

Correlates of Suicidal Ideation among Secondary School Students in Ibadan, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Suicide ideation among students in all various institution of learning has become a pressing public health and social concern in the society, with its adverse effects spreading across academic, psychological and social dimensions. In particular, secondary school students are increasingly exposed to environments and pressures that make them vulnerable to suicide ideation. These include substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure. Therefore, this study examines substance abuse, parental negligence, and peer pressure as correlates of suicide ideation among secondary school students.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design of correlational type. A total of 250 secondary school students were selected from 10 schools in Ibadan, Oyo State using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaires consisting of demographic information and sections which are scales on suicide ideation, substance abuse, parental negligence, and peer pressure. Three research questions were answered using Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis at 0.05 level of significant.

The findings of the study showed that peer influence substance abuse; $r(248)=.522, p<0.05$), peer pressure; $r(248)=.476, p<0.05$) and parental negligence; $r(248)=.461, p<0.05$) had significant relationship to suicide ideation among secondary school students. The independent variables jointly accounted for 46.9% variance indicating suicide ideation among students. Also, substance abuse $\beta = 0.37$, at $t = 5.83, p<0.05$, peer pressure $\beta = 0.31, t = 5.29, p<0.05$ and parental negligence $\beta = 0.29, t = 5.00, p<0.05$ had significant relative contribution to suicide ideation among secondary school students.

It was recommended among others that parents should build emotional bonds with their children and maintain open communication while Government agencies and educational stakeholders should organize community-based sensitization on suicide ideation among adolescents.

Key Words: Suicide Ideation, Substance Abuse, Parental Negligence, Peer Pressure

INTRODUCTION

Suicide is an urgent international societal health issue which is the intentional self-damage that results in death. The phenomenon has a continuum of suicidal behaviors that include suicidal ideation (thoughts about, consideration of, or intend to commit suicide), suicide plans, suicide attempts, and suicide. World Health Organization recognizes suicide as one of the leading causes of deaths in the world and particularly amongst adolescents and young adults and emphasizes the need to apply evidence-based prevention measures. Suicide is still significantly stigmatized in many societies despite the increased awareness and hence making it difficult to report and prevent it as well.

Robert (2025) explained that suicide is an activity that leads to lethal consequences, and is committed by a person that seeks to acquire something desired, usually in reaction to psychological suffering or what seems like insurmountable issues. Such change is done by committing suicide. In this perspective, it is assumed that people who consider suicide often have a feeling of despair or helplessness about their current situation. They might see no other way of changing their circumstances than the extremest measure which is killing themselves.

Suicidal attempters or suicide offenders could be so because they think death will be the only relief of mental suffering, emotional pain, or a supposed unchangeable life circumstance. This can be caused by depression, trauma or even by deep loneliness or rejection whereby the person feels that death is the only solution that can come in to relieve the suffering. Suicide is not always an impulsive or irrational behavior in this perspective but it is a choice taken after the person has already decided that there is no possible way of getting out of his or her sufferings. They might consequently feel that death will put an end to their emotional or mental suffering and deliver the sought results of rest, relief, or the end of agitation (Zavrou *et al.*, 2023). There are those who commit suicide to end issues that they feel are impossible to solve or to avoid life situations they consider miserable or to prevent what they perceive as imminent disaster as they are unable to withstand the situation of that kind (Sotillos, 2023). Suicide is fatal; suicidal victims who succeed attempt to commit suicide are likely to suffer serious injuries like fractured, brain damage, organ failure or could develop depression and other mental conditions, thus impacting not only themselves but also the health of their community, family, and their close acquaintances.

Suicide is the cause of death of hundreds of thousands of people per year on a global scale. Suitably, over 700,000 people die annually in suicide, so it is a significant cause of global death, especially in young people and young adults (WHO, 2025). Suicide is becoming a major cause of deaths among the youths in the African continent aged 15 to 29 years where it ranks as second leading cause of death among these individuals. The rates differ greatly across the countries still being very high because of the combination of social, economic, and health system issues. According to the recent data, Nigeria has a greater suicide burden compared to the global averages with an age-standardized suicide rate being significantly higher than the global average (International Journal of Medicine and Health Development, 2025). Some of the reports indicate that the rate is quite high in Nigeria, and the nation is among the countries with high suicide rates (Lovero *et al.*, 2023). According to meta-analytic estimates, the overall prevalence of suicide thought in Nigeria is estimated to be 9.7 percent, and proportions of trying and attempts are also visible (Oluwabiyi *et al.*, 2024). Although there are limited official state-level data, some research studies carried in the region indicate that suicidal ideation and attempts are occurring among youths and students in Oyo State. Studies (Owokotomo, 2024; Gbadegesin and Ikwuyatum, 2024) among adolescents and tertiary students in Ibadan have recorded high rates of suicidal ideation and attempts, which highlights the topicality of the question locally.

