

Perceived Effects of Peer Pressure to Academic Performance: A Correlational Study

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Research Article



Open-access & Peer-reviewed
Received: 30 May 2025
Available: 29 Jul 2025

ABSTRACT

This study looked at how peer pressure affected students' grades, concentrating on how their friends affected their study habits and overall school experiences. The study used a correlational research methodology and included 36 junior high school students from Assumpta School of Tagum, Incorporated. We conducted surveys and questionnaires to find out how pupils dealt with peer pressure. The results showed that there was a strong link between peer pressure and academic success. Peer pressure that was positive made pupils do things that helped them in school, such studying in groups. On the other hand, negative peer pressure made students skip more school and do things that were dangerous and hurt their academic progress. Statistical tests, including Pearson correlation coefficients, showed that students who thought they were under more peer pressure did worse in school. The study ended with suggestions for teachers and legislators to create learning settings that encourage good peer influences while reducing bad peer pressures. This would help students do better in school and be healthier overall.

Keywords: education, peer, pressure

INTRODUCTION

Peer pressure has a significant influence on academic performance and the overall well-being of adolescents. As students transition into junior high school, they become increasingly susceptible to the opinions and behaviors of their peers. Studies show that it can help or destroy how students do in school. (Gulati, 2017). The adolescent years are so important. It is when adolescents grow emotionally, socially, and academically. What they act, believe in, and care about depends on who they hang out with. When peers positively help each other, it can improve grades being a good person, and even lead to better choices in life.

However, it can also lead to negativity, poor decision-making, a bad attitude, and unhealthy ways to handle stress. Peer groups are crucial in shaping students' academic performance, especially in Nigerian schools. A study by Filade et al. (2019) at Babcock University in Ogun State found that peer influence goes beyond academics; it also impacts students' social and emotional growth. Their research showed that students who are part of positive peer groups tend to perform better academically. Because of this, the authors highlighted the need for teachers to actively supervise and guide student groups to ensure these influences are helpful rather than harmful. They also suggested that having trained school counselors available could help address any negative peer pressure and support students in achieving academic success (Filade et al., 2019). In the Philippines, a study by Gansino et al. (2024) at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School implied that peer pressure significantly influences academic achievement among Grade 11 students. The study emphasized that peer pressure can negatively impact students' academic performance because when students give in to it, they often place more importance on

socializing than schoolwork. This results in procrastination and unfinished tasks, ultimately slowing their academic progress as the time that should be dedicated to studying is spent on other activities.

Thus, this quantitative study surveyed the junior high school student population at Assumpta School to assess the prevalence and magnitude of peer pressure's impact on social relations and emotional well-being on their academic performance. As observed by the researcher, students are influenced by their peers in many aspects; if one is absent, the other group members are also lacking. The choices of words uttered are the same; sometimes, assignments are copied, and they make the same mistakes on their tasks. They had the same dress style during wash day. These were some of the researcher's observations. This study determined the effect of peer pressure on the academic performance of junior high students.

Statement of the Problem

This quantitative study aimed to determine the effects of peer pressure on the academic performance of the junior high school students enrolled at Assumpta School of Tagum City for the school year 2024-2025. This research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of peer pressure of the students in terms of social interaction and emotional well-being?
2. What is the academic performance of the students?
3. Is there a significant association between social Interaction and the academic performance of the students?
4. Is there a significant association between emotional well-being and the academic performance of the students?

Null hypotheses

The following hypotheses were set at 0.05 level of significance:

There is no significant association between social Interaction and the academic performance of the students.

There is no association between emotional well-being and the academic performance of the students.

Literature Review

The different kinds of literature and studies presented are considered the essential materials to support the discussion of the outcomes and whether these studies conform to the study results. Peer pressure occurs when a person forcibly adopts group members' beliefs, attitudes, or behavior to be approved and accepted by the group. Peer pressure has positive and negative aspects and can result in various outcomes for youth. However, criticisms of youth have primarily focused on negative peer group influences. In developing countries, there is a dearth of literature focusing on the effect of peer pressure on adolescent development, particularly in specific contexts such as Kenya's secondary schools. Peer pressure can lead to undesirable consequences or encourage healthy behaviors or academic performance, depending on whether the group is engaged in healthy or unhealthy behavior. Peer pressure is a main socioeconomic factor influencing high school students; since there is little information on the factors leading to social behavior, the present exploratory research studies the problems of high school students in the holistic development of their studies (Evaline et al., 2017).

Tripathy (2018) explained that peer pressure plays a significant role in shaping adolescent behavior, leading to positive and negative effects. The researcher also noted that adolescents often belong to a particular peer group or switch between groups, which serve as sources of identity and motivation. They tend to align their opinions, beliefs, and decisions with those of their peers and actively participate in the group's activities. According to Liu (2022), peer pressure can help as a motivating force, driving students to aim for academic excellence and personal growth. When a supportive and high-achieving peer group surrounds students, they may be inspired to push themselves further, causing enhanced academic performance and the development of valuable skills. This type of "competitive peer pressure" can foster a sense of camaraderie and mutual support, where students challenge one another to reach new heights. Adolescence is a particularly vulnerable period of human development because of the progressive changes and the social-emotional environment to which individuals are exposed. There is an alteration in the Interaction among biological, psychological, and social variables. In addition to a crucial period for developing psychosocial function, adolescence is when individuals may be especially vulnerable to danger (Bishop et al., 2003). Peer pressure refers to the influence of friends and classmates on a person's behavior, encouraging them to act in specific ways to fit in or avoid standing out (Hartney, 2011). This phenomenon is rooted in the complex social dynamics of group life, where individuals often adjust their actions to match group expectations to feel accepted (Weinfeld & Jones, 2010). While peer pressure is frequently linked to adverse

outcomes, it can also have a positive side, motivating students to work harder in school or participate in helpful, prosocial activities. Research has consistently found that peer pressure plays a significant role in shaping teenagers' experiences. In the academic world, the power of peers is especially noticeable. Studies indicate peer influence can either boost or undermine academic achievement (Gulati, 2017). On one hand, positive peer pressure can inspire students to set higher goals, stay motivated, and push each other to excel. On the other hand, negative peer pressure can distract students from their studies and ultimately lead to lower academic performance. During the critical period of identity formation, late adolescents are particularly vulnerable to negative peer pressure. Such pressure can lead individuals to engage in harmful behaviors like risky sexual activities, violence, and substance abuse to fit in with their peers (Adimora et al., 2018). It can also weaken teenagers' resistance to temptation, potentially resulting in addictive behaviors (Wubet, 2021). This intense urge to conform to the actions or beliefs of others may cause stress, anxiety, and depression, negatively impacting adolescents' physical and mental health as well as their social-emotional growth and relationships (Cruz et al., 2022).

