

Gender discrimination, peer pressure and social media as a correlate of adolescent mental health in Ibadan North local government

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Abstract

The significance of adolescent mental health stems from its pivotal role in shaping the adjustment process during this developmental stage. Thus, this study investigated the correlations between the independent variables (Gender discrimination, family background, peer pressure, and social media) and dependent variable adolescent mental health). The study adopted descriptive survey design of correlational type. A sample of three hundred in-school adolescents were randomly sampled in Ibadan North. Data was collected using reliable instruments (Adolescent mental health scale $\alpha = 0.89$, Gender discrimination Scale $\alpha = 0.79$, peer pressure $\alpha = 0.79$, and social media $\alpha = 0.75$). Three research questions were raised and tested at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. there was positive significant relationships between Gender Discrimination ($r = .165; p < 0.05$), social media ($r = .188; p < 0.05$) and Mental health. Also, there was negative significant relationship between Peer pressure($r = -.080$; and adolescent mental health. From the regression analysis it was discovered that Gender discrimination, peer pressure, and social media jointly predicted adolescent mental health. This suggests that the three factors or Variables combined accounted for 55% ($Adj.R^2 = 0.41$) variance in the prediction of adolescent mental health. From relative contributions, Gender discrimination was found to be the strongest predictor followed social media and peer pressure in that order. Among others it was recommended that the influence of the gender discrimination and social media need to be given priority attention, the social media could be made to provide filtered and strict messages that protect adolescent mental health

Keywords: Mental Health; Peer Pressure; Regression Analysis; Adolescent; Correlation

1. Introduction

The prosperity and esteem of a nation are entrusted to its adolescents. These young individuals, transitioning into adulthood within society, navigate a phase fraught with demands and challenges. The term "adolescent" originates from the Latin word "adolescere," signifying "to grow up." Thus, adolescence denotes the transitional stage inevitably traversed by individuals as they progress from childhood to maturity. This phase is marked by physical and physiological transformations occurring in distinct phases: pre-pubescence, pubescence, and post-pubescence, each unfolding gradually and sequentially. Adolescents undergo a myriad of changes encompassing physical, emotional, and social realms, culminating in maturity. They often manifest intensified emotions, exhibiting behaviors and emotional outbursts, along with feelings of discontentment and mood swings. Instead of regulating their emotions, they may succumb to emotional outbursts. Some adolescents may also engage in sexual deviance and demonstrate conscious or unconscious defiance against established authority structures (Ayantayo, 2011).

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Adolescence represents a pivotal stage characterized by multifaceted transformations across various facets of an individual's existence. It is a juncture wherein crucial decisions regarding academic pursuits, familial commitments, and potentially, sexual conduct are contemplated and made. For numerous young individuals, adolescence heralds the commencement of sexual activity and experimentation. While this progression is considered a normative aspect of development, engaging in sexual behaviors during adolescence can serve as a precursor to a spectrum of problematic behaviors.

Often depicted as a period of tumult and upheaval, adolescence epitomizes a phase of significant change. This transitional period, bridging childhood and adulthood, is underscored by a multitude of biological, cognitive, and psychosocial shifts. These alterations encompass physiological transformations, cognitive maturation, and psychosocial adjustments, all of which collectively shape the trajectory of adolescent development (Ayantayo, 2011).

During adolescence, marked by conspicuous growth and development, it becomes imperative for adolescents to equip themselves with the skills necessary to navigate the responsibilities and challenges associated with adult roles. Consequently, there is a heightened susceptibility to various psychological disorders and adjustment difficulties. Adolescent mental health assumes paramount importance as it profoundly influences the adaptive capacities and roles undertaken by adolescents within society.

The significance of adolescent mental health stems from its pivotal role in shaping the adjustment process during this developmental stage. Poor mental health among young individuals has emerged as a burgeoning concern on a global scale over the past decades. Despite the availability of healthcare resources, adolescents have been observed to underutilize these services, exacerbating the challenges associated with addressing mental health issues among this demographic (Ayantayo, 2011).

