be manipulated; instead, questionnaires were used to collect data from the participants. This design was deemed appropriate for this type of research and enabled the researcher to draw more reliable conclusions about the effects of negative peer pressure and substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi LGC, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised five (5) senior secondary school students in public schools in Keffi LGC, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study population comprised 2,533 senior secondary school students from the selected senior secondary schools in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria, aged 10 to 18 years, comprising 41.1% females and 58.9% males. Participants' demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, marital status, religion, and educational qualification, were not considered. A multistage sampling technique was used; stratified sampling was used to select the schools, while a simple random sampling technique, specifically, balloting without replacement) was used to select the sample participants because this method offered participants an equal chance of being selected. The researcher selected a total of five (5) government-owned secondary schools in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. These secondary schools include: Government College Keffi, Government Secondary School Keffi South, Government Secondary School Kofar Hausa, Government Secondary School Sabon Gari, and Government Secondary School Yelwa.

Sample Size:

The sample size for the participants was drawn using Taro Yamane's formula to ascertain a suitable size for the study. The total population for this study was 850. The sample size used was 270.

Method of Data Collection

Research assistants distributed and retrieved the questionnaires.

The instruments used were:

Peer Influence Scale Questionnaire-Revised (PISQ-R)

The Peer Influence Scale Questionnaire-Revised (PPSQ-R) is an instrument developed by Saini & Singh (2006) to measure peer influence susceptibility among adolescents. It comprises 25 items based on scenarios or self-perspectives that describe situations related to negative peer influence. It is a 5-point Likert scale with 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Can't say), 4 (Agree), 5 (Strongly Agree). The scale consists of five subscales, and the score of each item are summed to form the total score. Individuals scoring up to 55 are identified as those who experienced low peer influence. Individuals who scored 56 to 72 experienced a moderate level of peer influence, while

those who scored 72 or higher experienced a high level of peer influence. Saini & Singh (2010) reported an alpha coefficient of 0.932 and a one-week test-retest of 0.78 to 0.90 for peer influence.

WHO Youth Drug Survey (WHODYDSQ)

This questionnaire was developed and standardized by the World Health Organization in collaboration with the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control among youths and secondary school students. The WHODYDSQ consists of 32 items that are either open or closed-ended. The closed-ended items have a stem each and a response (alternative) option from which the respondents will tick the ones that are applicable to him or her. The WHODYDSQ has two sections A and B. Section A consists of 10 questions on demographic variables, while Section B consists of 22 questions on non-medical drug use and related questions.

Subtypes of Antisocial Behaviour Questionnaire (STAB)

Subtypes of Antisocial Behaviour Questionnaire (STAB) is an instrument developed by Alexandra & Brent (2009). STAB measures antisocial behaviour across the subtypes of physical aggression, relational aggression, theft, rebelliousness, destructive aggression, honesty, and fraud. It is a 32-item questionnaire. The response format is in a 5-point Likert scale of 1 = Never, 2 = Hardly ever, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Frequently, 5 = Nearly all the time. The authors reported validity measures from .85 to .87 across the dimensions and .86 for the general scale. The STAB appears to have a stable factor structure, reliable scales, and convergent validity with other longer self-report measures of antisocial behaviour. It also appears to be suitable for use with community, college, and adjudicated samples. The STAB scale was adopted for students' antisocial behaviour by Nnadozie et al., (2022) and reported and obtained a reliability alpha coefficient of .70 to establish its suitability among the Nigerian sample.

Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire (NMRQ).

Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire (NMRQ) is an instrument developed by Clarke & Nicholson, (2010) to measure resilience. Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire (NMRQ) can be used on adolescents and adults. It comprises 12 items and uses a five-point Likert scale where participants rate their agreement with statements, with responses ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neither Agree nor Disagree), 4 (Agree), 5 (Strongly Agree). A total score is calculated by summing the individual item scores, and this total score is then interpreted to indicate different levels of resilience. Scores 0-37 indicate a developing level of resilience, scores 38-43 indicate an established level of resilience, scores 44-48 indicate a strong level of resilience, and scores 49-60 indicate an exceptional level of resilience. Clarke and Nicholson (2010) reported Cronbach's Alpha = .76 and a one-week test-retest of 0.78 to 0.90.

Techniques for Data Analysis

The researcher employed a variety of statistical methods to analyze the collected data, including Linear Regression Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis. Specifically, Simple Linear Regression was used to test hypotheses 1 and 2, while Multiple Linear Regression was utilized for

hypothesis 3. Additionally, the Process Macro was applied to analyze data related to hypotheses 4 and 5. The data analysis was conducted using Version 26 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS

Hypothesis I

There will be a significant influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

This hypothesis was tested using Linear Regression Analysis, and the results are tabulated and interpreted as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Linear Regression analysis showing a significant influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Variables	R	R ²	F	β	T	P(sig))
Constant	.467	.221	9.001			.000
Negative peer pressure				.893	10.899	.000

Dependent Variable: Antisocial Behaviour

The results presented in table 1 above shows that negative peer pressure has a significant effect on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students ($R = 0.467 = R^2 = 0.221$ ($F(1,269) = 9.001$, $t = 10.899$, $p < .05$). This means that negative peer pressure 22.1% variation in antisocial behaviour. This finding suggests that negative peer pressure is likely to lead to antisocial behavior. Therefore, this hypothesis has been accepted.