During early adolescence, mutually acknowledged friendships tend to have higher quality than those that are not reciprocated (Linden-Andersen et al., 2009). According to Berndt (2002), the advantages of friendship depend on the relationship's quality. High-quality friendships can help protect against adjustment difficulties (Bollmer et al. 2005), and positive friendship quality is linked to greater happiness, life satisfaction, and self-esteem (Raboteg-Savic & Sakic, 2014). The nature of these friendships can influence how children perceive themselves, their school environment, and their peers (Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003). Peer pressure reaches far beyond the classroom, shaping how young people behave in social situations, make decisions, and take risks. Adolescents are often sensitive to peer influence when it comes to issues like substance use, risky sexual behavior, and involvement in delinquent activities (Adeniyi & Kolawole, 2015). However, not all peer influence is negative—having strong, supportive friendships can help teens build resilience against negative pressures, leading to better emotional and mental health outcomes (Taylor et al., 2023). A variety of factors determine how susceptible someone is to peer pressure. Personal qualities like self-esteem, assertiveness, and the ability to make thoughtful decisions are all important (Bonein et al., 2013). Some students can prioritize their values over the desire to fit in with their peers, demonstrating self-control that helps them resist conformity (Johnson & Lee, 2019). Additionally, research by Mekonnen and Dabal (2023) highlights that high self-efficacy and belief in one's ability to handle challenges can empower individuals to navigate peer pressure more successfully.

Academic Performance. Peer pressure is an influential determinant of academic performance. Positive peer influence encourages students to adopt good study habits, set scholastic goals, and engage in collaborative learning. Burns and Darling (2002) suggest that students in an academically focused peer group are more likely to achieve higher grades and exhibit a strong commitment to their education. A study by Korir et al. (2014) states that peers significantly connect with students' academic performance. Students whose friends are involved in negative doings like sneaking out of school, being absent from school, and using drugs probably have a low academic performance. Peer pressure can significantly affect students' academic motivation and performance. For instance, a study by Abderrahim (2016) states that peer pressure can motivate students to excel academically when surrounded by peers who prioritize educational success. Similarly, Gottfried (2014) highlighted that positive peer influences can improve academic enthusiasm, while negative peer influences can lessen students' academic efforts and achievements.

Similarly, negative peer pressure can lead to disengagement from academic achievement. Students may place more on being accepted by their peers over academic success, living to behaviors such as skipping classes, cheating, or neglecting homework. The University of Wisconsin Digital Collections reports that students often compromise their academic integrity to align with their peer group's expectations, which may lead to future consequences for their educational outcomes (DeFranco, 2023). Peer pressure occurs when a person forcibly adopts group members' beliefs, attitudes, or behavior just to be accepted by the group. Peer pressure has positive and negative aspects and can result in various outcomes for youth. However, criticisms of youth have primarily focused on negative peer group influences. In developing countries, there is a dearth of literature focusing on the effect or impact of peer influence on adolescent development, particularly in specific contexts such as Kenya's secondary schools. Peer pressure can lead to undesirable consequences or encourage healthy behaviors or academic performance, depending on whether the group is engaged in healthy or unhealthy behavior. Conversely, negative peer pressure can have adverse effects on academic performance. A study concluded that intense peer pressure significantly increases academic stress levels among adolescent students (Bharawmani et al., 2024).

Moreover, peer pressure can also lead to using substances or getting into troubles, which affect school attendance and focus, further impacting academic achievement. However, negative peer pressure can be resisted if parents engage and support their children (Simons-Morton et al., 2005). While negative peer pressure can sometimes lead to problems like struggling in school, risky behavior, emotional stress, or even bullying, it's important to remember that peers can also positively impact and help encourage good choices (Bhujbal et al., 2024). A study conducted by Fadare et al. (2025) recommended that teachers and parents offer appropriate guidance and intervention programs to adolescents to help them recognize how their choice of friends can either positively or negatively affect their academic performance. Beyond the classroom, positive peer pressure also thrives in extracurricular activities. Involvement in clubs, sports, and other groups fosters a sense of belonging and helps students develop time management and organizational skills. These experiences enrich school life and translate into stronger academic performance (Smith et al., 2020). Peer groups can be a source of anxiety for their members, particularly concerning academic pursuits, as stated by Kadir and Salija (2018). Although peer pressure is often seen as an opposing force affecting teenagers, a Temitope (2015) study suggests that education and preparation can help teens manage its adverse effects. Adding to this perspective, Mosha (2017) argues that the impact of peer pressure is not uniformly negative; instead, it manifests in diverse ways and intensities, contingent on how students perceive their peers' viewpoints within the group.

