



Self-esteem, peer pressure and the incidence of deviant behaviour among secondary school Students in Delta State

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Abstract

This study explored the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure and the incidence of deviant behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. A total of 2 research questions and 2 hypotheses guided the study. The correlational research design was adopted. The population comprised 72,854 senior secondary school students. A sample size comprising of 1,045 students was selected through a multistage sampling procedure. Questionnaire (opinion poll) is the instrument was used for the study. The validity and reliability of the opinion poll was ascertained. The PPMCC of determination was used to answer the phrased research questions while regression was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The answer of the study revealed that a major relationship exists between self-esteem (S.E) and deviant behaviour (DB) among secondary school students and that a significant relationship exists between peer pressure and deviant behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. The researcher recommended that stake holders such as parents, educators and policy makers should do their part to ensure that the self-esteem of the adolescents be consciously enhanced to reduce deviant behaviour among secondary school students.

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Introduction

Deviant behaviour among adolescents is a significant issue in Nigeria and delta state is not an exception. Deviant behaviour (DB) can be defined as actions or behaviours that defy social norms, laws or values. Shoemaker (2010) ^[23] describes deviance as a variety of forms of antisocial behaviour consisting of illegal actions in terms of violation of rules and criminal offenses involving adolescents under the age of 18. Mental health practitioners view deviance as a pattern of bad or disruptive behaviour that can be attributed to the parenting role. In cases or situation where the child or adolescent is exposed to negative influences like abuse, not given proper attention or lack of affection, the harmful influences may first be obvious in the child in the form of bullying and lying and may later degenerate to more serious anti-social activities, such as fighting and stealing (Kariuki, 2014) ^[13].

Deviance is currently viewed as a social disease that cannot be treated effectively without first discovering its real causes. Adolescents may engage in deviant behaviours due to various reasons which could include low self-esteem (SE) and peer pressure (PP); both have been identified as critical factors that contribute to deviant behaviours in adolescents. In Delta state, recent events such as the increase in the incidence of cultism, cyber-crimes, kidnapping for ransom and a host of other deviant behaviours have led to a growing concern about the impact of self-esteem and peer pressure on deviant behaviours in Delta state. Self-esteem is an individual's overall evaluation and perception of their own worth, value and competence. It entails the beliefs thoughts feelings and attitudes an individual holds about themselves which shapes their self-image and self-perception. It

encompasses the individual's confidence in their abilities, self-worth and acceptance of their strengths and weaknesses. Webster's dictionary defines self-esteem as "satisfaction with oneself," which may be the most straightforward description of the term. The definition of self-esteem in a different edition of the same dictionary is "one's good opinion of one's dignity or worth."

The development of self-worth suggests a protracted procedure. It is associated with the development of one's self-conscience and self-image. Its evolution over time includes periods of decline, particularly during times of transition from one stage to another and from one status to another, such as in adolescence (due to psychosomatic changes) or old age (due to changes in retirement and responsibilities and tasks) (Orth, *et al.*, 2010) ^[20].

The period of teenage years is important for the process of self-esteem (SE) formation. The creation of self-esteem can be supported, encouraged both by parents and teachers. Adolescents with high self-esteem possess the following traits: they can positively impact other people's opinions and behaviours; they approach new situations with confidence and positivity; they have a high threshold for dissatisfaction they take on early obligations; they accurately evaluate circumstances; they express positive emotions about themselves; they are able to maintain good control over their actions; and they believe that what they do and how they act are to blame for the things they go through (Lavoie, 2012) ^[15]. Consequently, the adolescent years are critical for the formation of self-identity and self-esteem (SE), and low self-esteem might jeopardise a teenager's capacity to regulate their emotions (Lin, *et al.*, 2008).