Hypothesis II

There will be a significant influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

This hypothesis was tested using Linear Regression Analysis and the results are tabulated and interpreted as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Linear Regression analysis showing significant influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Variables	R	R ²	F	β	T	P(sig)
Constant	.319	.157	36.476			

Substance Abuse		6.998	.000
	.519	6.040	.000

Dependent Variable: Antisocial Behaviour

The results presented in table 2 above shows that substance abuse has a significant influence on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria ($R = 0.319$; $R^2 = 0.157$ ($F(1, 269) = 25.630$, $t = 6.998$, $p < .05$). This means that substance abuse contributed 15.7% variation in antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Therefore, this hypothesis is also confirmed in the study.

Hypothesis III

Resilience will moderate the influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

This hypothesis was tested using Process MACRO and the results are tabulated and interpreted as shown in table below.

Table 3: Process MACRO analysis showing the moderating role of resilience in the influence of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	coeff	'	<i>P(sig)</i>
Constant	.4034	.354	64.3176	5.1597	87.7188	.000
Negative peer pressure				.5022	10.9734	.000
Resilience				-.2003	-4.5375	.000
Int_1				-.0948	-2.7224	.0062

Conditional effects negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour at values of resilience (moderator)

SS	β	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
Low	-1.370	.6317	.0631	10.0698	.0000	.5083	.7551
Average	.0000	.5011	.0458	10.9623	.0000	.4122	.5923
High	1.370	.3727	.0684	5.4415	.0000	.2373	.5062

The result above shows there is a significant effect of negative peer pressure, antisocial behaviour, and resilience.

Additionally, resilience moderates the effect of negative peer pressure and antisocial behavior ($t = -2.7224$; $p = .0062$). That means the relationship between negative peer pressure and antisocial behaviour is weakened by resilience. The higher the resilience, the weaker the relationship between negative peer pressure and antisocial behaviour because there's a negative interaction.

When resilience was low (-1.370) the effect of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour was (.6317). When resilience was average (.0000) the effect decreased to (.5011), and when resilience was high (1.370), the interactive effect of negative peer pressure on antisocial behaviour also decreased to a minimum level (.3727). This hypothesis is also confirmed in this study.

Hypothesis IV

Resilience will moderate the effect of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Process MACRO analysis showing the moderating role of resilience in the influence of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	coeff	'	<i>P(sig)</i>
Constant	.5434	.455	74.3176	4.1597	87.7188	.000
Substance abuse				.4012	10.9734	.000
resilience				-.2005	-4.5575	.000
Int_1				-.0958	-2.6444	.0062

Conditional effects of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour at values of resilience (moderator)

SS	β	SE	P	LLCI	ULCI
Low -2.660	.7327	.0642	.0000	.5084	.7661
Average .0000	.5112	.0469	.0000	.4133	.5934
High 2.660	.3627	.0685	.0000	.2384	.5073

The result above shows there is a significant effect of substance abuse, antisocial Behaviour and resilience. It also shows that resilience moderates the relationship between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour ($t = -2.6444$; $p = .0062$). That means the relationship between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour is weakened by resilience. The higher the resilience, the weaker the effect of substance abuse and antisocial behaviour because there is a negative interaction.

At a lower level of resilience (-2.660) the effect of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour was (.7327). When resilience was average (.0000) the effect decreased to (.5112), and when resilience

was high (2.660), the interactive effect of substance abuse on antisocial behaviour also decreased to a minimum level (.3627). Therefore, this hypothesis is also confirmed in this study.

Conclusively, resilience moderated the effect of negative peer pressure and antisocial behaviour.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first hypothesis, which stated that there will be a relationship between negative peer pressure and antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria, was accepted. The result of the simple linear regression Analysis, which evaluated whether negative peer pressure would significantly predict antisocial behavior among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria, revealed that negative peer pressure had a positive predictive value for antisocial behavior. This indicates that negative peer pressure predicts antisocial behavior among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. That is to say that the more one associates with fellow students who exhibit antisocial traits, the more he/she learns antisocial behaviour. The second hypothesis, which stated that there will be a relationship between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria, was accepted. The result of the simple linear regression statistics which investigated substance abuse will significantly predict antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria revealed a significant prediction between substance use and antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. However, the findings of Ndu et al., (2024), Okonkwo et al. (2022), and Onah et al. (2019) are in support of these study findings, as they revealed that substance abuse influences the degree of indulgence in antisocial behaviours among students. According to Peer Cluster theory, peers have a direct influence on students' substance use, and associating with a substance-using peer group would influence indulgence in antisocial behaviour.