In Europe, a study by Golsteyn et al. (2021) found that students placed in groups with more persistent peers tend to earn higher grades. Interestingly, other personality traits of peers, such as risk-taking, self-confidence, or anxiety, don't significantly impact academic performance. This suggests that the positive influence of persistence among peers is unique and separate from being surrounded by high-achieving classmates. Within such environments, supportive peer relationships help create an atmosphere where students encourage each other to strive for and achieve their academic achievement. Although much research highlights the adverse effects of peer pressure, there are situations where peer influence can be helpful. For instance, Altermatt and Pomerantz (2003) discovered that students who spend time with peers focused on academics tend to perform better in school. This is because these students feel motivated by their peers to reach higher academic goals. In a study in India, Reang (2022) found that peer groups are essential in shaping students' academic success, even if the influence isn't overwhelming. It suggests that teachers, counselors, and parents should step in to guide students, helping them understand how their friends can either encourage or discourage their school performance. Moreover, a study result in Vihiga County, Kenya, shows that if the relationship is low compared to students' role performance, home orientation, and school environment, peer-level factors positively affect students' academic performance (Korir et al., 2014). In the Philippines, peer influence is a significant factor in the academic progress of high school students. The positive side often inspires students to strive for excellence in their studies. The study in Cotabato revealed that students who spend time with a group that prioritizes education and academic success can adopt the same behavior and perspectives, leading to improved scholastic outcomes (Dela Cruz & Santos, 2017). This effect is especially noticeable in environments where academic achievement is celebrated and encouraged among peer groups. Moreover, it is essential to note that peer pressure has two positive results: a positive one, which will help the student improve their study, and a negative one, leading them to worse. A study by Daniel, K.E. (2016) states that peer presence's effect on adolescents is a risk-taking behavior. This shows that peers have a significant influence on enhancing the risk-taking behavior of adolescents.

Social Interaction. Peer pressure is an influential force in shaping adolescents' perspectives. Social Interaction occurs when two conditions are met: the existence of contact and the communication's availability (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018), according to Lee et. Al (2016), social Interaction refers to the verbal and nonverbal relationship between individuals. Social Interaction can be positive or negative, giving unity and understanding among individuals or the opposite. On the other hand, communication is the exchange of ideas, concepts, and information among individuals. Its purpose is to create a common understanding by influencing others' perspectives positively and negatively (Geidne et al., 2013). Interactions with peers play a crucial role in shaping social and emotional well-being. Research by Hoferichter et al. (2021) highlights a connection between the support children receive from their peers and their overall social-emotional health. Positive peer interactions tend to enhance social and emotional well-being, whereas negative experiences with peers can have detrimental effects (Rivers et al., 2009). Social Interaction with others has an impact on human development. Support from parents, teachers, and peers is significantly connected to children's academic success, as these relationships influence their performance in school (Vangie et al., 2019). Classroom learning depends greatly on interpersonal relationships, especially between students within the learning group. For teenagers, moving from high school to college represents a significant change, bringing challenges such as peer pressure, a new social life, living independently, and adapting to an unfamiliar environment. But, attending a higher education institution also gives valuable

opportunities for personal and learning growth (Friedlander et al., 2007). A study by Santor et al. (2000) formed tools to measure peer pressure, peer conformity, and popularity among 148 adolescent boys and girls. Their study found that these factors are closely linked, with peer conformity being a powerful predictor of risky behaviors in adolescents, such as substance abuse and other risk-taking activities. It means that adolescents who want to join a group are more likely to engage in harmful behavior. An idea of fitting in with a group will shape the behavior.

Peer relationships are a form of social connection that plays a vital role in meaningful life experiences starting as early as preschool (Gülay, 2018). These early peer interactions can influence many aspects of a child's development, particularly in social and emotional areas. For instance, children may build positive relationships through actions like sharing and helping, but they can also encounter negative experiences such as bullying. Therefore, peer relationships are complex social bonds encompassing various experiences (Henry & Rickman, 2007). Gommans et al. (2017) conducted an experimental study with adolescents to explore how popularity, likeability, and peer conformity are connected. They found that teenagers are more likely to conform to peers with high social status than those with low status. Additionally, popularity strongly influenced whether adolescents conformed rather than being liked by others. This suggests that the desire to be connected to the popular shapes the behavior of teenagers rather than just being liked. Peer pressure can also lead to more serious concerns—peer pressure. An analytical cross-sectional study of Singh (2007) shows that there is an inclination to smoke and use alcohol because of peer pressure. It reveals that peers can influence vices. Gardner and Steinberg (2005) point out that the peer group's influence begins early in life and grows throughout adolescence. Understanding the benefits and challenges posed by peers is critical for enhancing the productivity of educational processes and school systems design that better support student academic achievement. This recognition can help teachers and administrators create a school environment that promulgates positive peer impact while mitigating negative pressures. Peer pressure also plays a key role in shaping adolescent moral and ethical growth (Moore & Gino, 2013). Young people are especially open to the influence of their friends when making decisions about right and wrong, making it essential for them to be surrounded by supportive and principled peers. Negative peer pressure can lead to ethical compromises, such as lying, cheating, or engaging in illegal activities. These unchecked behaviors can have lasting implications on a student's character and moral compass. In contrast, positive peer pressure can potentially encourage ethical conduct and foster the development of a strong moral compass in students. When peer groups prioritize values such as honesty, integrity, and accountability, they play a crucial role in shaping an individual's moral growth, ultimately contributing to a well-rounded and principled character (Ajjidahun, 2011).

