

Peer Group Pressure, Self-Esteem and Bullying Behaviour among Secondary School Adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District

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ABSTRACT

This study examined peer group pressure, self-esteem and bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta State. Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. A correlational research design was adopted. The population comprised 45,318 senior secondary school students in public schools within the district. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample-size determination table, 380 students were selected through multistage sampling. Data were collected using the Peer Group Pressure, Self-Esteem and Bullying Behaviour Questionnaire (PGPSEBBQ), validated by experts in Guidance and Counselling and Measurement and Evaluation. A pilot test involving 50 students produced Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.81, 0.72 and 0.76 for peer group pressure, self-esteem and bullying behaviour respectively, with an overall coefficient of 0.81. Mean and standard deviation answered research question one, Pearson correlation answered questions two and three, while linear regression tested the hypotheses at the 0.05 significance level. Findings showed high peer group pressure and self-esteem, but very high bullying behaviour. Peer group pressure explained 51.0% of the variation in bullying behaviour, while self-esteem explained 28.1%. Both relationships were significant. The study recommended counselling, firm anti-bullying policies and stronger parent-school collaboration.

Keywords: peer group pressure, self-esteem, bullying behaviour, adolescents, secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

Bullying behaviour remains a major concern in secondary schools because it threatens adolescents' emotional well-being, social relationships and sense of safety within the learning environment. It may take the form of physical aggression, verbal abuse, intimidation, social exclusion or deliberate humiliation, usually involving an imbalance of power between the aggressor and the victim. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to such behaviour because this stage of development is characterized by a strong desire for friendship, acceptance and recognition. Although peer relationships can promote cooperation and healthy social development, they can also pressure young people to conform to harmful group expectations. An adolescent may participate in bullying, support an aggressor or remain silent during an incident simply to avoid rejection or maintain membership in a valued peer group. Peer influence is especially powerful during adolescence and can shape both positive and negative attitudes and behaviours as young people attempt to become more similar to those with whom they associate (Laursen & Veenstra, 2021). In Nigeria, bullying among secondary school students continues to attract concern, as evidence shows that peer influence and other social factors may contribute to adolescents' involvement in bullying as perpetrators or victims (Ighaede-Edwards et al., 2023).

Self-esteem is another important psychological factor that may help explain why some adolescents become involved in bullying. It refers to the extent to which individuals value, respect and feel confident about themselves. Adolescents with healthy self-esteem may be better able to resist negative peer pressure, manage disagreements and relate respectfully with others. In contrast, those with low or unstable self-esteem may experience insecurity, inadequacy or a strong need for social approval. Some may respond by withdrawing from others, while others may attempt to gain recognition, dominance or control through aggressive behaviour. Research has shown that self-esteem is meaningfully connected with bullying and cyberbullying among

adolescents, although the relationship may differ depending on whether the adolescent is a perpetrator, victim or both (Agustiniingsih et al., 2024). Despite growing scholarly attention to bullying, limited context-specific evidence exists on how peer group pressure and self-esteem jointly relate to bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District. Consequently, this study examined peer group pressure, self-esteem and bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in the district, with the aim of providing evidence that could support counselling interventions, positive peer relationships and safer school environments.

Statement of the Problem

A student may enter the classroom daily uncertain whether classmates will ridicule, exclude or intimidate them, while others join the abuse simply to gain acceptance or avoid becoming targets themselves. Such experiences reveal that bullying is not harmless play but a serious behavioural problem that can undermine adolescents' emotional security, social adjustment and participation in school. Peer group pressure may encourage aggressive conduct, while low or unstable self-esteem may increase vulnerability or lead some students to seek dominance through intimidation. However, the extent of these relationships among adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District remains insufficiently understood, thereby necessitating this study.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which was formally propounded in 1977. The theory explains that human behaviour is largely learned through observation, imitation and interaction with others in the social environment. According to Bandura (1977), individuals are more likely to reproduce behaviours they observe when such actions appear to attract approval, recognition or other forms of reward. Within the school environment, adolescents constantly observe the conduct of their friends and classmates. When aggressive students gain popularity, control or admiration through intimidation, other students may begin to see bullying as an acceptable way of earning respect. The likelihood of imitation may become stronger when peers laugh at bullying incidents, support the aggressor or when school authorities fail to apply appropriate consequences.