Suicidal behaviors can be categorized as ideation which is the continuing thoughts of how to end one life to planning, attempting and commission of suicide. Suicidal ideation is a health danger that is the first sign of impending suicide and a requirement of many suicide attempts. It can take the form of someone constantly thinking about death or having an obsession about hurting oneself or making plans about how they will finish themselves off. In various settings, ideation can often lead to more serious acts and is affected by both mental distress and social misfortune and environmental stimuli (Chen *et al.*, 2023; Akintayo, 2025).

Suicidal behaviors occur in different forms: suicidal ideation, constant thoughts about inflicting self-harm or killing oneself without a particular plan; suicide planning, devising a way or method of inflicting self-harm; suicide attempt, potential yet actual self-inflicted harm and death with the intention of ending life; and suicide, actual self-inflicted death with the intention of ending life. These symptoms can vary in individuals and age, and are normally coupled by withdrawal, mood swings, substance abuse, and disability in school or work. Suicide brings about catastrophic effects that are beyond personal level. When someone commits suicide or attempts it, their family might still have the experience of a deep sense of grief, guilt and psychological trauma. Living in the suicidal condition of a family member is associated with an increased emotional distress and suicidal ideas among other family members (Tasfi and Mostofa, 2024). At the community and societal level, suicide is a cause of emotional distress among the peers, lost productive lives, economic costs and an increased burden on the health and social services. The spillover effects include stigmatization of mental illness, broken social connections and eventual emotional aftermath of bereaved persons.

The idea of suicide is complicated by the interaction of biological, psychological, social and environmental factors. Mental health problems like depression, anxiety, and other psychiatric illnesses are well documented risk factors, which are closely linked to suicidal ideation and suicidal behaviors. Vulnerability is increased by family dysfunction which includes low parental support, conflict and family instability. Psychological distress is caused by socio-economic stress like poverty, joblessness, academic stress and food insecurity. Risk is

increased by exposure to trauma such as abuse, bullying, and a bad childhood. Drug abuse especially psychoactive drugs is associated with impulse control, mood swings, and increased suicidal behavior, peer relations that include rejection, isolation, and social pressure affecting emotional health. These risk factors often co-occur, compounding the likelihood of suicidal ideation (Orji *et al.*, 2025). The current study will be evaluating the correlations between three independent variables (substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure) and suicidal ideation among a sample population in secondary schools.

Substance abuse according to Akintayo (2025) is a chronic health and social issue, which is defined by an abusive or dangerous use of psychoactive substances like alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, prescription drugs and other illicit substances. Drug prescription is done in a medical or therapeutic context, which makes them potentially dangerous when used in other situations beyond the context of legitimate use (Moëll and Sand Aronsson, 2025). Traditionally, the concept of substance abuse has meant the use of any drug, which is forbidden by the law, regardless of whether it caused any harm or not, therefore, the frequent use of these drugs may be considered as abuse. Suicidal ideation has been strongly linked to substance abuse including abuse of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. Substances make it impossible to use the brain normally resulting in poor decision-making processes, emotional regulation and high levels of impulsivity. Teenagers can use substances as a way of coping with life stressors or student stress and so on, a tactic that often adds to the despair and hopelessness. Neurochemical changes that occur as a result of substance use disrupt emotional balance, exacerbate depression, and worsen judgment, increasing the risk that people will entertain suicidal ideation. Additionally, treatment with substance is commonly comorbid with other mental-health issues, e.g., anxiety and depression, forming a vicious cycle, which increases the risk of suicide-ideation. Stress is a major cause of substance use among adolescents due to academic pressure, family conflict, or peer conflict. Even though these drugs can provide short-term relief, they usually exacerbate the mental-health course of the person, thus increasing the risk of suicide-ideation (Horoşan *et al.*, 2024). The use of substances changes brain chemistry and emotional regulation and creates hopelessness, depression, and increased likelihood of suicidal ideation (Kumar and Saini, 2025). Users are also likely to develop more social isolation, cognitive inconsistencies and poor judgment that will worsen psychological disorders.