However, negative peer pressure can lead to adverse social outcomes. Adolescents may engage in risky behaviors such as substance abuse, bullying, or truancy to gain acceptance within a peer group. Derville (2001) discusses how the fear of social rejection often compels students to conform to behaviors that may harm their social and emotional well-being. This can result in social isolation, decreased self-esteem, and difficulty forming healthy relationships. As Hartney (2011) explains, peer pressure is the control that friends and classmates possess to manipulate an individual's choice, often encouraging them to do things in such a way as to fit in or avoid being left out. A range of social forces shapes this process, and young people frequently adapt their behavior to align with group expectations, whether for the sake of acceptance or to avoid rejection (Weinfeld & Jones, 2010). Social Interaction, meanwhile, involves the many ways individuals communicate, build relationships, and mutually influence one another within their social circles. While peer influence can be positive, negative peer pressure often leads to harmful outcomes. Research has shown, for example, that adolescents are more prone to risky behaviors such as substance use when they believe these actions are accepted or encouraged by their peers. This demonstrates how powerful peer approval can be in shaping adolescent conduct, sometimes with serious consequences for health and well-being (Brown et al. 2008). In the United States, research shows that adolescents report being less resistant to peer pressure than adults (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007), and observational evidence highlights peer influence as a key factor in adolescents' increased likelihood of taking risks. Additionally, one of the strongest indicators of delinquent behavior during adolescence is having delinquent friends, which is explained partly by peer socialization processes like "deviancy training" (Dishion et al., 2002). In other words, peers have a significant influence on what shapes the character of an individual,

A study in California by Reaves (2018) further reveals that adolescent problem behavior harms their behavioral health and undermines the stable and harmonious development of society. Key factors influencing this behavior include individual traits, family dynamics, school environment, and broader societal conditions, with problematic parent-child relationships, school violence, and social disorder identified as significant contributors. Teenage problem behavior is a serious social issue that disrupts social harmony and stability while adversely affecting

individuals' physical, mental, and developmental health (Jhiang and Gao, 2022). Sreeja et al. (2019) examined the influence of peers, spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and resilience on an individual's dedication to social justice. The study found that these factors positively contribute to a person's ability to help others in need, overcome challenges, promote prosocial behavior, and enhance overall well-being. However, further research is necessary to understand social justice commitment better, as the direct effects of these variables on such commitment have not been fully explored. The results of different studies highlight the importance of understanding social interaction in school settings. Classmates and friends significantly impact students' choices regarding academic activity, extracurricular and social behavior, which will mold an individual's future. This will support a study in Cebu by Legaspino et al. (2020), which states that the student in a peer group that gives importance to education will positively influence the individual's academic performance. Peer pressure also involves the positive and negative learning capacity.

Emotional Well-being. Emotional well-being (EWB) is an ever-changing part of our lives that reflects how we feel emotionally over time. It depends on the mix between positive feelings and negative ones. While our emotions can shift from moment to moment, emotional well-being tends to settle into a more consistent pattern over extended periods (Larsen & Prizmic, 2006). Researchers often measure this steady state using traits that capture how people generally feel. To get a clearer picture of emotions as they happen, methods like experience sampling or ecological momentary assessment are preferred since they track feelings in real-time, which tends to be more reliable than asking people to recall their emotions later (Kahneman & Krueger, 2006). A study by Nguyen et al. (2022) highlighted the positive effects of supportive peer relationships, which strengthen emotional resilience and improve decision-making skills. Positive interactions with peers offer emotional support and foster a sense of belonging, helping students to make decisions with greater confidence and independence. The study of Ramos et al. (2024) shows that negative peer pressure has a greater impact on psychological well-being than on social anxiety, likely because psychological well-being takes a comprehensive view of an individual's overall life. In contrast, social anxiety pertains specifically to the psychosocial aspect. Adolescence is a vital stage of development characterized by significant physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional transformations. During this time, young people often struggle with establishing their self-identity and navigating an increasingly complex social world (Santrock, 2018). One significant issue during adolescence is aggressive behavior, which is a complex phenomenon with essential short-term and long-term consequences for individuals and society (Majumdar, 2023). Aggression refers to actions intended to cause harm or injury to others and can appear during childhood and adolescence (Malonda, 2019). Another study emphasizes important considerations for programs designed to reduce peer pressure and aggressive behavior in adolescents. Given that peer pressure plays a major role in fostering aggression, schools and families must work together to create a supportive atmosphere that encourages positive behavior. Initiatives focusing on character development and social skills training can equip adolescents with the tools to resist negative peer influences (Wulandari et al., 2025). Moreover, boosting self-esteem through targeted interventions is vital, as it helps young people confidently manage social pressures. A study by Kaila (2024) concluded that a negative relationship resulted from the data between peer pressure and mental well-being, meaning that as peer pressure increases, mental well-being tends to decrease. Adolescents with strong psychological well-being and greater life satisfaction tend to be less influenced by peer pressure. In contrast, those who are more social and have good interpersonal relationships often experience a more substantial impact from their peers (Bansal et al., 2022). Negative peer pressure can significantly jeopardize a young adult's mental health, although some peer influence may be positive, promoting participation in sports or academics (Wentzel, 2016). According to Santos et al. (2019), children's well-being is powerfully shaped by their relationships with peers, which helps lower the chances of feeling excluded or becoming victims of bullying. When looking at gender differences, girls report feeling more satisfied with their friendships than boys. Goswami (2012) emphasized that supportive friends boost a child's well-being, whereas conflicts or aggressive behavior among peers can have the opposite effect. Positive connections with peers and neighbors are essential for children to enjoy a good quality of life. Caroline et al. (2018) found a clear link between healthy peer relationships and increased happiness. Similarly, Alcantara et al. (2017) discovered that peer support strongly relates to various measures of well-being, noting that students in public schools tend to report lower subjective well-being than private school students. On the other hand, Cruz et al. (2022) identified a negative relationship between peer pressure and mental health. Vinayak and Arora (2018) also studied 300 adolescents and found that peer pressure is connected to higher levels of social anxiety. Ahmadi et al. (2014) conducted a study to examine how emotional intelligence (EI) relates to psychological well-being. Using a correlational research approach, they collected data through standardized questionnaires designed to assess EI and psychological well-being. However, the abstract did not detail the specific instruments and sample size. Their findings revealed a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being, indicating that individuals with higher emotional intelligence generally

experience better psychological well-being. In Pakistan, Saud et al. (2016) examined the relationship between social influences within peer groups and emotional intelligence. Data were collected from 234 Mardan students attending two male and one female public sector colleges. The results from Chi-square and Gamma tests revealed a significant association between emotional intelligence and the peer group environment. In particular, factors such as cooperation, frequent interaction, sharing, and respect for opinions within the peer group were positively linked to emotional intelligence.