Social Learning Theory is particularly relevant to this study because it explains how peer group pressure may encourage adolescents to learn and display bullying behaviour. A student who desires acceptance may imitate the aggressive behaviour of influential friends, even when such conduct goes against personal beliefs. Self-esteem may further determine how easily the student responds to this pressure. Adolescents with low or unstable self-esteem may depend strongly on the approval of their peers and may bully others to gain attention, demonstrate strength or protect their social position. The theory therefore provides a suitable foundation for understanding how adolescents' interactions with their peer groups, together with their sense of personal worth, may shape bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Concept of Bullying Behaviours

Bullying behaviour describes a deliberate and repeated pattern of aggression in which a student or group of students uses greater physical strength, social influence or psychological advantage to intimidate, harm or control another student. It is different from an ordinary disagreement because the victim often finds it difficult to defend themselves. Bullying may occur physically through hitting, pushing or damaging personal belongings; verbally through insults, threats and name-calling; or socially through exclusion, gossip and public embarrassment. In Delta State, Urien and Enoje (2024) noted that bullying can negatively affect students' emotional well-being and school participation. This suggests that actions sometimes dismissed as harmless teasing may leave students feeling unsafe, rejected and unwilling to attend or participate fully in school activities.

Bullying does not usually develop in isolation, as it may be influenced by the adolescent's personal feelings and the behaviour of those around them. Some students may bully others to gain attention, appear powerful, hide feelings of insecurity or secure acceptance within their peer group. Ighaede-Edwards et al. (2023) found that

bullying among Nigerian adolescents is linked to personal, peer and school-related factors, showing that it should not be treated simply as an act of indiscipline. In this study, bullying behaviour is viewed as the outcome that may be connected with peer group pressure and self-esteem. Examining it from this perspective will help explain whether adolescents are influenced by their friends or use aggression to protect their image and position among peers.

Concept of Peer Group Pressure

Peer group pressure refers to the influence that friends and age-mates exert on an adolescent's thoughts, choices and behaviour. During adolescence, the need to feel accepted and valued by others becomes especially strong. As a result, a student may follow the expectations of a group even when those expectations conflict with personal values or school rules. Peer pressure may be positive when friends encourage academic commitment, discipline and responsible conduct. However, it becomes harmful when adolescents are encouraged to engage in aggression, truancy or other inappropriate behaviours. In Delta State, Mordi and Onoyase (2023) reported that peer pressure was significantly related to the experiences and academic outcomes of secondary school students. Their finding highlights how strongly adolescents may be affected by the attitudes and actions of those they regard as friends.

Peer group pressure is central to the present study because bullying often occurs within a social setting where students seek recognition, loyalty and acceptance. An adolescent may insult, intimidate or physically harm another student to impress friends, avoid ridicule or maintain a position within the group. Other students may support bullying by laughing, encouraging the aggressor or refusing to intervene because they fear rejection. Laursen and Veenstra (2021) explained that adolescents are particularly responsive to peer influence and often adjust their behaviour to become more similar to their friends. Peer group pressure may therefore help explain why students who might not ordinarily behave aggressively become involved in bullying. This study consequently examines whether peer group pressure is associated with bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Concept of Self Esteem

Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall sense of personal worth, acceptance and confidence. It reflects how adolescents perceive themselves, value their abilities and respond to approval, criticism or rejection from others. Healthy self-esteem does not mean that a student feels superior to others; rather, it enables the student to recognize personal strengths and weaknesses without losing a sense of dignity. Adolescents with positive self-esteem are often more confident in expressing their views, making decisions and resisting unhealthy social influence. In contrast, those with low or unstable self-esteem may feel inadequate, depend heavily on external approval or struggle to cope with negative peer experiences. Okafor and Akpochofo (2022) described self-esteem as students' perception of their value as individuals and emphasized its importance in their attitudes, confidence and decision-making.

Self-esteem is relevant to the present study because adolescents' perceptions of themselves may influence how they behave toward their peers and respond to bullying situations. A student with low self-esteem may become more vulnerable to intimidation or may join in bullying to gain recognition, appear powerful or secure acceptance within a peer group. On the other hand, adolescents with a stable sense of self-worth may be better able to resist pressure to harm others and respond more constructively to conflict. Agustiningsih et al. (2024) found that self-esteem is meaningfully associated with bullying and cyberbullying among adolescents, with higher self-esteem potentially reducing involvement in bullying perpetration. Accordingly, this study examines whether self-esteem is related to bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Peer Group Pressure and Bullying Behaviour