Parental negligence refers to a lack of appropriate parental care, influence and attention. It is defined by a deficiency of concentration, care, and parental supervision and is a severe impact on the psychological well-being of teenagers. Teenagers who experience inconsistent parenting especially parental negligence often complain of being abandoned, reduced self-esteem, and decreased self-worth (Ofodile *et al.*, 2025). Without the parental involvement, adolescents have a higher chance of developing depression, anxiety, and other mental-health complications that foretell suicidal ideation (Oladunmoye, 2025). Furthermore, communication and guidance is lacking, leaving the adolescents without the necessary coping skills to further jeopardize their susceptibility. The role of the involvement of parents is very crucial in determining the emotional and psychological health of the adolescents. On the other hand, parental neglect, in the form of emotional inaccessibility, lack of proper supervision and not giving attention to the emotional or physical needs of a child has been found to pose a risk of suicidal thoughts. Young people who become victims of this negligence usually have low self-esteem and negative mental-health outcomes (Ofodile *et al.*, 2025, Akintayo, 2025) which are the main reasons of suicidal ideations. Lack of parental support may give rise to a sense of being abandoned and worthless. Ortiz-Jiménez *et al.* (2024) stressed that children brought up in negligent homes are more likely to develop mood disorders, anxiety, and even suicidal emotions that can be aggravated in adolescence when identity formation and peer navigation processes take center stage. Divorce and separation of parents often shatter the support network exposing the students to emotional turmoil, lack of parental oversight, poor economic situation and undermined guidance (Akintayo *et al.*, 2026). Parent-children communication is a crucial barrier to suicide ideation that can be limited to address the issue of neglect which usually leads to communication failures that deny adolescents the opportunity to seek help when they need it the most.

Peer pressure is an indirect or direct pressure that is placed by peers- people with similar interests, experiences or social status. The people of a peer group may influence what a person believes, values, religion, and how he/she behaves (Oyekola *et al.*, 2025). An organization or individual can promote a common attitude, values or behavior. The topic of peer influence has been agreed upon as a significant factor in the development of suicidal thought, especially in adolescents (Adindu *et al.*, 2024). Peer pressure is a strong force in adolescence that may have severe effects on the mental state, either worsening or alleviating the depressive symptoms, anxiety, and

suicidal ideation. Peer groups help in the decision-making process of adolescents, including the decision to participate in risky activities such as substance abuse or self-harm. Studies (Martínez *et al.*, 2023; Mwiinga, 2025) have also demonstrated that adolescents can be influenced by their peers to imitate their behaviors such as substance abuse, bullying and other vices, thus exposing them to the risk of committing suicide. Negative peer pressure, which is a pressure to engage in high-risk behaviors that include substance abuse or self-harm, increases the likelihood of suicidal thoughts substantially. During the teenage, youths tend to engage in social comparisons, which may result in incompetence, isolation, and psychological lamentation. Peer pressure in its most severe form of bullying is a perfectly documented risk factor to suicidal ideation. Students who have been victimized have had negative self-perceptions internalized and they are set on a downward path of depression and isolation. Although these effects can be mitigated in a positive peer interaction setting, in high-stress settings, negative influences prevail. A child needs love, care and direction. Without proper parental care, the child will have a desperate life full of doubt. This negligence forces the adolescent to find comfort in peer groups but these groups are not necessarily prudent and good. There is a possibility that the peers could be uninformed, hostile or drug users. Under such conditions, the teenager can be directed into substance abuse which is culminated into being emotionally numb to life. After a break in the substance habits, there can be a point of realization, disillusionment, and emptiness. A sense of helplessness and hopelessness prevails upon the adolescent, leading to suicidal ideation.