A study in Turkey found that, within the various aspects of social-emotional well-being, the ability to cope with peer pressure is the strongest predictor of social engagement and self-assertiveness. At the same time, it has the least influence on task orientation. These results suggest that coping with peer pressure is closely linked to social-emotional well-being and is an essential factor in predicting it (Ogelman et al., 2024). Hsieh et al. (2018) investigated how social intelligence, comprising social awareness and social information processing, and emotional intelligence moderate the links between psychological distress, peer victimization, and internet addiction. Their study involved a national sample of 6,233 Taiwanese fourth-grade students. Using hierarchical linear regression analyses, they found that higher psychological distress and increased peer victimization were associated with greater risks of internet addiction. Emotional intelligence was shown to reduce the harmful effects of victimization on mental health and was inversely related to internet addiction. Conversely, social awareness intensified the negative impact of victimization on internet addiction, while social information processing exacerbated the adverse effects of peer victimization on the mental health of Taiwanese adolescents. In the Philippines, Cleofas (2019) conducted a study examining the relationship between student engagement, mental health, and quality of life in college students. The findings showed that various forms of social connections within the school environment were associated with students' quality of life, and mental health also played a significant role in this connection. While these studies suggest a potential link between peer pressure and well-being, underlying factors remain that have yet to be fully understood regarding how these elements are connected. It emphasizes that parents, educators, and academic institutions need to recognize the presence of peer pressure among young people, whether its influence is positive or negative. It is essential to understand not only how susceptible students are to yielding or resisting peer pressure but also to acknowledge the encouragement and support they receive from their peers. This awareness is crucial for creating environments that effectively help adolescents navigate peer influences.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded on the Theory of Van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Theory. This framework helps understand the nature and extent of peer pressure on adult language learners and their academic performance, in which peer relationships play a vital role in shaping their identity and social skills. Peer pressure can significantly influence this developmental stage, leading to positive or negative outcomes in academic performance, social interaction, and emotional well-being. It is conceptualized in this study that the peer relationship may positively or negatively affect the student's academic performance. Suppose the student spends more time with their peers. In that case, the relationship will be stronger, thus affecting his/her performance at school and his/her social interaction with the other people surrounding them, including the guardian and other family members. Peer pressure can positively or negatively impact students' academic performance of the students. If the parents and teachers do not guide the students, they will become what they are supposed to be, especially if they spend more time with their peers who do not have the potential to perform at school. Similarly, peer pressure influences the students' ability to form healthy peer connections and navigate social dynamics. Peer pressure can lead to emotional and psychological stress, affecting students' well-being.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Locale

The study was conducted at Assumpta School of Tagum, Incorporated, located in Barangay Mankilam, Tagum City, Davao del Norte, Philippines. Assumpta School of Tagum, Incorporated is a non-stock and non-profit Catholic educational institution established in 1995, offering elementary, junior, and senior high education, serving a various student from the local community and neighboring areas (Bunda, n.d.). The school's environment is a supportive academic setting that nurtures both spiritual and intellectual development, making it an ideal location to explore the perceived effects of peer pressure on academic performance. With a student body representing various socioeconomic backgrounds, the school provides a natural and relevant context for examining how peer influences relate to students' academic outcomes. Data collection occurred within the school premises, including classrooms and common areas, allowing for direct engagement with the participants in their

everyday learning environment. The choice of Assumpta School of Tagum was based on its accessibility, demographic diversity, and alignment with the study's focus on adolescent academic experiences.

Design

The study utilized a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. The choice of a quantitative approach was based on the existing trends in the research field at the study site (Creswell, 2012). This approach is relevant when the researchers intend to clarify the explanations behind existence. Moreover, the researcher employed the descriptive correlational method, which aims to provide static pictures of situations and establish the relationship between different variables (McBurney & White, 2009). This design permits a detailed analysis of the probable relationship between peer pressure, directing social Interaction, emotional well-being, and students' academic performance.

Respondents

This study employed the Grade 7 to 10 students of Assumpta School of Tagum, Incorporated. The respondents were selected using a purposive sampling method, also known as judgmental or selective sampling, which encompasses purposefully selecting individuals based on specific criteria regarding the research objectives (Kelly, 2010). With this, the ideals included students known to have close peer groups, as recommended by their advisers. This approach guaranteed that the sample replicated the unique social dynamics the researcher aimed to investigate and provided valuable insights into how peer relationships influenced students' experiences. Moreover, Grades 7 to 10 students were at a critical developmental stage where peer influence becomes progressively significant. This age group is predisposed to peer pressure as they navigate social dynamics and academic expectations. By selecting these grade level, the research can effectively explore how peer relationships impact academic outcomes during a developmental period in students' lives.

Instruments

The researcher gathered the data through the survey questionnaire in line with peer pressure regarding social Interaction and emotional well-being. An adapted survey questionnaire will be employed that consists of two major parts: the first part covers the social Interaction, and the second part covers the emotional well-being of the students. Furthermore, a four-point Likert scale was used to answer each question. The presentation of each indicator was defined as follows: 4- strongly agree; 3- Agree; 2- Disagree; 1- strongly disagree. On the other hand, the student's academic performance will be measured by the average grades they received during the first quarter. The adapted questionnaire used in the study will be validated by the panel of experts identified by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Validation

As mentioned, the adapted questionnaire will be validated by the panel of experts identified by the Dean of the Graduate School. On one occasion that the instrument is validated, it will be pilot-tested to 15 students who were not part of the primary research respondent to measure its reliability and validity. Once the questionnaire had been validated, the proper survey began.

