



New Trends
in Psychology

Impact of Family Life and Peer Influence on Social Adjustment of Adolescents with Visual Impairment in Kwara State, Nigeria

Sunday Abimbola Abodunrin¹, Assam Andy Edim²

Abstract: This paper examines the impact of family life and peer influence on social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment. The objective of the study is to examine the relationship between family life, peer influence and social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment, identify the joint contribution of family life, peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment, and to examine the relative contributions of family life and peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment. The study adopts survey research design. The data were collected using three (3) self made research instrument, this is to enable the researcher find out the influence of family life and peer influence on social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment. The findings reveals that, there is a significant relationship between family life, peer influence and social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment, also there is joint contributions of family life, peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual as well as significant relative contribution of family life, per influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment. The study therefore recommends that, adolescents with visual impairment must be encouraged to relate and interact with peers within and outside their environment. This will expose them to new ideas as well as improving their feelings towards others in the society.

Keywords: Family Life; Peer Influence; Social Adjustment; Adolescents; Visual

¹ University of Ibadan, Nigeria, Address: Oduduwa Road, Ibadan 200132, Oyo, Nigeria, Corresponding author: abosabim@yahoo.com.

² Institute of Special Education, Palacky University Olomouc, Czech Republic, Address: Křížkovského 511/8, 779 00 Olomouc 9, Czech Republic, E-mail: assamandy11@gmail.com.



Copyright: © 2024 by the authors.
Open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

1. Introduction

Adolescence, the transitional period from childhood to adulthood, is characterized by distinctive physical, psychological transformations, and social expectations. It can be divided into three phases: early adolescence spanning roughly from ages 12 to 15, middle adolescence covering ages 15 to 18, and late adolescence extending from ages 18 to 25.

These changes are part of the natural process known as puberty, during which individuals undergo physical growth, take on adult-like appearances, and develop the capacity for reproduction, among other physiological changes. Notably, puberty typically commences about two years earlier in girls compared to boys, and the timing and sequence of these changes can vary significantly among individuals (Petersen, 2002).

The period of adolescence encompasses both physical and cognitive changes. During this phase, individuals mature in their thinking processes and problem-solving abilities (Sroufe & Cooper, 2001). One noteworthy cognitive development is the emergence of formal operations, which enables adolescents to engage in more rational and abstract reasoning (Sroufe and Cooper, 2001). This stage fosters the capacity for coherent thinking about abstract concepts and encourages more logical reasoning.

Moreover, during adolescence, individuals achieve a qualitatively higher level of personal development. The sense of self becomes more organized, cohesive, and integrated. Adolescents are capable of connecting their past behaviors with their anticipated future roles and gain the vital capacity for self-reflection. The challenges adolescents encounter while shaping their personal identities are often referred to as an “identity crisis” (Blos, 1999).

Tuttle (2007) highlighted four primary challenges faced by individuals with visual impairments.

Firstly, to establish a sense of competence, individuals with visual impairments must develop exceptional coping skills and adaptive behaviors.

Secondly, they grapple with maintaining self-esteem, especially when faced with predominantly negative societal attitudes and reflections.

Thirdly, individuals with visual impairments need to maintain control over situations, identify alternative courses of action, and make decisions regarding various aspects of their lives.

Lastly, they must confront the issue of how relying on others for certain daily tasks can impact their self-esteem. This reliance, even when accompanied by strong coping skills and adaptive behaviors, may give the impression of lacking an internal locus of control.

“Visual impairment leads to a range of educational, social, and psychological consequences, which can be both objective and subjective, depending on the type and extent of the visual impairment. In the context of education, it is important to categorize these effects.

The objective consequences of visual impairment primarily pertain to cognition. Since our senses serve as the gateway to knowledge, any sensory impairment in vision can restrict both the extent and quality of cognitive abilities. Vision, being one of the most actively utilized senses, plays a pivotal role in the acquisition of knowledge through visual experiences. Consequently, the resulting impact of impaired vision on cognition can be profound (Pandey, 2018).”