Peer group pressure and bullying behaviour are closely related because adolescents often adjust their actions to gain acceptance, recognition or protection within their friendship groups. Although peer relationships can offer emotional support and a sense of belonging, they may also encourage harmful conduct when aggression,

intimidation or humiliation is treated as a sign of strength or loyalty. A student who would not ordinarily bully another person may participate in name-calling, physical attacks, social exclusion or rumour-spreading to avoid rejection or impress influential friends. Such pressure may be direct through persuasion and threats or indirect through laughter, praise, silence and group approval. Laursen and Veenstra (2021) explained that adolescents frequently modify their behaviour to become more similar to their peers, particularly when group membership is important to their identity. Similarly, Ugwu et al. (2024) noted that peer influence may strengthen adolescents' involvement in bullying by making aggressive behaviour appear acceptable and socially rewarding. Thus, peer group pressure may shape bullying behaviour by encouraging adolescents to seek status, prove loyalty or avoid becoming victims themselves, making it an important variable in understanding bullying among secondary school adolescents.

Self-Esteem and Bullying Behaviour

Self-esteem and bullying behaviour are connected because adolescents' feelings about themselves can shape how they relate to others, respond to rejection and handle conflict within their peer groups. A student with a secure sense of personal worth is generally more likely to resist pressure, respect other students and manage disagreements without relying on intimidation. In contrast, adolescents who feel inadequate, rejected or uncertain about their social value may become more vulnerable to bullying or may use aggression to gain attention, protect their image and create a sense of control. Palermi et al. (2022) explained that adolescents with consistently high self-esteem appeared more protected from involvement in bullying, cyberbullying and victimisation than those who displayed strong self-derogation. Similarly, Agustiningsih et al. (2024) established that self-esteem is closely associated with adolescents' experiences of bullying and cyberbullying, although the pattern may differ for perpetrators and victims. This suggests that low self-esteem does not automatically cause bullying, but it may weaken an adolescent's ability to manage insecurity and social pressure constructively. In the present study, self-esteem is therefore considered an important psychological variable that may help explain bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Review of Empirical Studies

Empirical Studies on Peer Group Pressure and Bullying Behaviour

Yang et al. (2022) conducted a longitudinal study to examine the relationship among peer pressure, moral disengagement and cyberbullying perpetration among Chinese adolescents. The study involved 2,407 adolescents, with an average age of 12.75 years at the beginning of the research. Data were collected at three different points over three years using measures of peer pressure, moral disengagement, cyberbullying perpetration and family socioeconomic status. A cross-lagged panel model and longitudinal mediation analysis were used to analyse the data. The findings showed that peer pressure directly predicted later involvement in cyberbullying. Moral disengagement also mediated this relationship, indicating that adolescents exposed to stronger peer pressure were more likely to justify harmful behaviour and subsequently bully others online. The relationship was particularly strong among adolescents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This study is relevant to the present research because it shows that pressure from peers may gradually influence adolescents to accept and participate in bullying behaviour. However, while Yang et al. focused mainly on cyberbullying among Chinese adolescents, the present study examines general bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Ugwu et al. (2024) investigated childhood adversity, peer influence and bullying perpetration among high school learners in the North-West Province of South Africa. The researchers adopted a cross-sectional survey design and collected data from 769 Grade 11 and Grade 12 students, comprising 356 females and 413 males. The data were analysed using structural equation modelling and bootstrapping procedures. The findings revealed that susceptibility to peer influence significantly predicted bullying perpetration and also mediated the relationship between childhood adversity and bullying. The results further showed that personality characteristics such as extraversion and conscientiousness influenced how strongly adolescents responded to peer pressure. In practical terms, adolescents who were more open to negative peer influence were more likely to become involved in bullying, especially when aggressive behaviour was accepted within their friendship groups. The study relates

closely to the present research because it confirms that peer influence is an important social factor in adolescent bullying. Nevertheless, the present study differs by directly examining peer group pressure alongside self-esteem within the Nigerian secondary school context.