The third hypothesis, which stated that Resilience will moderate the relationship between negative peer pressure and antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria, was accepted. The results obtained from the process macro show that resilience moderates the relationship between negative peer pressure and antisocial behavior. This hypothesis is also confirmed in this study. This result shows that resilience is a positive psychological variable in preventing students from engaging in antisocial behaviours. This finding supports the results of McGauran et al. (2019) and Carolyn et al. (2012), which suggest that resilience moderates the effect of antisocial behavior. The findings of this work support the protective factor theory, which suggests that resilience is not the absence of risk, but rather the presence of protective factors that buffer individuals against the harmful effects of adversity. This theory emphasizes that resilience arises from interactions between risk factors and protective mechanisms. They help individuals not only resist the effects of risk factors but also navigate challenging situations and develop positively despite them.

Lastly, the fourth hypothesis, which stated that Resilience will moderate the relationship between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria, was accepted. The result obtained from the process macro shows that resilience moderated the relationship between substance abuse and antisocial behaviour. This hypothesis is

also confirmed in this study. This result shows that resilience is a positive psychological variable in preventing students from engaging in antisocial behaviours.

Conclusions

This study examined the influence of negative peer pressure and substance abuse on antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that negative peer pressure and substance abuse are significant predictors of antisocial behaviour, both independently and jointly, suggesting that these factors play a critical role in shaping maladaptive behavioural patterns among adolescents. Moreover, the study established that resilience significantly moderates these relationships, highlighting the protective role of personal coping resources in reducing susceptibility to peer and substance-related influences.

These findings imply that antisocial behaviour among adolescents is not merely a product of individual choice but is largely shaped by social and environmental dynamics. However, resilience emerged as a vital buffer, demonstrating that with appropriate support systems and personal coping skills, adolescents can resist pressures that might otherwise lead to maladaptive behaviour. This underscores the importance of adopting a holistic, preventive, and resilience-focused approach to addressing adolescent antisocial tendencies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher has put forth the following recommendations:

1. Since the study found that negative peer pressure significantly predicts antisocial behaviour, schools should design and implement peer education and mentoring programs. Senior students with positive behaviour can be paired with juniors to serve as role models. This will help reduce the influence of negative peers and foster healthy peer interactions.
2. With substance abuse also emerging as a significant predictor of antisocial behaviour, schools, parents, and community stakeholders should collaborate to introduce awareness campaigns, counseling, and health education programs that highlight the dangers of drug and substance abuse. Regular sensitization workshops and drug-free clubs can be formed to provide students with healthier alternatives.
3. The combined effect of negative peer pressure and substance abuse on antisocial behaviour suggests the need for holistic interventions. Programs should not treat these factors in isolation but rather integrate both in preventive strategies. For example, combining peer influence management with anti-drug campaigns will likely yield stronger behavioural outcomes.
4. The moderating role of resilience indicates that students with stronger coping abilities are better able to resist antisocial tendencies despite peer pressure or exposure to substances. Schools should therefore introduce resilience-building programmes such as life skills training, stress management workshops, emotional intelligence development, and extracurricular activities (sports, debate, drama, etc.), to help students build self-confidence, problem-solving skills, and coping strategies.

Limitations of the Study

Some of the limitations encountered at the time of the study include: the administration and retrieval of the instruments took longer than expected, initially, the researcher timed it for three months but the administration and retrieval lasted more than three months as school went on break, and the researcher had to wait till school resumed. Another limitation was the timing of the administration of the instruments, which was usually morning, at 9am when the students are learning. This was overcome by adjusting the timing of the test administration from 9am-11am. Again, obtaining adequate relevant literature to support this study was a problem because of the limited research done in this area. Also, another limitation encountered by the researcher was in the area of research instruments. The research instrument was many, including a consent form; hence, some students could have found the questions too many, with a high possibility of fatigue setting in, and it was quite challenging. Typing and photocopying the questionnaires proved costly and it took a great sacrifice on the part of the researcher to use her very limited resources. Finally, extensive analysis of each questionnaire took a great time and financial constraints.

Suggestion for Further Studies

In this study, the researcher examined the effect of negative peer pressure and substance abuse on antisocial behaviour: the moderating role of resilience among secondary school students in Keffi, Nasarawa State. It is suggested that:

1. Future studies on the effect of negative peer pressure and substance abuse on antisocial behaviour: moderating role of resilience among secondary school students should specifically focus on the moderating role of resilience on antisocial behaviour exclusively without capturing other independent variables.
2. Due to the nature of the participants, some of the schools in Keffi were covered due to the limited time. Hence, further study is suggested to cover more secondary schools in Nasarawa State so that more generalizable result is obtained.
3. The researcher also suggests that a larger population be used in future studies and the study be replicated in other states of the nation for more accurate generalizations.

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