Teenagers with visual impairments face challenges when it comes to mobility. Complete loss of sight necessitates a greater reliance on their other senses, which can result in increased difficulties and a slower pace of movement. Many consider this limitation to be the most significant consequence of visual impairment.

This constraint not only impacts an individual’s ability to access various experiences but also influences their social interactions. The absence of vision not only hampers their ability to move freely but also limits their exposure and opportunities for gaining new insights (Pandey, 2018).

Abodunrin and Komolafe (2017) assert that an individual with visual impairment’s ability to adapt to the challenges stemming from their condition hinges on their level of acceptance, recognition, and accommodation within their family, peer group, and society. Several factors contribute to fostering positive interpersonal relationships and, consequently, good psychological adjustment among individuals with visual impairments. These factors include active parental involvement in their daily activities and the parent’s level of emotional intelligence.

Within this context, the family plays a pivotal role in the development of visually impaired children. Parents exert the most significant influence on a visually impaired

child's development from birth to maturity. Consistency in parental attitudes is a key attribute, with historical research dating as far back as 1944 indicating the need for ongoing support for parents as they adapt to raising a child with visual impairment.

There exists a noticeable divide between parents and their visually impaired children, and when the child's visual impairment affects the parent-child relationship, it leads to difficulties in adapting to the child's needs and behaviors. This, in turn, escalates parental anxiety (Howe, 2006).

The journey of raising a visually impaired child through developmental stages is a source of worry for families (Cohen, 2007). Some families manage to adapt to this situation, while others continually grapple with various stresses, often experiencing a sense of trauma. Parents of children with disabilities perceive disparities among their children at various life stages, leading to mental pressure and anxiety (Zahedi, 2006).

Additionally, as parents witness their children growing, they become increasingly concerned about who will care for their children with disabilities after their own passing (Liewellyn, Gething, Kendig, & Cant, 2003). Furthermore, a parent's role can significantly influence the quality of life of their children. Recently, with the rising number of people with disabilities, particularly visual impairments, there has been a growing focus on the quality of life of these individuals in scientific and medical discussions in recent decades (Witt, Riley & Coiro, 2003).

Parents of adolescents with visual impairments play crucial roles in facilitating the social development and adjustment of their children with visual impairment. Regrettably, in Nigeria, many parents tend to deny or refuse to accept their children's disabilities, which often leads to a lack of suitable opportunities for their growth and adaptation.

It is clear that parents are the primary source of significant emotional experiences, and this impact becomes even more pronounced in the case of disabled individuals, who may have a narrower range of psychological experiences due to their impairment.

Human beings are inherently social, and how we perceive ourselves is often influenced by the way others perceive us. We constantly adapt and shape our lives based on the feedback we receive from our families, communities, and friends. This feedback serves as a mechanism for controlling and organizing our actions while also providing checks on our behavior.

The manner in which feedback is delivered is of utmost importance and can profoundly impact an individual's sense of identity, self-concept, and self-esteem. For individuals with visual impairments, a greater reliance on auditory and tactile cues is necessary. While these cues still enable the recognition of moods, emotions, and the ability to make inferences about an individual's character and emotional well-being, they lack the visual information provided by facial expressions.

Morse (2003) noted that blind individuals may not be as accurate in deducing and judging personal characteristics based solely on voice. Therefore, clear, reliable, and redundant communication becomes essential in ensuring effective interaction for individuals with visual impairments.

The ability of individuals with visual impairment to engage effectively in social interactions hinges significantly on several factors. These include the attitudes of sighted individuals towards them, the attitudes of individuals with visual impairment towards both sighted individuals and themselves, as well as their proficiency in orientation and mobility skills.

Parents can play a vital role in nurturing their children's capacity for social interaction, provided they have a good understanding of how children interact with one another and comprehend the substantial influence such interactions have on the social development of children with visual impairment. It is essential to assess the extent to which parents are involved in helping their children acquire these valuable social interaction skills.