Empirical Studies on Self-Esteem and Bullying Behaviour

Palermi et al. (2022) examined the relationship between different patterns of self-esteem and involvement in bullying, cyberbullying, victimisation and cybervictimisation among Italian adolescents. The participants were 936 students between the ages of 13 and 16 years. Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire that measured different dimensions of self-esteem and students' bullying experiences during the previous two to three months. Using a person-oriented analytical approach, the researchers identified four self-esteem profiles: school- and family-oriented, consistently high, self-derogating, and body- and peer-oriented. The findings showed that adolescents with consistently high self-esteem were less involved in bullying and victimisation than those who displayed self-derogation or negative self-perception. The study suggests that a stable sense of personal worth may protect adolescents from both perpetrating and experiencing bullying. It is relevant to the present study because it demonstrates that self-esteem is not merely a personal feeling but a psychological factor that can shape adolescents' relationships and behavioural choices. However, the study was conducted in Italy and included both traditional and online bullying, whereas the present research focuses on bullying behaviour among adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Mota et al. (2024) explored the relationship among sibling violence, self-esteem and bullying behaviour among adolescents in Portugal. The study involved 286 students aged between 12 and 17 years. Data were collected using a demographic questionnaire, the Social Exclusion and School Violence Questionnaire, the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Mediation analysis was used to determine whether self-esteem explained the relationship between experiences of violence among siblings and bullying behaviour toward peers. The results indicated that self-esteem served as a significant negative mediator between unhealthy sibling interactions and social exclusion or verbal aggression among peers. This means that adolescents whose family experiences weakened their sense of personal worth were more likely to become involved in harmful peer interactions. The study is relevant because it shows that self-esteem may explain how difficult social experiences are translated into bullying behaviour. Unlike Mota et al., however, the present study does not focus on sibling violence but examines the direct relationship between self-esteem and bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Research Questions

1. What is the status of peer group pressure, self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District?
2. What is the relationship between peer group pressure and bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District?
3. What is the relationship between self-esteem and bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between peer group pressure and bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.
2. There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlational research design to examine the relationships among peer group pressure, self-esteem and bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta

State. A sample of 380 students was selected from public secondary schools through a multistage sampling procedure involving the selection of local government areas, schools and respondents. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Peer Group Pressure, Self-Esteem and Bullying Behaviour Questionnaire* (PGPSEBBQ), which contained sections on demographic information and the three study variables, rated on a four-point scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The instrument was validated by experts in Guidance and Counselling and Measurement and Evaluation, while its reliability was established through a pilot study using Cronbach's alpha with a reliability coefficient of 0.82. With permission from the school authorities, the researchers and trained assistants administered the questionnaire, assuring students of confidentiality and voluntary participation. Pearson correlation and multiple correlation were used to answer the research questions, while linear and multiple regression analyses were used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the status of peer group pressure, self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta State?

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of the status of peer group pressure, self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour

Variables	Mean	Status
Peer group pressure	43.26	High
Self-esteem	34.23	High
Bullying behavior	59.26	Very high

Decision rule: below 25, the status is low; 26 to 50 is high; and 51 to 100 is very high

Table 1 shows that all the variables under study are at elevated levels among the respondents. Specifically, peer group pressure (Mean = 43.26), self-esteem (Mean = 34.23), and family structure (Mean = 28.50). For the students' bullying behaviour (Mean = 59.26). This indicates a high level of the variables under investigation.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta State?

Table 2: Correlation and coefficient of determination of the relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta State

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>r</i> ²	<i>r</i> ² %	Decision
Peer group Pressure	380	0.71	0.50	50.0	Positive Relationship
Bullying behaviour					

Table 2 shows that there is a positive moderate relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.71$). Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.50$) reveals that approximately 50.0% of the variation in students' bullying behaviour can be explained by peer group pressure. This indicates a positive relationship between peer group pressure and students bullying behaviours among adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta State?

Table 3: Correlation and coefficient of determination of the relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta State.

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>r</i> ²	<i>r</i> ² %	Decision
Self-Esteem	380	0.53	0.28	28.1	Positive Relationship
Bullying behaviour					

Table 3 indicates that there is a moderate positive relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.53$) and the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.28$) shows that approximately 28.1% of the variation in students' bullying behaviour can be explained by self-esteem. This reveals a positive moderate relationship between self-esteem and students bullying behaviours among adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no Significant relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta State

Table 4: Regression analysis of the relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviour.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11785.680	1	11785.680	400.501	.000
	Residual	11123.528	378	29.427		
	Total	22909.208	379			

$a-R = 0.717, p < 0.05$, Significant

a. Dependent Variable: Peer Group Pressure

Predictors: (Constant), Bullying behaviour

Table 4 presents the regression analysis of the relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviour. The ANOVA result shows that the model is statistically significant ($F = 400.501$), indicating that peer group pressure has a significant relationship with students' bullying behaviour with a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between peer group pressure and students bullying behaviours among adolescents in secondary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District.