It's imperative to acknowledge that gender discrimination transcends mere societal implications, evolving into a significant public health concern with profound ramifications. Interventions geared towards fostering gender equality and combatting sexism are indispensable for safeguarding the mental health and well-being of adolescents. By cultivating inclusive environments that prioritize diversity and uphold individuals' rights, we can cultivate a more equitable society where adolescents can flourish irrespective of their gender (McMillan et al., 2018).

The family serves as a pivotal cornerstone in promoting well-being and nurturing the healthy growth of adolescents. Adolescents heavily depend on their families for emotional support, guidance, and the fulfillment of their basic needs. Intra-familial challenges, including conflict, instability, or inadequate communication, can profoundly impact adolescents' mental and physical health, as well as their academic performance.

Discrimination within families, whether stemming from age, gender, or other factors, can indeed precipitate tension and mental health concerns among family members. Recognizing the intricate impact of family dynamics on health outcomes is paramount when devising health initiatives and interventions.

During adolescence, individuals undergo significant cognitive and emotional changes, seeking acceptance and validation from their peers. This desire for social approval may compel adolescents to conform to peer norms and behaviors, often at the expense of values instilled by parents, educators, and other authority figures. Consequently, adolescents may engage in activities or behaviors they otherwise wouldn't, such as substance abuse, truancy, and exam malpractice, which can detrimentally impact their psychological well-being.

The prevalence of social media usage among youth is nearly ubiquitous. According to The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory (2021), up to 95% of individuals aged 13-17 acknowledge using a social media platform, with over a third admitting to using social media "almost constantly."

Moreover, gender exerts a profound influence not only on the prevalence rates of mental disorders but also on various aspects including risk factors, timing of onset, trajectory, diagnostic processes, treatment approaches, and adjustment to mental health challenges (Anang, 2022).

1.1. Statement of the problem

In 2010, a survey conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation encompassed over 2,000 young individuals aged 8-18 years from diverse regions across the United States, aiming to explore their media usage patterns. Findings from the survey underscored the continued centrality of media in the lives of young people. It was revealed that youth dedicate an average of 10 hours and 45 minutes daily to social media usage, signifying its profound integration into their daily

routines. Notably, a significant minority (20 percent) of media consumption, equating to approximately two hours, occurred via mobile platforms such as cell phones, laptops, and handheld game players. This suggests a remarkable flexibility in media consumption concerning both time and location. The prevalence and versatility of media consumption among adolescents imply its significant influence on this demographic (The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory, 2021).

Moreover, gender exerts a multifaceted impact on various aspects of life, including access to resources, coping mechanisms for stress, interpersonal interaction styles, self-assessment, spirituality, and societal expectations (Anang, 2022). Gender discrimination perpetuates the infringement of women's rights across their lifespan, profoundly affecting their sense of well-being and overall mental health.

Research findings by Andersén et al. (2024) emphasize the pivotal role of social environments, encompassing family dynamics and peer interactions, in shaping adolescent mental health outcomes. These social contexts can either foster support and resilience or precipitate distress and vulnerability, underscoring the significance of social surroundings in adolescents' mental well-being.

The influence of psychosocial factors on adolescent mental health cannot be understated. Factors such as the content of social media, gender discrimination, family backgrounds, and peer pressure exert both positive and negative impacts on adolescent mental health. The proliferation of programs, images, and content on social media platforms has been associated with adverse effects on adolescent mental health, highlighting the need for comprehensive interventions and support mechanisms (The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory, 2021).

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The overarching aim of this study is to explore the interplay between adolescents' mental health and several key factors, namely social media usage, gender discrimination, family background, and peer pressure, within the context of Ogbomosho, Oyo State. Specific objectives include:

- Investigating the relationship between social media usage, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background concerning adolescent mental health among individuals residing in the Ibadan North local government area.
- Assessing the individual contributions of social media usage, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background to adolescent mental health, delineating the relative influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable.
- Exploring the collective impact of social media usage, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background on adolescent mental health, elucidating the combined contribution of these independent variables to the overall mental well-being of adolescents.