There are still significant evidence gaps despite the emerging evidence that discusses suicidal behaviours in Nigeria. The current literature mainly focuses on adults and tertiary level students, and there is little empirical evidence that explores population on secondary school in Ibadan and its environs. As a result, the gap in information that defines the position of substance abuse, parental negligence, and peer pressure as predictors of suicidal ideation in this group of respondents persists. In addition, the previous studies often overlook the concomitant effect of family and other extended social forces on the suicidal ideation of adolescents in Oyo State. These deficiencies highlight the need to conduct intensive, context-specific studies to evaluate the relationships between substance use, neglect, and peer influence on suicidal ideation among secondary school students in Ibadan, which will provide the evidence to be used in informing prevention and intervention policies. Based on this, the present research has focused on Substance Abuse, Parental Negligence and Peer Pressure as Correlates of Suicidal Ideation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine substance abuse, parental negligence, and peer pressure as correlates of suicide ideation among secondary school students. Specifically, the study intends to:

- i. examine the relationship between substance abuse, parental negligence, peer pressure and suicidal ideation among secondary school students
- ii. determine the joint contribution of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to suicidal ideation among secondary school students
- iii. determine the relative contribution of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to suicidal ideation among secondary school students

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study

1. What is the relationship between substance abuse, parental negligence, peer pressure and suicidal ideation among secondary school students?
2. What is the joint contribution of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to suicidal ideation among secondary school students?
3. What is the relative contribution of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to suicidal ideation among secondary school students?

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design of correlational type. This is suitable because the researcher does not have direct control over independent variables. Inferences about relations among variables are made without direct interaction with independent variables and dependent variable (Akintayo and Osundiran, 2024). The population for this study comprises of all secondary schools' students in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of two hundred and fifty (250) students were selected as the true representative of the population. The respondents from the population were selected using the multi stage sampling technique. Simple random technique was first used to select three (3) Local Government Areas out of the eleven Local Government Areas in Ibadan, Oyo State. Purposive sampling was used to select ten (10) schools from the selected Local Government Areas due to the accessibility of the researcher to collect data from the students as at the time of data collection and simple random sampling was used to select 25 students in the junior and senior classes in each of the schools as the respondents of the study.

Instrumentation

The study made use of a questionnaire titled "Substance abuse, parental negligence, and peer pressure as correlates of suicide ideation among secondary school students" to elicit desired information from the respondents. The questionnaire designed is divided into five sections (A, B, C, D and E). Section A collects information on the socio-demographic of the respondents like gender, age, class and school.

Suicide Ideation Scale

The suicide ideation was scale adapted from the Suicide Ideation Scale for Young Adolescents developed by Chang and Chang (2016). It was used to measure the degree of suicide ideation among the respondents. It consists of 10 items that elicits responses from the respondents with options from Strongly Agree = 4 to Strongly Disagree = 1 using a four point Likert format. Higher score indicates higher level of suicide ideation. Two sample items are: "I have experienced persistent thoughts about ending my life" and "I feel an overwhelming sense of despair that affects my daily life". The scale was pilot tested to ensure it is reliable for use with a coefficient of 0.92.

Substance Abuse Scale

The substance abuse scale adapted from the MMPI-2 scale for college students developed by Svanum, *et al.* (1994), was used to measure the degree of substance abuse among the respondents. It consists of 10 items that elicits responses from the respondents with options from Strongly Agree = 4 to Strongly Disagree = 1 using a four point Likert format. Higher score indicates higher level of substance abuse. Two sample items are: "I have experienced negative consequences because of my substance use" and "I use substances even when I know it may harm me". A pilot study was carried out to revalidate the scale and a reliability coefficient of 0.76 was recorded.

Peer Pressure Scale

The peer pressure scale adapted from the multidimensionality of peer pressure in adolescence developed by Clasen and Brown (1985), was used to measure the degree of peer pressure on the respondents. It consists of 10 items that elicits responses from the respondents with options from Strongly Agree = 4 to Strongly Disagree = 1 using a four point Likert format. Higher score indicates higher level of peer pressure. Two sample items are: "My friends often push me to go against my personal values" and "My peers encourage me to try substances like alcohol or drugs". The scale was revalidated through a pilot study and a coefficient value of 0.79 was reported.

Parental Negligence Scale

The parental negligence scale was adapted from Kausar and Jan (2025). It was used to measure the degree of parental negligence on the respondents. It consists of 10 items that elicit responses from the respondents with options from Strongly Agree = 4 to Strongly Disagree = 1 using a four-point Likert format. Higher score indicates higher level of parental negligence. Two sample items are: “I feel that my parents are not emotionally available when I need them” and “My parents are unaware of my daily activities or interests”. A pilot study was carried out to ensure the fitness of the scale for reliability and a value of 0.84 was reported.