Given the interest in the relationship between self-esteem and human behaviour, naturally researchers have become more interested in the relationship between deviance and self-esteem. Numerous studies have demonstrated a negative association between both high and low self-esteem and the incidence of deviance. There is also some argument that deviance and criminal behaviour is a sign of "normal" behaviour and adjustment among adolescents while maladjustment might be more apparent in those who abstain from crime (Hendrix, 2016) ^[12]. However, even when one examines the body of studies exploring the impact of self-esteem on select crime types, findings are often mixed. Depending on the study, findings show that both low self-esteem (Donnellan, Trzszniewski, and Robins 2005; Osner, 2016) ^[7] and high self-esteem (Baumeister and Boden 2008) ^[1] can lead to violence, aggression, and antisocial behaviour while other research indicates a protective over a risk effect (Trzszniewski, Donnellan, Moffitt, Robins, Poulton, and Caspi 2006; Boden, Fergusson, and John Horwood 2007; Harris 2011; Ostrowsky 2010; Steinke 2012) ^[29, 2, 11, 22, 27].

Some of these mixed findings may be due to variations in the conceptualization of self-esteem, similarities between high self-esteem and narcissism that are not addressed (Bushman and Baumeister 1998) ^[4], as well as variations in the use of conditional variables when examining the link between self-esteem and deviance. The mixed findings of the effects of self-esteem on aggression are only a small portion of the greater research area in need of further study when examining the link between self-esteem and deviance and crime in general, which unfortunately continues to remain under-researched.

To understand how self-esteem operates in relation to deviance, it is necessary to isolate the protective effect of self-

esteem while paying heed to its potential risks. This need becomes even more crucial when considering the number of financial resources and time that may be put into programs that do not work the way they should.

Self-esteem (SE) model of deviance postulates that adolescents may engage in deviant behaviors as a reaction to their own unfavorable self-perceptions. Specifically, youths with poor self-esteem are more likely to experiment with criminal behaviors in an attempt to boost their self-esteem, according to the self-derogation theory. The findings indicate a curvilinear (second-order) connection in which young people with very high self-esteem requirements and extremely low self-esteem are most likely to benefit personally from delinquent behavior. These effects seem to last for one and a half to three and a half years after the first onset. Another surprising discovery is that people with extremely high self-esteem may also occasionally experience boosting benefits from criminality (Edwards, 2009) ^[8].

People gradually become less dependent on their parents as they grow from childhood to adolescence, and as a result, they start to spend more time with their peers. Peer impact is therefore pervasive during adolescence. Adolescents are subjective by their peers through a process known as peer socialization or peer affiliation, within which they adopt or modify their behavior in reaction to perceived peer pressure or norms (Simons-Morton & Farhat, 2010) ^[28]. While (open/perceived) peer pressure (PP) is defined as straight pressure placed on an human being to conform to a specific peer grouping behavior, peer (public) norms are defined as perceived (and thus possibly not actual) attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that are considered acceptable within a peer group (Simons-Morton & Farhat, 2010) ^[28]. Peer group rules may be enforced by peer pressure, however internalization of norms can occur even in the absence of explicit peer pressure. That is to say, even in the absence of peer pressure to behave a certain way, people may yet experience subtle pressure to fit in with peer standards.

People who are our age, class, school, or coworkers are considered our peers. It is up to us how we respond to our peers to determine how significant and unique a role they play in our lives—positive or bad. We made lots of pals our own age, especially in schools and colleges. And they are all uniquely connected to us. Thus, it is nearly hard to ignore them or become cut off from them. As a result, their actions and words have a profound effect on our thoughts that may last a lifetime.

Peer groups are described as social groupings consisting of individuals that have a common status, are similar in age, or have similar educational backgrounds. These individuals are typically close in age. (Grgin & Lackovi, 2006). Peer group studies demonstrate the critical role that peer games play in socialization, but they also highlight the link between negative peer relationships throughout childhood and later socially undesirable behavior.

A youngster joins a peer group because they require stability and a sense of identity, whereas peer association is defined as a small group of similar-aged, high intimacy, pretty close friends. Typically, peer associations comprise of two to twelve pals in a group (Singh, 2017) ^[25].