According to Loijas (1994), research into the social relationships, networks, and support systems of visually impaired adolescents has revealed that many of these adolescents tend to have fewer friends, limited social contacts, and smaller social networks compared to their peers without impairments. Visually impaired adolescents are also more likely to experience feelings of loneliness and isolation, as noted by Jan et al. (1997). Their social networks are often predominantly composed of family members and relatives (Loijas 1994, Kef, 1999). In contrast to sighted adolescents, those with visual impairment tend to mention fewer extended family members, neighbors, and friends in their social circles (Kef 1999).

The majority of adolescents with visual impairment have conveyed that they share close bonds with their parents, and when it comes to matters related to their impairment, they primarily receive social support from family members and professionals (Suokas 1992, Nemshick, Vernon & Ludman, 2006).

As per Loijas (1994), parents have been identified as significant providers of social support in daily activities and with regard to assistance with homework among adolescents with visual impairment. Additionally, many of these adolescents have reported receiving social support from their friends (Kef 1999). However, it's worth noting that most of them have expressed that even though their close friends are aware of their impairment, they find it challenging to have open discussions about visual impairment with them (Nemshick, Vernon & Ludman, 2006).

Hence, this study aims to investigate the influence of family dynamics and peer relationships on the social adaptation of adolescents with visual impairment in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study is to:

1. Examine the relationship between family life, peer influence and social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment.
2. Identify the joint contribution of family life, peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment.
3. Examine the relative contributions of family life and peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment.

Research Questions

The following research questions serves as guide for this study:

1. What is the relationship between family life, peer influence and social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment?
2. What is the joint contribution of family life, peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment?
3. What is the relative contribution of family life and peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment?

2. Methodology

The study adopts survey research design. The data were collected using three (3) self made research instrument, this is to enable the researcher find out the influence of family life and peer influence on social adjustment of adolescents with visual

impairment. Population for the study comprises of all students with visual impairment in Kwara state. Purposive sampling technique was used to select sixty (60) respondents from the target population including the totally blind and low vision. The data was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co efficient and multiple regression analyses which was tested at 0.05 level of significant

3. Results

Research question one: What is the relationship between family life, peer influence and social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment?

Table 1. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Showing the Relationship between Social Adjustment, Family life, and Peer Influence

	Social adjustment	Family life	Peer influence
Social adjustment	1		
Family life	.973* (.000)	1	
Peer influence	.*994 (.000)	.986* (.000)	1
Mean (\bar{X})	31.9833	27.5500	29.7500
S.D	14.06582	14.53742	13.80325

* Sig. at 0.05 level

Table 1 shows that there is a significant relationship between Social adjustment and Family life ($r=.973$, $p(.000)<.05$), Peer influence ($r=.994$, $p(.000)<.05$). Hence there is a positive significant relationship between family life, peer influence and social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment in the study.

Research question two: What is the joint contribution of family life, peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment?

Table 2. Summary of Regression Analysis Showing Joint Contribution of Family Life, Peer Influence to Social Adjustment of Adolescents with Visual Impairment

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.994	.989	.989	1.49961			
ANOVA						
Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Regression	11544.799	2	5772.400	2566.835	.000	Sig.
Residual	128.184	57	2.249			
Total	11672.983	59				

Table 2 shows the joint contribution of the two independent variables (Family life and Peer influence) to the prediction of the dependent variable i.e. Social adjustment. The table also shows a coefficient of multiple correlation ($R = .994$ and a multiple R^2 of .989). This means that 98.9% of the variance was accounted for by two predictor variables when taken together. The significance of the composite contribution was tested at $\alpha = 0.05$. The table also shows that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded F-ratio of 2566.835 (significant at 0.05 level). This implies that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

Research question three: What is the relative contribution of family life and peer influence to social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment?