1.3. Research questions

The following research questions will be answered based on the research work

- What is the relationship between social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background impact on adolescent mental health in Ibadan North local government?
- What is the joint contribution of social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background on the impact on adolescent mental health in Ibadan North local government?
- What is the relative contribution of social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background on the impact on adolescent mental health in Ibadan North local government?

1.4. Significance of the Study

The findings of this research hold practical implications that extend to various stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, counseling psychologists, correctional homes, non-governmental organizations, the general public, policymakers, and future researchers.

Understanding the impact of social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background on adolescent mental health can empower students to make informed decisions and adopt healthier coping mechanisms.

Insights from the study can assist parents in recognizing and addressing potential stressors and challenges faced by their children, thereby fostering supportive environments conducive to positive mental health outcomes.

Mental health professionals can integrate the research findings into their therapeutic approaches and interventions, enhancing the effectiveness of counseling and psychological support services for adolescents.

Correctional facilities can benefit from the study by understanding the factors influencing adolescent mental health, allowing for the development of targeted rehabilitation programs aimed at addressing underlying issues and reducing recidivism rates.

NGOs focused on mental health advocacy and support can use the findings to inform their outreach efforts, program development, and resource allocation to better address the needs of adolescents within communities.

Policymakers can utilize the research findings to inform the development of evidence-based policies and initiatives aimed at improving adolescent mental health outcomes and allocating resources effectively.

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on adolescent mental health, providing a foundation for further research and exploration in this field, ultimately advancing our understanding and informing future interventions and practices.

1.5. Scope of the Study

Undertaking a study on the impacts of adolescent mental health on the entire Nigerian population would be excessively challenging. Therefore, this research focuses specifically on examining the influence of social media, family background, peer pressure, and gender discrimination on adolescents' mental health. The participants involved in this study encompass adolescents within the Ibadan North local government area of Oyo state. This geographical scope allows for a targeted investigation into the factors affecting adolescent mental health within a specific locality, facilitating a more nuanced understanding of the issue at hand.

1.6. Operational Definition of Term

- Mental health: Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being
- Adolescents: an individual between childhood and adulthood, usually within the age of 11-18 years.
- Peer pressure: This refers to the influence an adolescent gets from peers and they do something because they want to feel accepted or valued by their peers.
- Gender discrimination: Gender discrimination refers to treating adolescents unfairly or unfavorably because of their gender
- Social media: These platforms allow adolescents to connect, communicate, and share information, photos, videos, and opinions with others online.
- Family background: Family backgrounds refer to the collective experiences, values, beliefs, and socioeconomic status of individuals' families.

2. Literature review

2.1. Adolescent mental health

Adolescent mental health refers to the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of individuals typically between the ages of 10 and 19 years old. This stage of life is characterized by significant physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional development, making adolescents particularly vulnerable to mental health challenges.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), half of all mental health conditions begin by the age of 14, and most cases go undetected and untreated.^[1] Therefore, addressing adolescent mental health is crucial for promoting overall well-being and preventing long-term issues.

Several factors influence adolescent mental health:

- Biological Changes: Hormonal fluctuations and brain development during adolescence can affect mood, behavior, and decision-making processes. These biological changes can contribute to the onset of mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety.
- Psychosocial Factors: Adolescents face various psychosocial stressors, including academic pressure, peer relationships, family dynamics, identity formation, and societal expectations. These stressors can exacerbate mental health issues or trigger their onset.

- Environmental Influences: Socioeconomic status, access to healthcare, exposure to violence or trauma, and cultural factors can significantly impact adolescent mental health outcomes. Disparities in access to resources and support services can exacerbate mental health inequalities among adolescents.
- Technology and Social Media: The pervasive use of digital technology and social media among adolescents presents both opportunities and challenges for mental health. Excessive screen time, cyberbullying, and social comparison can negatively impact self-esteem, body image, and mental well-being.