The data for the study was collected through the administration of questionnaire to the students in the selected schools. All the copies of questionnaire distributed to the respondents were collected after completion. The data collected were analyzed using the descriptive statistics such as percentages, and mean score. Inferential statistics of correlation and multiple regressions were also adopted to analyze the research questions.

RESULT

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demographic Characteristics			N = 250	
			Frequency	Percent%
Local Government and Schools	Ibadan North	Islamic High School, Basorun	25	10.0
		St. Louis Grammar School	25	10.0
		Basorun Ojoo High School	25	10.0
		St. Patrick Grammar School	25	10.0
	Akinyele	Ajibode Grammar School	25	10.0
		Army Day Secondary School	25	10.0
		Orogun Grammar School	25	10.0
	Egbeda	Bishop Phillips Academy	25	10.0
		Community High School, Isebo	25	10.0
		Community High Sch, Ajagba	25	10.0
Gender	Male	112	44.8	
	Female	138	55.2	
Age	12–14 years	67	26.8	
	15–17 years	177	67.2	
	18 years and above	6	6.0	
Class	JSS3	63	25.2	
	SSS1	82	32.8	
	SSS2	98	39.2	

	SSS3	7	2.8
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Source: Field Survey, 2025

The table above shows the even distribution of respondents from each school in the selected Local Government Areas of Ibadan Oyo State. The frequency shows that four schools were selected in Ibadan North Local Government which has 40% of the respondents, while three schools were selected in Akinyele Local Government with 30% of the respondents and three schools were selected in Egbeda Local Government which also makes up 30% of the respondents for the study. The gender distribution of respondents shows that a slightly higher number of females (138, 55.2%) participated in the study compared to males (112, 44.8%). This indicates a fair representation of both genders, with a slight female predominance. The majority of the respondents fall within the 15–17 years age group (168, 67.2%), followed by those aged 12–14 years (67, 26.8%), while only a small portion were 18 years and above (15, 6.0%). This reflects a typical age distribution in secondary school populations, with most students in their mid-teen years. The gender distribution of respondents by class shows that 25.2% of the respondents were in JSS3, 32.8% were in SS1, the respondents from SS2 were 39.2%, while 2.8% of the respondents were in SS3 and none respondents were from JSS1 and JSS2.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between the independent variables (substance abuse, parental negligence, peer pressure) and the dependent variable (suicidal ideation) among secondary school students?

Table 2: Summary of correlation matrix showing the relationship between the study variables

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r			
Suicide ideation	250	27.30	5.65	248	1.000			
Substance abuse		28.55	5.32		.522	1.000		
Peer pressure		26.12	4.98		.476	.001	1.000	
Parental negligence		25.78	5.14		.461	-.001	.001	1.000

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The table above reveals the relationship that exists among substance abuse, parental negligence, peer pressure and suicide ideation among secondary school students. The correlation; substance abuse ($r(248) = .522, p < 0.05$), peer pressure ($r = .476, p < 0.05$) and parental negligence ($r = .461, p < 0.05$) had significant relationship to suicide ideation among secondary school students. This implies that as levels of substance abuse, peer pressure, and parental negligence increases, the level of suicide ideation among secondary school students also tends to increase.

Research Question 2: What is the joint contribution of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to suicidal ideation among secondary school students?

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis on the contribution of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to the prediction of suicidal ideation

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.685	0.469	0.460	0.565

REGRESSION SUMMARY					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	115.92	3	38.64	55.19	.000
Residual	130.88	246	0.53		
Total	246.80	249			

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The result in above table reveals the combination of the independent variables; substance abuse, peer pressure, and parental negligence jointly contributed significantly to suicide ideation among secondary school students. The result yielded a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.685 and a coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.469, indicating that approximately 46.9% of the total variance in suicide ideation among students is accounted for by the joint influence of substance abuse, peer pressure, and parental negligence. The table also showed a statistically significant outcome: ($F_{(3,248)} = 55.19, p < 0.05$), which implies that the independent variables jointly and significantly predict suicide ideation among secondary school students.