Peer pressure is the influence that other people receive from their peers, which shapes their opinions and actions. Adolescents are mostly impacted by peer pressure. At that point, it is easy to shape someone's cognitive patterns and get them interested in criminal activity. If the person resists their

peers' pressure or their curiosity, they fear that they could have to live alone. They join a peer group that may be engaging in harmful activities because of a fear of being alone (Brown, 2004) ^[3].

Deviant behavior and deviant peer association have been connected (Elliott, Huizinga, & Ageton, 2015) ^[9]. Families are crucial to a child's socialization and development, but peer groups are even more significant because kids squander more moment in time with their friends than their parents. Seeing that result, friends shape kids' behavior and have a significant impact on parents' decision-making (Pardini, Loeber, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 2005).

Children gradually build more networks among people outside their family as they start to grow and develop into adolescents as a result, they tend to rely more on these relationships than on their parents and this is where all the 'good stuff' happens especially when such relationships are not monitored or under any form of parental supervision. According to Differential Association Theory (DAT), delinquent behaviour is learned through interaction by imitating others. Children are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior when they are exposed to delinquent interactions. This is a result of the kids copying these harmful behaviors from peers, family members, and the environment. Peer influence can be either direct, where peers overtly attempt to alter behaviour, or indirect, where nonconforming individuals are ostracized (Manzoni *et al.*, 2011) ^[18].

One of the most popular theories utilized to explain this association is differential association theory, which proposes that individuals' delinquency derives from sustained interaction with pro-deviant others (Matsueda, 2001; Short, 1956) ^[17, 24]. Accordingly, individuals are not viewed as inherently delinquent, rather learning these behaviours through intimate social relationships. Ample evidence exists to support this unidirectional perspective (Church, Wharton, & Taylor, 2008; Erickson, Crosnoe, & Dornbusch, 2000) ^[6, 10]. Studies assert that individuals oriented toward peer groups are more likely to engage in deviant behaviour than those with stronger parental associations (Michael & Ben-Zur, 2017).

Nisar, Ullah, Ali and Alam (2014) explored the family, peers and economic factors that play a role in juvenile delinquency. Adolescents conform to different norms, behaviour and values due to peer pressure. Peers have an impact on the behaviour of an individual. If there is negative influence of peer group then it leads to negative formulation of character as individual spend most of the time with their peers.

Although there may be some debate about the processes through which negative peer affiliation is linked with delinquent behaviour, there is an abundance of research citing that this association exists. Research has clearly documented the links between peer influence and substance use, as well as deviant behaviour and antisocial values.

In line with previous findings, Dodge, Dishion and Lansford (2006) discuss in their book that young adolescents who are at risk for delinquency or are on the cusp of exhibiting antisocial behaviour are susceptible to negative influences from deviant peers. Similarly, higher levels of deviant peer association were found to predict later increases in pro-delinquency beliefs, as found by Pardini, Loeber, and Stouthamer-Loeber (2005). This finding is especially relevant to the present study, as it highlights the influence peers can have on adolescent beliefs about delinquency. Peer networks have a greater ability to shape a child's behavior as

they get older, in part because of developmental shifts that highlight how important it is for friends and associates to accept you (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007) ^[26]. Friendship groups set social norms. According to these norms, behavior that is seen acceptable is rewarded with affirmations and support; behavior that goes against the group norms may result in rejection or condemnation.

These peer pressures can be advantageous when they support behavior that is considered positive, like achieving high grades. Regrettably, certain peer groups will adopt antisocial norms that encourage criminal activity. Thus, teachers may observe groups of kids using alcohol, tobacco, or other substances, or participating in other risky behaviors, during the middle school years. Once these harmful behavioral norms are in place, it may be challenging to break them.

Additionally, they have the ability to homophily—the term for the process of drawing into the group other pupils who have a tendency toward similar behaviors. For instance, bullying behavior is socially rewarded when homophily arises among bullies, which encourages it to persist and even spread among group members. According to research on teenage behavior, adolescents who associate with the wrong peer group run the risk of experiencing a number of unfavorable long-term consequences, such as violent behavior, substance addiction, and school dropout (Van Ryzin & Dishion, 2014) ^[30].