Procedure

The research process began with obtaining the ethics certificate. Once approved, the research process commenced with securing an endorsement letter from the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School, which was submitted to the principal of Assumpta School of Tagum Incorporated for approval. After the principal's approval, the researcher also requested permission from the teacher advisers of Grades 7 to 10 to conduct the study. Moreover, he asked the teachers for assistance by providing him with the names of the students involved in peer relationships. The respondents were asked to assess their attitudes. The study's purpose was explained to them, and confidentiality was assured. To encourage thoughtful responses in answering each item, the researcher personally administered the survey, collected the forms, and entered all data into his computer. All responses were collected and organized in a Microsoft Excel file. The consolidated data was then analyzed using suitable statistical methods. Throughout the process, the researcher ensured that all files were stored securely and handled with strict confidentiality. The researcher analyzed and interpreted the results, which were based on the statement of the problem. All these data were interpreted using the statistical tools used in this study. There were tables for the data, and a proper discussion followed after each table. The researcher analyzed and interpreted the results in direct response to the problem statement. The data were interpreted using appropriate statistical tools, with each set of results in tables. After each table, the researcher provided a detailed discussion to clarify the findings and their implications.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Several statistical techniques were utilized to explore the relationships between the variables. The specific methods employed included: Frequency, which examined the recurrent dataset, was used to analyze students' academic performance, social Interaction, and emotional well-being scores. Mean, representing the dataset's average as a measure of central tendency, was used to assess the academic performance scores, Social Interaction, and emotional well-being. Pearson's correlation coefficient, developed by Karl Pearson to quantify the strength of association between two variables, was employed to determine the strength and direction of the relationships among academic performance, social Interaction, and emotional well-being.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are vital in research, particularly when human participants are involved in studies examining sensitive topics such as peer pressure and academic performance. Silverman (2007) claims that researchers must adhere to the ethical principles established by their professional associations to ensure participants' safety and respect during the study. Thus, informed consent was obtained from all participants before their engagement in the research study. Each student was knowledgeable about the research aims their definite role in the process, and their right to back out without facing any negative consequences. As Creswell (2003) highlights, ensuring the concealment of informants is critical for protecting their identities and respecting their autonomy regarding the disclosure of personal experience. To uphold these ethical standards, the researcher executed actions such as assigning unique identifiers to each participant and storing all data firmly. These steps helped protect privacy and foster trust throughout the research process. Furthermore, respondents were guaranteed that their answers would remain confidential and be used solely for research purposes. Upon the completion of the study, findings will be shared with them, offering insights into how their contributions influenced the overall results. This method establishes respect for their contribution and underscores the importance of their perceptions in deepening the understanding of peer pressure's effects on academic performance. To maintain the highest ethical standards, the study secured approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and obtained letters of authorization from the relevant authorities at each participating institution (American Psychological Association, 2020). This research fostered a partnership grounded in transparency, trust, and mutual respect by recognizing the participants as independent entities who gladly shared their experiences in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Peer Pressure of the Students

Table 1. Social Interaction

Indicator	Mean Rating	Descriptive Equivalent
Sometimes I miss classes because my friends urge me to do so.	1.36	Strongly Disagree
I cannot resist going for a late-night party with friends.	1.44	Strongly Disagree
I go on a date with my friend despite parental warnings.	1.56	Strongly Disagree
Sometimes I do things because my friends want me to do so.	2.31	Disagree
I feel pressure to chat for long hours on the internet.	1.75	Disagree
Many times I put off my homework and other important assignments for friends' party.	1.72	Strongly Disagree
To maintain a status in a peer group, sometimes I pressure my parents to buy an expensive item.	1.44	Strongly Disagree
I usually compromise with peers' request for a movie, party, etc.	2.31	Disagree
Sometimes I do something wrong just to be good on friends view.	2.22	Disagree
I cannot say 'NO' to my friends even if my parents do not agree.	1.69	Strongly Disagree
Overall Mean	1.78	Disagree

Table 1 presents a series of indicators related to social Interaction, explicitly focusing on the influence of friends and peers on individual behavior. Each indicator is accompanied by a mean rating and a descriptive equivalent that categorizes the degree of agreement or disagreement in every statement. The first three indicators in the

table reflect strong disagreement among respondents. The mean rating for the statement, '*Sometimes I miss classes because my friends urge me to do so,*' is 1.36, indicating a robust rejection of the idea that peer pressure leads to skipping classes. Similarly, the statement, '*I cannot resist going for a late-night party with friends,*' receives a mean rating of 1.44, demonstrating that respondents do not feel compelled to prioritize social activities over their responsibilities. Additionally, the statement regarding going on dates despite parental warnings garnered a mean rating of 1.56, reinforcing the notion that individuals tend to value their parents' guidance in their social decisions. The subsequent indicators show varying levels of disagreement, with some respondents indicating a moderate acceptance of peer influence. The statement '*Sometimes I compromise with peers' requests for a movie, party, etc.*' has a mean rating of 2.31, suggesting that while there is some willingness to accommodate friends, it does not imply significant pressure. Moreover, the statement '*Sometimes I do something wrong just to be good in friends' view*' receives a mean rating of 2.22, indicating that although some individuals may occasionally engage in questionable behavior for social acceptance, this is not a predominant tendency. The table concludes with an overall mean rating of 1.78, which falls within the "Disagree" category. This indicates that, on average, respondents do not feel significantly pressured by their peers in the contexts presented in the indicators

Emotional Well-being

Table 2. Emotional Well-Being

Indicator	Mean Rating	Descriptive Equivalent
There is always a peer pressure for dating.	2.14	Disagree
I do not take advice from my parents about peer group activities.	1.47	Strongly Disagree
Sometimes I do violent acts to keep up with peers.	1.44	Strongly Disagree
I know my limits when with friends.	3.39	Strongly Agree
I find it difficult to escape from peer pressure.	2.31	Disagree
Sometimes I have to undergo peer pressure to be liked in a group.	2.47	Disagree
Sometimes I have to appease my peers by doing things that I don't want to do.	1.72	Disagree
It is difficult to think about the negative consequences of what we do with peers.	1.92	Disagree
Sometimes I do risky and harmful acts to get acceptance in the peer group.	1.81	Disagree
When I feel uncomfortable in a group, I do not know how to say NO.	2.28	Disagree
Overall Mean	2.09	Disagree