Table 3. Summary of Regression Analysis Showing Relative Contribution of Family Life and Peer Influence to Social Adjustment of Adolescents with Visual Impairment

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution		
(Constant)	1.027	.538		1.908	.061
Family life	-.249	.082	-.257	-3.041	.004
Peer influence	1.271	.086	1.247	14.761	.000

Table 3 reveals the relative contribution of the two independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights, viz: Family life ($\beta = -.257$, $p < .05$), and Peer influence ($\beta = 1.247$, $p < .05$). Hence, it could be deduced that family life and peer influence were significant i.e. could independently and significantly predict social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment in the study.

Table 4. Perception of Respondents on the Measures of Family Life in the Study

S/N	Family life	SD	D	U	A	SA	\bar{X}	S. D
1	My parents allow me to do things by myself.	20 33.3%	10 16.7%	2 3.3%	15 25.0%	13 21.7%	2.85	1.624
2	The relationship between me and my parents is like cat and rat.	18 30.0%	18 30.0%	2 3.3%	14 23.3%	8 13.3%	2.60	1.464
3	My parents encourage me to accomplish my goals in life.	16 26.7%	14 23.3%	2 3.3%	13 21.7%	15 25.0%	2.95	1.599
4	Through the help of my mother I have the confidence to deal with unexpected event without fear from the training I received from; home, I can handle unforeseen situations.	18 30.0%	12 20.0%	5 8.3%	15 25.0%	10 16.7%	2.78	1.519
5	My father does not support me to accomplish my goal in life.	14 23.3%	11 18.3%	3 5.0%	14 23.3%	18 30.0%	3.18	1.600
6	I wish I have a good father than the one I have	18 30.0%	17 28.3%	3 5.0%	10 16.7%	12 20.0%	2.68	1.546
7	My parent encourages me to acquire knowledge by myself.	14 23.3%	17 28.3%	2 3.3%	13 21.7%	14 23.3%	2.93	1.550
8	I feel recognized through the love and affection by my parent.	22 36.7%	25 41.7%	5 8.3%	3 5.0%	5 8.3%	2.07	1.191
9	My parent provides me with all necessary materials needed in school.	14 23.3%	19 31.7%	4 6.7%	13 21.7%	10 16.7%	2.77	1.454

10	Through the help of my parent, my achievement has no limit.	14 23.3%	21 35.0%	3 5.0%	11 18.3%	11 18.3%	2.73	1.471
Weighted Mean = 2.76								

Table 5. Perception of respondents on the measures of peer influence in the study

S/N	Peer influence	SD	D	U	A	SA	\bar{x}	S. D
1	I feel inferior to most of the people i know	15 25.0%	13 21.7 %	5 8.3%	7 11.7 %	20 33.3 %	3.07	1.645
2	I feel worried or bothered about what other people think of me	13 21.7%	8 13.3 %	3 5.0%	15 25.0 %	21 35.0 %	3.38	1.595
3	I have confidence when others see me as being physically appealing	17 28.3%	23 38.3 %	10 16.7 %	4 6.7%	6 10.0 %	2.32	1.242
4	I feel worried about how well i get along with other people	9 15.0%	10 16.7 %	1 1.7%	15 25.0 %	25 41.7 %	3.62	1.530
5	I always thought of being a worthless individual when am with my friends	10 16.7%	30 50.0 %	8 13.3 %	7 11.7 %	5 8.3%	2.45	1.156
6	My friends treat me well without any discrimination	13 21.7%	12 20.0 %	10 16.7 %	13 21.7 %	12 20.0 %	2.98	1.455
7	I like being in school	14 23.3%	16 26.7 %	6 10.0 %	12 20.0 %	12 20.0 %	2.87	1.490
8	I am easily embarrassed	14 23.3%	11 18.3 %	5 8.3%	16 26.7 %	14 23.3 %	3.08	1.533
9	I felt inferior or inadequate as someone with eye challenge	14 23.3%	26 43.3 %	3 5.0%	8 13.3 %	9 15.0 %	2.53	1.384
10	I tried to avoid conflict and confrontation	8 13.3%	12 20.0 %	5 8.3%	15 25.0 %	20 33.3 %	3.45	1.466
Weighted Mean = 2.98								