Research questions

In the course of this study the following research questions would be answered

1. What is the relationship connecting self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State?
2. What is the relationship between peer pressure (PP) and delinquent behaviour (BD) among SSS in Delta State?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State.
2. There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State.

Research Design

The study made use of correlational design which deals with the relationship that exists among different variables. This enabled the researcher to ascertain the nature of the relationship that exists between self-esteem, peer group and deviant behaviour among secondary school students.

Participant selection

The study comprised 1,045 SS 2 students selected from the 452 secondary schools in Delta State with a total of 72,854 SS 2 students.

The students were selected from schools across the 25 Local Government Areas of Delta State. The sampling techniques that were used to select the students were proportionate stratified, simple random and convenience sampling techniques. These sampling techniques were used at three different stages of the sample selection.

In the first stage the proportionate sampling technique was used to ensure that all the Local Government Areas have equal representation. In order to do this, the percentage of 1,045 sample size in relation to the entire population, which stood at 1.434% was determined. Hence, 1.434% of the

population in each Local Government Area were selected. In selecting the number of schools, the researcher used the simple random sampling to randomly select one school from each of the local government areas in the state. Then the students were selected from each of the selected schools by way of convenience sampling technique. That is only students who were available and willing to participate were selected.

Measures

Questionnaire (opinion poll) is the instrument was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire (opinion poll) comprises four sections; the first section contains the demographic data of the respondents. These include their gender, location and class. The other sections contained several measures that will be used to collect the students' responses, which will be used to measure their self-esteem (SE), susceptibility to peer pressure (PP) and delinquent behaviour (DB). The measures are described below:

Self-Esteem Rating Scale: This scale determined the students' stage of self-esteem (SE). The scale contains a total of 13 items, but reduced to 8 after validation. The items were adopted from the Adolescent Self-Esteem Questionnaire developed by Hafekost, Lawrence, Boterhoven and n de Haan (2015). The original test had a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.91. The items were structured on a 4-point scale, ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 4 for strongly agree.

Peer Pressure Rating Scale: This scale was used to determine the extent to which the students are susceptible to peer pressure. The scale contains a total of 30 items (11 items measuring Yielding to Peer Pressure, 13 items measuring Resistance to Peer Pressure, and 6 items measuring Peers Encouragement). The items were adopted from the Perceived Peer Pressure Scale developed by Palani and Mani (2016). The original test had a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.94. The items were however, reduced to 18 after validation (9 items for Yielding to Peer Pressure and 9 items for Resistance to Peer Pressure). The items were structured on a 4-point scale, ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 4 for strongly agree.

Delinquent Behaviour Rating Scale: This scale was used to determine the extent to which the students will exhibit delinquent behaviour. The scale contains a total of 25 items (3 items measuring vandalism, 7 items measuring Theft, 5 items measuring Physical Aggression, 4 items measuring Truancy, 2 items measuring destructiveness, and 4 items measuring status offense). The items were adopted from the Frequency of Delinquent Behaviour Scaling Instrument developed by Kumuyi, Akinnawo and Akintola (2020). The original test had a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.75, a Spearman-Brown coefficient of 0.68 and Guttman Split-Half coefficient of 0.68. The items were however, reduced to 23 after validation (3 items for vandalism, 7 items for Theft, 5 items for Physical Aggression, 4 items for Truancy, 2 items measuring destructiveness, and 2 items for status offense). The items were structured on a 4-point scale, ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 4 for strongly agree.

The face, content and construct validities of the instrument

was estimated by experts in measurement and evaluation. They assessed the choice of language, sentence structure and use of grammar in the instrument. Their judgement was used to ascertain the face validity of the instrument.