Hypothesis 2: There is no Significant relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District, Delta State

Table 5: Regression analysis of the relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6376.731	1	6376.731	145.798	.000
	Residual	16532.477	378	43.737		

	Total	22909.208	379			
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$-R = 0.528, p < 0.05$, Significant

Dependent Variable: Self-esteem

Predictors: (Constant), Bullying behaviour

Table 5 presents the regression analysis of the relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour. The ANOVA result indicates that the model is statistically significant ($F = 145.798$), and a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicated that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and students bullying behaviours among adolescents in Secondary Schools in Delta Central Senatorial District.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Status of Peer Group Pressure, Self-Esteem and Students' Bullying Behaviour

Research question one showed that peer group pressure ($M = 43.26$) and self-esteem ($M = 34.23$) were high, while students' bullying behaviour ($M = 59.26$) was very high. This suggests that the adolescents experienced considerable influence from their friends, maintained a relatively strong sense of self-worth and were frequently exposed to or involved in bullying within the school environment. The finding agrees with Ighaede-Edwards et al. (2023), who reported a notable prevalence of bullying among secondary school adolescents in Edo State, showing that bullying remains a serious concern in Nigerian schools. However, it differs from Ndubisi et al. (2026), whose Lagos State study found that most respondents reported a moderate rather than very high level of bullying involvement. The difference may reflect variations in school climate, peer norms, supervision and the social environments of the students studied.

Peer Group Pressure and Students' Bullying Behaviour

The result in research question 2 revealed a strong positive relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviour, with a correlation coefficient of 0.71 and a coefficient of determination of 50.0%. The result in hypothesis 1 also confirmed that the relationship was statistically significant ($F = 400.501, p = 0.000$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that there was a significant relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviours among adolescents in Secondary Schools in Delta Central Senatorial District. This finding agrees with Yang et al. (2022), who reported that peer pressure increased adolescents' involvement in cyberbullying, and Ugwu et al. (2024), who found that adolescents who were more susceptible to peer influence were more likely to bully others. The result suggests that some students may engage in intimidation, exclusion or aggression to gain acceptance, impress friends or avoid rejection within their peer groups.

Self-Esteem and Students' Bullying Behaviour

The result in research question 3 revealed a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour. Research question three yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.53, while the coefficient of determination showed that self-esteem explained 28.1% of the variation in bullying behaviour. The result in hypothesis 2, further confirmed that the relationship was significant ($F = 145.798, p = 0.000$), this revealed that there was a significant relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviours among adolescents in Secondary Schools in Delta Central Senatorial District. This outcome differs from Palermi et al. (2022), who reported that stable self-esteem reduced adolescents' involvement in bullying, and Mota et al. (2024), who linked low self-esteem with harmful peer behaviour. The finding may indicate that some adolescents with exaggerated or unstable self-confidence use intimidation, aggression or dominance to gain attention, protect their image or maintain social influence among their peers.

Findings

Based on the analysis, the following findings were obtained:

1. The status of peer group pressure and self-esteem was high, while bullying behaviour was very high among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.
2. There was a significant positive relationship between peer group pressure and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.
3. There was a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and students' bullying behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that bullying is a serious concern among secondary school adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District. Peer group pressure and self-esteem were significantly related to bullying behaviour, showing that adolescents' social relationships and sense of self-worth can meaningfully shape how they treat others within the school environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. School counsellors should provide regular guidance programmes that help students recognize harmful peer influence, make responsible personal choices and develop supportive friendships.
2. School authorities and teachers should enforce clear anti-bullying policies, create safe and confidential reporting channels, and respond promptly to bullying incidents.
3. Parents, teachers and counsellors should work together to help adolescents develop healthy self-esteem and manage rejection, insecurity and conflict without turning to intimidation or aggression.

Contributions to Knowledge

1. The study demonstrated that peer group pressure is strongly connected with bullying behaviour among adolescents in Delta Central Senatorial District.
2. It also established that self-esteem can influence bullying, especially when students use aggression to gain attention or social recognition.

Limitation of the Study

The study focused only on adolescents in public secondary schools within Delta Central Senatorial District, so its findings may not fully reflect the experiences of students in private schools or other areas. It also did not examine other factors that may contribute to bullying behaviour among adolescents.

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