Table 6. Perception of respondents on the measures of social adjustment in the study

S/N	Social adjustment	SD	D	U	A	SA	\bar{X}	S.D
1	I often feel uncomfortable meeting new people	14 23.3 %	18 30.0 %	3 5.0%	13 21.7 %	12 20.0 %	2.85	1.505
2	I felt inferior to most other people in athletic ability	4 6.7%	6 10.0 %	4 6.7%	26 43.3 %	20 33.3 %	3.87	1.186
3	I felt worried whether other people like to be with me	13 21.7 %	14 23.3 %	2 3.3%	10 16.7 %	21 35.0 %	3.20	1.634
4	i felt ashamed of my physique or figure	15 25.0 %	15 25.0 %	7 11.7 %	13 21.7 %	10 16.7 %	2.80	1.459
5	I am able to do things as well as most other people	13 21.7 %	13 21.7 %	-	14 23.3 %	20 33.3 %	3.25	1.622
6	I fear making a mistake which others can see	8 13.3 %	12 20.0 %	3 5.0%	16 26.7 %	21 35.0 %	3.50	1.479
7	I am very fearful of disapproval and rejection	19 31.7 %	15 25.0 %	4 6.7%	15 25.0 %	7 11.7 %	2.60	1.452
8	I often compared myself to others	9 15.0 %	11 18.3 %	5 8.3%	20 33.3 %	15 25.0 %	3.35	1.424
9	I often think that others do not respect me	9 15.0 %	10 16.7 %	6 10.0 %	18 30.0 %	17 28.3 %	3.40	1.440
10	I think I am good looking	12 20.0 %	11 18.3 %	2 3.3%	25 41.7 %	10 16.7 %	3.17	1.440
Weighted Mean = 3.20								

4. Discussion of Findings

The findings indicate a significant relationship between social adjustment and both family life ($r = .973, p < .05$) and peer influence ($r = .994, p < .05$). Thus, there exists a positive and substantial correlation between family life, peer influence, and the social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment in this study. These results align with the perspective of Abodunrin & Komolafe (2017), who argued that the ability of visually impaired individuals to adapt to challenges arising from their

impairment is contingent upon the acceptance, recognition, and accommodation by their parents, family members, siblings, and friends. Furthermore, active parental involvement in their daily activities, coupled with emotional intelligence and self-concept, serves as stimulating factors that contribute to positive interpersonal relationships and, consequently, favorable psychological adjustment in individuals with visual impairment.

The study also unveils the combined impact of the two independent variables, Family Life and Peer Influence, on predicting the dependent variable, which is Social Adjustment. The table further illustrates a coefficient of multiple correlation ($R = .994$) and a multiple R^2 of .989. This signifies that when taken together, these two predictor variables account for a remarkable 98.9% of the variance. To assess the significance of this collective contribution, a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was employed.

The analysis of variance for the regression yielded an F-ratio of 2566.835, signifying significance at the 0.05 level. This indicates that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was statistically significant. However, it's important to note that there may be other unaccounted variables not included in this model that could have contributed to the remaining variance.

This outcome aligns with the perspective of Kent (1983) and Wolffe & Sacks (1997), who emphasized the significant role of parents as sources of social support in daily functioning and homework assistance. Additionally, many adolescents with visual impairment have reported receiving social support from their friends (Kef 1999). However, some of them have noted that despite their close friends' awareness of their impairment, they still find it challenging to openly discuss their visual challenges with them (Nemshick et al. 2006).

The study also reveals the individual contributions of the two independent variables to the dependent variable, represented as beta weights: Family Life ($\beta = -.257$, $p < .05$) and Peer Influence ($\beta = 1.247$, $p < .05$). Therefore, it can be inferred that both family life and peer influence independently and significantly predict the social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment in this study.