Subsequent to the face validity, the questionnaire was pilot tested by administering it on 100 respondents in secondary schools other than the ones earmarked to be used in the final study. The responses were collated and entered into a computer system with the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26. The data were analysed using principal component analysis method of confirmatory factor analysis. The total cumulative variance was used to estimate the content validity of the instrument. It yielded the following values; 51.36% for Self-Esteem, 71.20% for Peer Pressure and 77.29% for Delinquent Behaviour. The rotated component matrix was used to estimate its construct validity. It yielded the following range of values; 0.51-0.80 for Self-Esteem, 0.53-0.85 for Peer Pressure and 0.57-0.91 for Delinquent Behaviour.

To ensure the reliability, data obtained were subjected to a reliability test using the Cronbach's reliability coefficient. The coefficient obtained was used to estimate the internal consistency of items in the questionnaire. Scales with index within the range of 0.70 and above were accepted in reliability while those with index less than 0.70 were considered unacceptable. It yielded the following coefficient; 0.72 for Self-Esteem, 0.89 for Peer Pressure and 0.94 for Delinquent Behaviour. These coefficients were greater than 0.70 showing that the scales are reliable.

Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents in their various schools. She recruited the service of five research assistants to help her administer the questionnaire. The research assistants were trained on the objectives of the study and how to go about administering the questionnaire to the respondents. The completed questionnaire were retrieved immediately from the students.

Ethical considerations

For ethical compliance, prior to the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher sought and obtained permission from the principals of the various schools. The students were not be coerced to respond to the questionnaire. Rather, they were told that the process was completely voluntary and that they were free at any time to discontinue the process whenever they felt uncomfortable with the process.

Data Analysis

The data obtained in the field were collated, scored, coded and entered into a computer system using SPSS version 26. The PPMCC of Determination was used to answer the research questions. On the other hand, the regression statistics were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State?

Table 1: Pearson's Correlation analysis of the relationship between self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	r ²	r ² %	Remark
Self-Esteem	1,043	24.48	3.16	-0.352	0.124	12.4	Negative Relationship

Delinquent Behaviour		52.08	15.00				
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In Table 1, the researcher presented the result of a Pearson’s correlation analysis, which was used to examine the relationship that exists between self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. The result revealed that $r = -0.352$, $r^2 = 0.124$, and $r^2\% = 12.4$. The result showed a negative relationship between self-

esteem and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. It implied that self-esteem contributed 12.4% to the variability in delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State?

Table 2: Pearson’s Correlation analysis of the relationship between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	r ²	r ² %	Remark
Peer Pressure	1,043	54.12	9.10	0.126	0.016	1.6	Positive Relationship
Delinquent Behaviour		52.08	15.00				

In Table 2, the researcher presented the result of a Pearson’s correlation analysis, which was used to examine the relationship that exists between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State. The result revealed that $r = 0.126$, $r^2 = 0.016$, and $r^2\% = 1.6$. The result showed a positive relationship between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. It

implied that peer pressure contributed 1.6% to the variability in delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State.

Table 3: Regression analysis of the relationship between self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State

Model Summary					
R	R ²	Adj. R ²		Std Error	
0.352	0.124	0.123		14.04	
ANOVA					
	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	28957.927	1	28957.927	146.885	.000 ^b
Residual	204441.363	1037	197.147		
Total	233399.290	1038			
Coefficient					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	B		
(Constant)	93.007	3.405		27.314	.000
Self-Esteem	-1.672	.138	-.352	-12.120	.000

In Table 3, the researcher presented the result of a regression statistics which was performed to investigate the relationship between a self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State. The calculated F-value is 146.885, and the p-value is 0.000, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that a relationship exists between self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State. The R² value of 0.124 indicates that self-esteem explain for

12.4% of the variation in delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B) for predicting delinquent behaviour from self-esteem, is -1.672; while the standardized regression coefficient is -0.352, $t = 12.120$, $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State

Table 4: Regression analysis of the relationship between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State