Addressing adolescent mental health requires a comprehensive approach involving multiple stakeholders, including families, schools, healthcare providers, policymakers, and communities. Strategies for promoting adolescent mental health include:

- Early Intervention: Early identification and intervention for mental health concerns are essential to prevent escalation and long-term impairment. Screening programs in schools and healthcare settings can help identify at-risk adolescents and connect them with appropriate support services.
- Education and Awareness: Increasing awareness and reducing stigma surrounding mental health issues are crucial for promoting help-seeking behaviors and fostering supportive environments. Educational programs in schools and communities can promote mental health literacy and resilience-building skills.
- Access to Services: Ensuring access to affordable and culturally competent mental health services is essential for meeting the diverse needs of adolescents. This includes expanding mental health resources in schools, improving access to counseling and therapy, and integrating mental health services into primary care settings.
- Promotion of Protective Factors: Building supportive relationships, fostering positive peer and family connections, promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors (e.g., exercise, nutrition, sleep), and providing opportunities for meaningful engagement and skill development can enhance adolescents' resilience and mental well-being.

Adolescents are particularly susceptible to the detrimental effects of gender discrimination, given their ongoing development of identity and self-esteem. Encountering discrimination based on gender can evoke feelings of inadequacy, diminish self-worth, and potentially precipitate conditions like depression or anxiety.

2.2. Gender discrimination

Research conducted by Nolen-Hoeksema & Girgus (1994) has demonstrated that adolescents facing gender discrimination are at a heightened risk of experiencing mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety, and stress. This is attributable to the erosion of their sense of belonging and self-efficacy, resulting in adverse emotional outcomes. For instance, disparities in treatment within educational or professional environments may impede adolescents' academic or career aspirations, fostering sentiments of hopelessness or frustration.

Furthermore, the imposition of limitations on opportunities or rights based on gender can perpetuate feelings of injustice and powerlessness among adolescents. Consequently, they may harbor emotions of anger, resentment, and disillusionment towards societal norms and institutions. In severe instances, adolescents may internalize these adverse encounters and resort to maladaptive coping mechanisms like substance abuse or self-harm to manage their distress, as indicated by Chen et al. (2016).

The influence of gender on adolescent students' encounters with peer pressure and psychological well-being constitutes a complex issue necessitating meticulous examination. While McMillan et al. (2018) underscore the pivotal role of gender in shaping these dynamics, ambiguity persists regarding whether observed disparities stem from differences in sample demographics or the gendered context surrounding specific behaviors pertinent to psychological well-being.

Notably, gender discrimination permeates various spheres, with the workplace serving as a prominent arena wherein its repercussions are pronounced. Practices such as discriminatory hiring or promotion practices, disparate treatment of employees, and gender-based wage gaps exemplify instances of workplace discrimination. Moreover, peers can contribute to this discriminatory milieu by perpetrating exclusionary behaviors, such as sidelining female colleagues from pivotal meetings or decision-making processes.

These manifestations of gender discrimination not only perpetuate systemic inequities but also exert deleterious effects on individuals' psychological well-being, particularly adolescents navigating their identities and social roles. Confronting discrimination in the workplace or within peer circles can undermine one's sense of self-worth, belonging, and efficacy, thereby exacerbating feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression (McMillan et al., 2018).

To effectively address these challenges, it is crucial to implement comprehensive strategies targeting both individual and systemic factors contributing to gender-based discrimination. This entails fostering inclusive organizational cultures, implementing equitable policies and practices, and promoting awareness and education on gender bias and its implications for psychological well-being (McMillan et al., 2018).