Research Question 3: What is the relative contribution of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to suicidal ideation among secondary school students?

Table 4: Relative contribution of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to the prediction of suicidal ideation

Coefficients ^a					
Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.05	0.175		6.0	.000
Substance Abuse	0.42	0.072	0.37	5.83	.006
Peer Pressure	0.36	0.068	0.31	5.29	.009
Parental Negligence	0.33	0.066	0.29	5.0	.013

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The table revealed the relative contribution of each of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure to suicidal ideation among secondary school students. Substance abuse made the highest contribution with a standardized weight of $\beta = 0.37$, and this was statistically significant at $t = 5.83, p < 0.05$, peer pressure also made a meaningful contribution with $\beta = 0.31, t = 5.29, p < 0.05$ and parental negligence contributed with $\beta = 0.29, t = 5.00, p < 0.05$. This implies that each of substance abuse, parental negligence and peer pressure is a significant predictor of suicide ideation when the effects of the others are controlled. Hence, they individually and significantly influence the tendency of suicide ideation among students.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The current study examined the relationships between substance abuse and parental negligence, peer pressure and suicidal ideation among a sample of secondary school pupils, assessing the concomitant and relative predictive value of these variables. Findings bring about strong empirical data that suicidal thoughts in adolescence are not unique psychopathological occurrences, but it is a construction that can be significantly embedded in the social, family and behavioural contexts.

The first research question examined the links between the three independent variables (substance abuse, peer pressure, parental negligence) and suicidal ideation in secondary school students. Correlational analysis showed that all three predictors (substance abuse, $r=.522$, peer pressure, $r=.476$, parental negligence, $r=.461$) have significant positive relationships. These data indicate that high levels of exposure to, or involvement in, such factors of risk are comorbid with an increased level of suicidal ideation.

The results of the correlational analysis supported a moderate to strong positive correlation between substance abuse and the presence of suicidal ideation ($r = .522$), whereby a student with a higher reported level of substance use was prone to having a suicidal ideation. This result is in line with the substantial body of literature within and outside the Nigerian context which identifies substance abuse as a relevant risk factor of the development of suicidal ideation in adolescents. Indicatively, De Berardis *et al.* (2020) found that adolescents who abused alcohol and drugs were much more likely to report suicidal ideation and attempts because the substances made them impaired and had poor emotional control. In the same manner, Baryshnikov *et al.* (2020) have reported that the depressive symptoms and hopelessness are increased due to the use of substances and make suicidal thoughts worse. In their Nigerian study, Owobamigbe *et al.* (2025) found a close relationship between drug intake and suicidal behaviors in in-school adolescents and mentioned that substance abuse can be a maladaptive coping strategy to psychosocial stressors. These conclusions of the past are reinforced by the current evidence and indicate that substance abuse is still a strong predictor of suicidal ideation among Nigerian secondary school students despite the existing cultural taboos on suicide. The relatively high relationship in this study as compared to other studies which had lower correlation could be a culminating effect of increasing exposure of teenagers in cities like Ibadan to drugs, alcohol and other psychoactive substances. This is in line with the current day evidence of increasing accessibility of substances and peer-based use of substances by the youths in Nigeria.

The research realized the positive connection between peer pressure and suicidal ideation to be significant ($r = .476$). This observation is consistent with previous studies that highlight the great influence of peers in the adolescent stage. According to Giletta *et al.* (2015), female adolescents exposed to negative peer norms, such as risky behaviours promotion, had higher chances of becoming emotionally distressed and having suicidal thoughts. Similarly, Estévez-García *et al.*, (2023) found peer rejection, bullying, and coercion to be important predictors of suicidal ideation in students at secondary school. The same findings were echoed in Nigeria where Chigbu *et al.*, (2021) noted that peer influence has a significant role in influencing the behavioural and emotional consequences of adolescents, especially in schools where peer acceptance is unlikely to be tolerated. The current research is in agreement with these and strengthens the claim that peer pressure, particularly negative peer pressure can destroy the self-esteem and the ability of adolescents to cope thus enhancing suicidal ideation. Nevertheless, other studies on the topic in other countries have shown that less effective connections between peer pressure and suicidal ideation when parents have high levels of support. The relatively good correlation in this study is thus likely to be contextual like the deteriorating parental control and the heightened peer networks among the Nigerian adolescents, particularly, in the urban areas.