The data in the table recapitulates numerous indicators about emotional well-being, focusing on how individuals perceive and respond to peer pressure. Each indicator is given a mean rating, which measures the responses, along with a descriptive equivalent that classifies the degree of agreement or disagreement in every statement. This information suggests clear ideas for the respondents' emotional well-being related to their social life. The first statement, '*There is always peer pressure for dating*', shows a mean rating of 2.14, representing disagreement with the idea that peer pressure heavily influences dating. This proposes that respondents do not feel crucial external pressure to engage in dating activities. On the contrary, the second statement, '*I do not take advice from my parents about peer group activities*', obtains a mean rating of 1.47, presenting strong disagreement and interpreting that individuals give importance to parental guidance concerning their social relations. The third statement, which represents engaging in violent acts to keep group acceptance, also illustrates strong disagreement with a mean rating of 1.44. A noteworthy result in the table is the fourth indicator, '*I know my limits when with friends*', which takes a mean rating of 3.39, representing strong agreement. This demonstrates respondents' self-awareness and confidence in setting boundaries within their social life. Additional indicators show different levels of disagreement concerning the challenges faced by peer pressure, like '*I find it difficult to escape from peer pressure*' (mean: 2.31) and '*Sometimes I have to undergo peer pressure to be liked in a group*' (mean: 2.47). Both represent that they are not overwhelmingly felt when peer pressures happen. Moreover, numerous indicators concern the difficulties of navigating social conditions. For example, '*sometimes I have to appease my peers by doing things that I don't want to do*' has a mean rating of 1.72, while '*It is difficult to think about the negative consequences of what we do with peers*' receives a mean rating of 1.92. Both ratings suggest that respondents generally feel capable of resisting negative

influences and are aware of potential consequences of their choices. The overall mean rating of 2.09 falls within the "Disagree" category, reflecting that respondents do not perceive significant peer pressure affecting their emotional well-being.

Academic Performance of the Students

Table 3. Academic Performance of the Students

Grades Range	Frequency	Mean
85 – 89	8	88.18
90 – 94	24	93.12
95 – 99	4	95.37
Total	36	92.22
Grades Range	Frequency	Mean

This analysis examines a group of respondents' general weighted average (GWA) scores, providing insights into the distribution and central tendency of their performance. The numbers consist of 36 individual scores. This range has the lowest frequency with eight students, indicating that fewer students scored in this bracket. This is the most populated range, with 24 students, suggesting that a significant portion of the cohort performed well. Four (4) students achieved grades in this top range, indicating that high scores are less common. The overall mean GWA is approximately 92.27, indicating that the average performance of respondents is above the typical threshold for academic success. The distribution shows that while fewer students in the higher grades, those who are present score significantly above average. The presence of multiple respondents achieving scores in the average to high nineties is suggested. Meanwhile, the lower scores in the set data indicate that a significant number are performing exceptionally well.

Significant Relationship between Social Interaction and Academic Performance of the Students

Table 4. Social Interaction and Academic Performance Correlation

Variables	Significant
p-value	0.033
Correlation Coefficient	-0.356
Correlation Type	Low Negative Correlation

The significant result indicates the meaningful connection between social Interaction and academic performance. The p-value of 0.033 shows that the relationship between social Interaction and GWA is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This suggests that there is less than a 3.3% chance that the observed correlation is due to random variation, lending credibility to the findings. The p-value specifies the probability of obtaining the practical results under the null hypothesis (which posits no relationship). A p-value below 0.05 recommends that the results are statistically significant, presenting evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The negative correlation coefficient of -0.356 reflects a low negative correlation between social Interaction and Academic Performance. A negative correlation suggests that academic performance decreases weakly as social Interaction increases. A correlation coefficient of -0.1 to -0.3 is typically considered weak, while values closer to -1 indicate a stronger negative relationship. Thus, a coefficient of -0.356 illustrates a moderate but still relatively weak negative correlation.

Significant Relationship between Emotional Well-being and Academic Performance of the Students

Table 5. Emotional Well-being and Academic Performance Correlation

Variables	Significant
p-value	0.002
Correlation Coefficient	-0.492
Correlation Type	Low Negative Correlation

A significant correlation has been identified in the compelling study examining the correlation of peer pressure specifically in the emotional well-being and academic performance, as measured by General Weighted Average (GWA) grades. The analysis presents a correlation coefficient of -0.492, demonstrating a low negative correlation between the influence of peer pressure on emotional well-being and GWA grades. The p-value of this correlation is 0.002, which is significantly lower than the conventional threshold of 0.05. This low p-value proposes that the observed correlation is statistically significant, representing a strong indication against the null hypothesis and indicating that the relationship is unlikely to have happened by chance. The -0.492 negative correlation implies

that the higher levels of peer pressure are related to lower GWA grades. This observation suggests that students who experience significant peer pressure may struggle academically, possibly due to anxiety, stress, or distractions stemming from social dynamics. If the correlational coefficient indicator has a low score, it means there is a significant relationship between peer pressure in emotional well-being and academic performance.

The level of peer pressure in terms of social interaction and emotional well-being. The results show that the respondents' attitudes toward peer pressure and social influence are not strong enough to develop a disinterest in school-related work and other academic activities. According to the Influence-Compatibility Model, adolescents regulate their behaviors to align with those of their peers to strengthen their compatibility within their social circles, which may result in positive and negative behavioral consequences (Smith, 2020). However, the low mean score of the result suggests that the respondents give importance to their self-esteem rather than the desire to fit in, meaning the peer pressure to be socially accepted does not imply to them. (Korir et al., 2014). The result of peer pressure concerning emotional well-being implied a nuanced understanding of teenagers' social interactions. This means that the respondents have a positive perspective on peer pressure. Respondents are more likely to decline the idea that peer pressure overpowers them. They are aware of the outcome of peer pressure and know how to manage themselves. It will be supported by the study conducted by Kaila (2024), which concludes that a negative correlation was found between peer pressure and mental well-being, which means that as peer pressure increases, mental well-being tends to decrease. Additionally, the result supports Steinberg and Monahan (2007), who suggest that adolescents with an optimistic attitude toward peer influence are better equipped to face social influences efficiently (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007). This implies that the capacity to identify and handle peer pressure can lead to better emotional outcomes, as these adolescents are not merely passive recipients of social influence but active examples in their social environments.