Preventing or discouraging girls and young women from pursuing interests or careers in traditionally male-dominated fields, such as science, math, and sports, constitutes a form of gender discrimination. Such practices perpetuate gender stereotypes and curtail opportunities based on gender rather than merit or interest. Similarly, enforcing gendered dress codes or penalizing non-conformity to gender norms in educational settings reinforces harmful stereotypes and curtails individuals' freedom of expression.

Furthermore, the societal expectation that "boys will be boys" may excuse or overlook inappropriate behavior, contributing to a culture of impunity for misconduct. This not only perpetuates harmful gender norms but also fails to hold individuals accountable for their actions, irrespective of gender. Such attitudes can have adverse effects on both boys and girls, perpetuating inequality and reinforcing detrimental stereotypes about gender roles and conduct.

Moreover, discrimination within intimate relationships, where one partner restricts the other's activities or autonomy based on gender, represents a grave violation of individual rights and autonomy. Whether it involves limiting women's employment opportunities, controlling their finances, or restricting their mobility, such behaviors undermine the agency and independence of the individual, perpetuating power imbalances within the relationship (McMillan et al., 2018).

In public spaces, instances of sexual harassment and catcalling constitute forms of discrimination that engender an atmosphere of fear and discomfort, particularly for women and marginalized groups. These behaviors curtail individuals' freedom of movement and hinder their ability to engage in public life without apprehension of harassment or violence, consequently impeding their access to public spaces and compromising their sense of safety and autonomy.

Indeed, gender discrimination holds profound implications for both mental and physical health on a global scale. The barriers it erects, such as restricted access to healthcare and heightened rates of illness, can significantly impact individuals' well-being and longevity.

Stepanikova's study in 2020, as documented in *E Clinical Medicine*, offers valuable insights into the intricate interplay between gender inequality and health, with a specific focus on the ramifications of "perceived gender discrimination" on women's mental health. The study's findings are particularly noteworthy, revealing that more than 1 in 10 women, all of whom were either pregnant or parenting young children, reported instances of perceived gender discrimination.

A significant revelation of the study lies in the correlation observed between perceived gender discrimination and elevated depression scores among women. Notably, this association persisted even after adjusting for potential confounding variables such as socioeconomic status, level of social support, and gender role inequality. This robust finding underscores the pivotal role of perceived gender discrimination as a determinant of women's mental health (Stepanikova, 2020).

The implications of this study are profound, emphasizing the imperative for targeted interventions aimed at mitigating gender discrimination and its detrimental impact on mental health. By acknowledging and addressing both structural and interpersonal factors that perpetuate gender discrimination, policymakers and healthcare professionals can collaborate towards fostering more inclusive societies where women can flourish mentally and physically.

Stepanikova's study underscores the pivotal role of perceived gender discrimination in shaping women's mental health outcomes. By addressing this form of discrimination, significant progress can be made toward enhancing mental well-being and advancing gender equality on a global scale.

While biological research into the origins of depression in women is undoubtedly valuable, it is essential to recognize that depression, like numerous other health conditions, is influenced by a multifaceted interplay of biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors. Studies such as the one referenced serve as poignant reminders of the profound sociocultural determinants contributing to the global "gender gap" in depression (Stepanikova, 2020).

Indeed, confronting overt instances of gender discrimination is imperative to address the disproportionate burden of depression experienced by women globally. From socioeconomic disparities to exposure to violence and

marginalization, women frequently encounter diverse forms of discrimination that heighten their vulnerability to depression and other mental health challenges.

Efforts to combat gender discrimination must be multifaceted and comprehensive, spanning various sectors such as policy, education, healthcare, and social services. This entails not only rectifying systemic inequalities but also promoting gender equity and empowerment at individual, community, and societal levels.

Furthermore, it is crucial to cultivate environments that prioritize women's mental health and well-being by ensuring access to culturally sensitive and gender-responsive mental health services, advocating for gender-inclusive policies, and challenging harmful gender norms and stereotypes.