The significant and positive correlation between parental negligence and suicidal ideation ($r = .461$) aligns with the attachment theory and other past empirical studies. Research by Khan *et al.* (2015) developed the thesis that emotional neglect, absence of supervision, or a lack of parent-child communication are more exposed to adolescents that are susceptible to depression and suicidal thoughts. In the Nigerian context, Okoedion and Okolie (2020) have noted that suicidal behaviours among adolescents were strongly predicted by weak parental monitoring and emotional unavailability. All these findings are supported by the current study which shows that peer pressure and substance abuse cannot override the negative impact of parental negligence as it is a risk factor that is relevant even with these factors in play. This finding dispels the notion of Western studies, which emphasize the importance of individual psychopathology in adolescent psychopathy in collectivist societies such as Nigeria. The finding indicates that the breakdown of traditional family ties, which was previously established by Cha *et al.*, (2018), is also a possibility in causing higher rates of suicidal thoughts among youths.

The regression model revealed that the combination of substance abuse, peer pressure and parental negligence explained 46.90 -percent of the variation in suicidal ideation. This finding coincides with the biopsychosocial model which states suicidal behaviour is a product of interplay of multiple factors risking it and not a single factor. Similar concomitant effects were provided by Fonseca-Pedrero *et al.* (2022), who found behavioural, familial, and social factors to be the collective predictors of suicidal ideation in adolescents. Ekeze *et al.*, (2024)

also reported that a combination of family dysfunction, peer pressure, and risky behaviours significantly increased the risk of suicide among Nigeria students. The explained variance in the current study is larger than some of the previous studies carried on the same topic in Nigeria, which implies that the variables are particularly salient predictors of suicidal ideation between secondary school students in Ibadan. This could be because of the increased stressors in the city, in school, and exposure to social media that could all enhance the effect of these risk factors.

The substance abuse was identified as the greatest predictor of suicidal ideation ($\beta=0.37$), then peer pressure ($\beta=0.31$) and parental negligence ($\beta=0.29$). This sequence agrees with previous studies according to Conner and Ilgen, (2016) as well as Kumar and Saini, (2025) which substance abuse is a proximal and immediate stimulator of suicidal ideas. The result is in opposition to those that have stated that parental negligence is the strongest predictor, which suggests that behavioural factors can now have an increased influence on the mental state of adolescents in modern Nigerian society. This change can be indicative of changing social realities, where teenagers are more and more turning to drugs and peer groups instead of family institutions as coping and identity building. However, the importance of all three variables independently and synergistically as significant predictors highlights the significance of the variables, which is consistent with previous Gelvez-Gafaro *et al.*, (2022) claims that suicide is the culmination of convergent psychosocial risk factors.

Comparing the presented results with the previous research, it is possible to say that the results of the study are mostly supportive of the existing empirical data, as well as they add to the knowledge as they help to demonstrate the relative power and the synergy of substance abuse, peer influence, and parental negligence among students of secondary schools in Ibadan. Those findings validate the fact that adolescent suicidal ideation is entrenched at the behavioural practice, peer and family functioning levels, which means that the intervention should be applied in these areas.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that suicide ideation among secondary school students is significantly influenced by psychosocial factors; substance abuse, peer pressure, and parental negligence. The statistical results indicated that all three variables not only correlate positively with suicide ideation but also jointly and independently predict it at a significant factor of suicide ideation. Substance abuse was found to be the most potent predictor, suggesting that students who engage in drug use are more vulnerable to developing suicidal thoughts. Peer pressure and parental negligence also played important roles, indicating the critical influence of students' social interactions and family environments on their mental health.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Parents should build emotional bonds with their children and maintain open communication.
2. Awareness and prevention programs should be implemented to promote healthy lifestyles and discourage substance abuse.
3. Schools should employ professional counsellors to support students' mental well-being.
4. Government agencies and educational stakeholders should organize community-based sensitization on suicide ideation among adolescents.
5. Schools should implement peer-led anti-drug and anti-bullying clubs.
6. Teachers should be sensitized on how to detect and address signs of distress among learners.
7. Establish school-based mental health services to ensure regular psychological support for students
8. Education policy makers should mandate psychological services in all secondary schools.

9. Develop partnerships between schools and mental health NGOs for effective outreach.

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