Model Summary					
R	R ²	Adj. R ²		Std Error	
0.126	0.016	0.015		14.88	
ANOVA					
	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	3677.835	1	3677.835	16.602	.000 ^b
Residual	229721.455	1037	221.525		
Total	233399.290	1038			
Coefficient					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	B		
(Constant)	40.877	2.787		14.665	.000
Peer Pressure	.207	.051	.126	4.075	.000

In Table 4, the researcher presented the result of a regression statistics which was performed to investigate the relationship

between a peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among SSS in Delta State. The calculated F-value is 16.602, and the

p-value is 0.000, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that a relationship exists between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. The R^2 value of 0.016 indicates that peer pressure explains 1.6% of the variation in delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B) for predicting delinquent behaviour from peer pressure, is 0.207; while the standardized regression coefficient is 0.126, $t = 4.075$, $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Discussion of Result

Self-Esteem (SE) and Delinquent Behaviour (DB) among SSSs

The first study among Delta State secondary school students indicated a negative correlation between deviant behavior and low self-esteem. The results showed that among Delta State secondary school pupils, self-esteem contributed 12.4% to the variability in delinquent behavior. According to a comparable theory, there is a noteworthy correlation between Delta State secondary school pupils' self-esteem and delinquent behavior. This research suggests that students' self-esteem may have an impact on their decision to engage in delinquent behavior. This research may have as its explanation the fact that children with low self-esteem are more likely to engage in unsafe and reckless behavior as teenagers. The root of the issue is their desire for popularity and their incapacity to weigh the pros and disadvantages of their choices. Teenagers are impressionable, and those with poor self-esteem would naturally drift toward delinquent behavior if they perceive that being popular in a group is linked to it.

The aforementioned results corroborate those of Osner (2016), who discovered a link between aggression or crime and self-esteem. The author discovered that violent, aggressive, and antisocial behavior can result from having a high sense of self-worth. The results also corroborate those of Kernis (2013), who found that people with unstable high self-esteem are more likely than those with stable high self-esteem to react angrily to ego threats. People who have poor self-esteem are more likely to experience externalizing issues in the actual world, like antisocial behavior and delinquency. The results, however, differ with those of Bynner *et al.* (2011), who were unable to link externalizing issues to low self-esteem.

Peer Pressure (PP) and Delinquent Behaviour (DB) among SSSs

The second conclusion showed that among Delta State secondary school pupils, peer pressure and delinquent behavior were positively correlated. Peer pressure was shown to have a 1.6% contribution to the variation in delinquent behavior among Delta State secondary school pupils. According to a matching premise, peer pressure and delinquent behavior are significantly correlated among Delta State secondary school pupils. This research suggests that pupils may be persuaded to engage in delinquent behavior by their peers. This is due to the fact that peers' endorsement of delinquent behavior can lead people to feel that breaking the law improves one's standing and earns them other benefits from society, which increases the likelihood that they would commit crimes. Compared to adults, adolescents typically spend more time with their peers. The aforementioned result

is consistent with the findings of Cotter and Smokowski (2016), who demonstrated that teenagers' perceptions of their friends' delinquent behavior heighten the incentives for such behavior because, at this developmental stage, social acceptance is crucial. The results corroborate those of Michael and Ben-Zur (2017), who hypothesize that people who are more inclined to behave in a deviant manner are those who are more focused on their peer groups than on their parents.

Conclusion

Conclusively, this study examined the extent of the relationship that exists between self-esteem, peer group and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State. The results indicate:

1. That a significant relationship exists between self-esteem and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State
2. That a significant relationship exists between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students in Delta State

Recommendations

In view of the above findings, the researcher therefore, recommends the following:

1. Parent should work on building the self-esteem of their children through the application of the right parenting practices, which may in turn discourage the children from indulging in delinquent behaviour
2. Students should be encouraged to be mindful of the kinds of friends they keep so that they will not be negatively influenced by deviant peers in indulging in delinquent behaviour.
3. Schools should advocate for involvement in extra-curricular activities like sports and various after-school programs to help increase self-esteem and general well-being of the adolescents.

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