By acknowledging and addressing the sociocultural determinants of depression, alongside advancing biological research, significant strides can be made in narrowing the gender gap in mental health outcomes and fostering a more equitable and inclusive society for all (Stepanikova, 2020).

2.3. Family background and adolescent mental health

Indeed, single parenthood can present substantial challenges for both parents and children, potentially heightening the susceptibility to mental health issues and psychological distress. Studies suggest that single-parent households may encounter additional stressors and socioeconomic disparities compared to more conventional family arrangements, which can impact family functioning and overall well-being.

While there has been a longstanding acknowledgment of the disadvantages confronting single-parent families, it is crucial to acknowledge the multifaceted and intricate nature of factors influencing outcomes within these families. While single parenthood may entail unique obstacles, outcomes can exhibit considerable variation contingent upon factors such as the availability of social support networks, financial resources, and individual resilience.

Consistent research underscores the substantial influence of the family environment on health outcomes, particularly during pivotal developmental stages such as adolescence. Studies, such as the one conducted by Jiang and Jiang (2021), underscore the significance of family structure in safeguarding the mental health of teenagers, with two-parent biological households often associated with more favorable outcomes.

Disruptions in family structure, such as divorce or the loss of a parent, can exert profound effects on the mental health of both children and parents. Importantly, the impact of these disruptions varies, with divorce often associated with heightened emotional and behavioral challenges compared to other forms of disruption. Furthermore, certain characteristics in caregivers and children serve as risk factors for intra-family abuse, including young age, depression, substance abuse, poverty, and a history of childhood separation from caregivers.

Addressing these multifaceted issues necessitates a comprehensive approach that considers both individual and systemic factors shaping family dynamics and well-being. This may entail offering support services for families navigating transitions, promoting mental health awareness and resilience-building within families, and addressing broader social determinants of health such as poverty and substance abuse.

The presence of unrelated male partners in the household can pose an additional risk factor for male caregivers, akin to the risk factors observed in female caregivers. Research indicates that approximately 30% of children are expected to reside with unrelated surrogate fathers (Oliver, 2006). Moreover, studies have underscored the substantial impact of having a stepparent in the household on the risk of abuse, with the presence of a stepparent elevating the risk by a striking factor of 20–40 times compared to residing in a biologically intact family. Conversely, the risk of abuse is approximately 14 times higher when living with a single mother compared to residing in a biologically intact family (Oliver, 2006). These findings underscore the necessity of considering family structure and dynamics in assessing risk factors for child abuse and devising appropriate interventions.

Peer pressure, defined as the emotional or mental influence exerted by individuals within the same social group to conform to specific behaviors or attitudes, profoundly influences adolescent behavior and reflects their yearning for acceptance and belonging (Bern & Farrell, 2010). This social pressure can compel individuals to adopt the attitudes, beliefs, or values of their peers to assimilate (Jones, 2010).

Furthermore, peer pressure encompasses the influences exerted by members of the same social group, such as age, grade, or status, on each other to conform to specific behaviors or norms (Hartney, 2011; Weinfield, 2010;

Sivasubramanian, 2007). While peer groups play a crucial role in the socialization and development of children, particularly during adolescence, the drawbacks often outweigh the benefits, especially given the increasing technological proficiency of youngsters (Walters, 2019).

For example, peer associations have been correlated with challenges in adolescents' assertiveness (Etodike et al., 2017, as cited in Consiglio et al., 2023) and social maladjustment (Ifinedo, 2014). This highlights the necessity for a nuanced understanding of peer dynamics and the implementation of strategies to foster healthy social development while mitigating the adverse impacts of peer pressure.

Peer pressure assumes a pivotal role in the social, psychological, and academic development of adolescents (Klarin, 2016). It shapes how adolescents form social bonds, navigate relationships, and construct their identities. Intriguingly, research suggests that female adolescents may be more susceptible to peer pressure, resulting in negative psychological outcomes compared to their male counterparts (McMillan et al., 2018).