Academic Performance of the Students. The general mean, as interpreted in the GWA data, indicates that the typical performance of respondents is above the standard threshold for academic achievement. This positive academic performance can be related to existing studies on the influence of peer pressure on outcomes. A study demonstrates that peer influence can positively and negatively affect academic performance. For example, Abderrahim (2016) pointed out that peer pressure can stimulate students to shine academically when surrounded by classmates who emphasize educational achievement. This aligns with the results, as a high average GWA score may imitate a group that supports each other in achieving academic success, thus nurturing an environment helpful to learning and achievement. Alternatively, negative peer pressure can significantly ruin academic performance. Neglecting to study for social life and activities or engaging in academic dishonesty because of peer influence can hinder academic development (Steinberg, 2008).

Relationship between social Interaction and academic performance. The connection between social Interaction and academic performance provides a significant perspective on how these two variables interact. The meaningful relationship displayed in the result implies that the observed correlation is statistically significant. This finding suggests the exact correlation observed due to random chance, thus reinforcing the credibility of the outcomes. The p-value results discard the null hypothesis, which states that there is no relationship between social interaction and academic performance. The consequence allows us to see that social Interaction does play a role in influencing academic results, deserving further study into how these interactions manifest in educational situations. Yedemie and Yidegi (2021) observed a substantial positive correlation between academic social Interaction and student achievement. Their study established that students who participate more with their classmates or friends tend to perform better academically, strengthening the idea that social interactions can help predict academic achievement. The meaningful results bridge the connection between social Interaction and academic performance, indicating that students' engagement with their peers may improve their learning outcomes (Yedemie & Yidegi, 2021).

Relationship between emotional well-being and academic performance. Analyzing the relationship between peer pressure and well-being with academic performance through General Weighted Average (GWA) grades stresses significant outcomes of the problems of these interactions. The results suggestively indicate a negative correlation between peer pressure regarding emotional well-being and academic performance. This may suggest that the higher levels of peer pressure are related to lower GWA grades, demonstrating an adverse potential effect of social influence on students' academic success. The p-value is less than the standard significance value, showing a strong indication against the null hypothesis, which implies no relationship between peer pressure and academic performance. This means that the observable correlation is unlikely to have occurred by chance. The low negative correlation coefficient interpreted a moderate negative relationship, explaining that

students may experience challenges in academic performance as peer pressure increases. A study stated a significant correlation between peer pressure and mental well-being among high school students, which means that increased peer pressure negatively affects students' emotional health and well-being (Cruz et al., 2021). This relates to the outcomes, indicating that when peer pressure arises, students may face a decline in their academic achievement and a negative influence on their emotional well-being. The correlation coefficient in the study emphasizes this relationship, describing that increased peer pressure is related to lower GWA grades, which may later result in emotional distress.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This investigation provided a more detailed examination of the manner in which contemporary adolescents navigate the frequently intricate landscape of academic demands, social connections, and peer pressure. The quiet fortitude that many young people possess was what caught my attention—they are not merely adhering to the crowd. Instead, they are making decisions that align with their values, establishing their own objectives, and thinking independently. It is reassuring to observe that a significant number of students possess the emotional resources to remain authentic in a time when conformity can seem to be the ultimate goal. Emotional intelligence was a significant factor in this situation. Students who were more capable of managing their emotions and were more aware of their emotions appeared to be better prepared to navigate peer situations, particularly those that were challenging. They were aware of when to decline, when to withdraw, and how to maintain their concentration on the things that were truly important to them, such as excelling in school. The research also served as a reminder that peer influence is not always detrimental. Friends can encourage one another to improve, remain motivated, and strive for greater success. However, it is a double-edged sword. Schoolwork may be adversely affected when friendships become sources of emotional tension. This indicates that students require a variety of forms of support, including academic, emotional, and social support. The message is unmistakable: it is equally crucial to assist students in developing into emotionally aware, self-assured individuals as it is to assist them in achieving high grades. School environments that prioritize emotional intelligence, compassion, and respect are more conducive to student success, not only in academics but also in practical life.

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are given below:

1. For students. Students are encouraged to build and keep friendships that support good habits and emotional well-being. Being part of peer groups that share their values and school goals can help them feel better emotionally and do well academically. Self-awareness and self-reliance must be nurtured to face the effects of negative peer pressure when it comes. When things do not go as planned, socially, academically or emotionally, do not hesitate to ask for help from your teacher, counselor, school heads, and parents.
2. For teachers. Teachers should have a sense of teaching by providing a friendly classroom environment where students feel emotionally and mentally safe against peer pressure. Daily lessons and activities teach them about self-esteem, self-awareness, and self-reliance to handle peer pressure positively.
3. For school administrators. School administrators should implement a learner-centered approach that prioritizes the well-being of the students, offering programs about peer relationships that impact emotional, social, and academic well-being. The guidance and counselor's office must be supported with its programs. A caring and inclusive school environment can help the students feel support and love for their future.
4. For future researchers. Deeper research is recommended to explore and discover the various effects of peer pressure concerning social Interaction, emotional well-being, and academic performance. Further investigation regarding relationships across diverse demographic groups, including gender, age, socioeconomic status, and school type, is highly recommended. Lastly, in current times, peer pressure in social media is a fascinating topic, and it is digital peer pressure.

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