This finding aligns with the perspective of Abodunrin & Komolafe (2017), who emphasized the substantial role of the family in the development of children with visual impairment. Parents, in particular, exert a dominant influence on a child's development from birth to maturity. Notably, consistency in parental attitudes is a

vital attribute. As far back as 1944, researchers began exploring how parents of infants with visual impairment respond to the news of their child's disability. Their conclusion highlighted the need for ongoing support during the early years as parents adapted to raising a child with visual impairment.

5. Conclusion

Family life and peer influence is one of the key actors that bridge the gap that exist between adolescents with visual impairment and the society. From the study, it was established that, family life and peer influence plays a significant role on social adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment and that this adolescents with visual impairment cannot do without their family as well as their peers in the society.

6. Recommendation

The study therefore recommends that:

- Parents of the adolescents with visual impairment should accept their childrens disabilities and do all that is possible to help them develop and adjust socially at their own pace. It is this acceptance plus other parental positive reactions that will make the child feels being cherished at home.
- It is also recommended that adolescent with visual impairment be encouraged to join students club and associations, this will promote healthy interaction and modeling or imitation of positive behaviours this will help in promoting their social adjustment.
- Also, adolescents with visual impairment must be encouraged to relate and interact with peers within and outside their environment. This will expose them to new ideas as well as improving their feelings towards others in the society.

References

- Abodunrin, S. & Komolafe, A (2017). Parental involvement, emotional intelligence and self-concept as predictors of psychological adjustment of adolescents with visual impairment in special schools in south-west, Nigeria. *Ibadan Journal of Education Studies* vol. 14 no. 2
- Blos P (1999) *The adolescent passage*. New York: International Universities Press.

- Cohen M. (2007). *Impact of a handicapped child on the family*. Available from URL: <http://www.yale.edu>.
- Howe D. (2006). Disabled children, parent- child interaction and attachment. *Child and family social work*; 11.2, pp. 95-106.
- Jan, J.; Freeman, R. & Scott E (1997). *Visual impairment in children and adolescents*. New York: Grune & Stratton.
- Kef, S. (1999). Outlook on relations. Personal networks and psychosocial characteristics of visually impaired adolescents. *Academisch proefschrift*. Universiteit van Amsterdam, Amsterdam.
- Liewellyn, G.; Gething, L.; Kendig, H. & Cant, R. (2003). Adult sons & daughters with a disability. In: Liewellyn, G.; Gething, L.; Kendig, H. & Cant R. *Invisible Carers: Facing an Uncertain Future*. Sydney: University of Sydney. Available from URL: http://www.afdsr.org/care/completed/sons_daughters.php.
- Nemshick, L.; Vernon, M. & Ludman, F. (2006): The impact of retinitis pigmentosa on young adults: Psychological, educational, vocational and social considerations. *Journal of Visual*.
- Pandey, R. (2018). *Comparative Study of Adjustment of Visually Impaired Students*.
- Petersen, P. (2001) *A handbook for developing multicultural awareness*. Alexandria, VA: American Association for Counseling and Development.
- Peterson, R.; Lowman, C. & Kirchner C (2002). Visual handicap: Statistical data on a social process. In: Data on Blindness and Visual Impairment in the U.S. A Resource Manual on Social Demographic Characteristics, Education, Employment and Income, and Service. *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 6(11): DOI: 10.13189/ujer.2018.061121
- Sroufe, L. & Cooper, R. (2001) *Child development. Its nature and course*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
- Tuttle, D. (2007). The role of the special teacher-counsellor in meeting students' self-esteem needs. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness* 81, pp. 156-161.
- Witt, W.; Riley, A. & Coiro, J. (2003). Child hood functional status, family stressors and psychosocial adjustment among schoolaged children with disabilities in the United States. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*; 157.7, pp. 687-95.
- Wolffe, K. & Sacks, SZ. (1997). The lifestyles of blind, low vision, and sighted youths: A quantitative comparison. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness* 91, pp. 245-257.
- Zahedi F. (2006) The effect of education and consulting on reducing the stress of parents of intellectual disable children. *Research Institute Exceptional Children*. Available from URL: <http://www.riec.ac.ir>. [in Persian].