Fatima (2015) conducted a study exploring the relationship between peer pressure, psychological well-being, gender, locality, and academic achievement among adolescents. The research revealed that males tend to experience more peer pressure compared to females. However, intriguingly, there was no significant difference in the psychological well-being of male and female students, suggesting that the impact of peer pressure on psychological outcomes may vary across genders.

These findings underscore the intricate interplay between peer pressure, gender, and psychological well-being during adolescence. While males may encounter more external pressure from peers, both genders are susceptible to the psychological ramifications of conforming to peer norms. Understanding these dynamics is paramount for developing interventions and support systems that foster healthy peer relationships and psychological well-being during this pivotal developmental stage.

2.4. Social media

Social media has evolved into an indispensable aspect of modern society, with a considerable portion of its users comprising students (Wiley & Sisson, 2006; Hasugian et al., 2020). The emergence of the internet has revolutionized various facets of human life, affecting domains ranging from education and socialization to commerce and entertainment (Pratt et al., 2011). Indeed, the internet has become so pervasive in our lives that it has displaced traditional modes of interaction and communication (Steinberg et al., 2009).

The extensive utilization of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram underscores the profound influence of the internet on contemporary society. Adeyeye et al. (2013), referencing Kubani (2010) in Umeogu&Ojiakor (2014), highlight this paradigm shift, citing staggering statistics such as over 500 million Facebook users, 50 million tweets, 450 million mobile internet users, and 68 million bloggers. These statistics underscore the transformative impact of the internet on global communication and social interaction.

However, alongside its benefits, the widespread use of the internet and social media also poses challenges and drawbacks. Issues such as online harassment, cyberbullying, misinformation, and excessive screen time have emerged as significant concerns in the digital age. Moreover, the perpetual connectivity facilitated by social media can contribute to feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression among users.

Social media has ingrained itself as a fundamental aspect of contemporary life, offering a plethora of platforms for user engagement. From Badoo and LinkedIn to Telegram and Twitter, the options are abundant. However, in 2017, the top four social media sites were identified as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter (Statista, 2017, as cited in Mensah &Kyei, 2019). Furthermore, recent research by Motteram et al. (2020) highlighted WhatsApp and Facebook as the most subscribed social media apps in Nigeria, thereby influencing the focus of the current study on these platforms to the exclusion of others.

Before exploring the drawbacks of social media, it's essential to acknowledge its positive contributions. The internet, including social media platforms, has played a crucial role in various domains such as academia, business, youth empowerment, and entrepreneurship (Umeogu&Ojiakor, 2014; Mensah &Kyei, 2019; Fab-Ukozor&Ojiakor, 2020). It has facilitated the dissemination of knowledge, provided avenues for networking and collaboration, and empowered individuals to showcase their talents and creativity.

Additionally, the Internet has streamlined administrative tasks and facilitated remote work arrangements, as highlighted by Stoltenberg (2024) and Etodike&Ojiakor (2020). However, alongside these benefits, the widespread use of social media has also given rise to new challenges and problems. Job loss and unemployment have been associated with the proliferation of social media (Etodike et al., 2018), while issues such as sexual harassment, academic procrastination, and cyber-loafing have become prevalent concerns (Anierobi et al., 2021; Etodike&Ojiakor, 2020). Furthermore, the use of social media while driving has been linked to dangerous in-vehicular dialogic communication, posing risks to road safety (Ojiakor, 2019). Moreover, social media use has been implicated in increasing vulnerability to sexual risk behavior (Etodike&Ojiakor, 2020).

In recent years, the accessibility of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp has become ubiquitous, facilitated by the widespread use of mobile phones (Luik, 2010, as cited in Kumar & Nanda, 2024). Regardless of age or socioeconomic background, individuals can now access these platforms anytime and anywhere, thanks to the convenience offered by mobile technology. This proliferation of mobile devices, available in various forms, sizes, and price ranges, has significantly increased youths' exposure and vulnerability to new media content and associated risks (Szpilko et al., 2020).

It's worth noting that gone are the days when internet access was limited to computers. Today, phone manufacturers have made significant strides in reducing the cost and complexity of mobile devices, making internet connectivity accessible even on devices previously considered basic, such as the 'Nokia torch.' This democratization of internet access has expanded the reach of social media platforms to a broader audience, including individuals in remote or underserved areas.

2.5. Theoretical framework

The study draws upon Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, rooted in the broader framework of social work learning theory (Ayala-Enríquez& Guerrero-Dib, 2024). Albert Bandura's social learning theory posits that human behavior is shaped by the interaction between individual cognitive factors (the person) and environmental influences (the environment), expressed as $B=F(P&E)$ (Alqahtani, 2024). Here, the term "person" encompasses cognitive processes, while "environment" refers to social models and situational contingencies affecting the individual.

Bandura emphasizes the intricate interplay among these three elements, suggesting that behavior, perceptions, and environmental factors mutually influence each other (Yang & Salman, 2024). Behavior can either be influenced by perceptions or lead to changes in perceptions, while environmental circumstances can likewise shape behavior or be modified by it (Jeong et al., 2024).

Applied to adolescents, this theory provides insights into the complex dynamics of peer pressure, time management, and academic performance (Cheng et al., 2013). Adolescents navigate a multitude of social influences, including peer pressure and family background, which interact with individual cognitive processes to shape behavior and outcomes. For example, the pressure to conform to peer norms may impact adolescents' time management strategies, subsequently affecting their academic performance.

Moreover, environmental factors such as family dynamics and exposure to social media play significant roles in adolescents' mental health outcomes. Bandura's theory suggests that these external influences interact with adolescents' cognitive processes to shape their perceptions and behaviors, ultimately impacting their mental well-being.

Bandura's social learning theory highlights the intricate relationship between individual cognition, behavior, and environmental influences, suggesting that these factors are highly interrelated and mutually influential (Donalds&Osei-Bryson, 2019). Adolescents' behaviors may thus be influenced by a combination of internal cognitive factors and external environmental factors, such as peer relationships and significant others (Clough, 2015). This perspective underscores the importance of considering both individual and environmental factors when studying adolescent behavior and development.

Within adolescents, certain cognitive or personal factors may predispose them to specific behaviors, while the environment, including friends, peers, and significant others, can further shape their actions and time management practices (Clough, 2015). Bandura's theory provides a framework for understanding the dynamic interaction between these internal and external influences, shedding light on the complexities of adolescent behavior.

Moreover, the theory's emphasis on environmental factors, particularly the influence of peers and social networks, aligns with the role of social media in contemporary society (Peck &Shu, 2018). Social media platforms have become

integral parts of adolescents' lives, offering avenues for social interaction, information dissemination, and self-expression. The globalization and technological advancements facilitated by social media have indeed transformed the world into a global village, as predicted by Marshall McLuhan.

3. Methodology

The central aim of this research is to investigate the influence of psychosocial factors on the mental well-being of adolescents in Ibadan North local government. These psychosocial factors encompass social media usage, peer pressure, experiences of gender discrimination, and family background. This chapter outlines the research design, population, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods.

3.1. Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive correlational research design. This approach does not involve the manipulation of variables but rather examines the relationships between them. The dependent variables include social media usage, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background, while the independent variable is adolescents' mental health. The design observes and records information as it naturally occurs during the study period.

3.2. Population

The participants in the study are adolescents residing in Ibadan North local government of Oyo State. The population encompasses both male and female students and represents diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds within the area.

3.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study's sample size comprised 300 respondents, selected through a multistage sampling procedure. Firstly, a Purposive sampling technique was employed to choose in-school adolescents in Ibadan North Local Government area. Secondly, a simple random technique was used to select ten out of the sixteen public schools in the area. A stratified sampling technique was then employed to select middle-aged adolescents (aged 13-16 years) in Senior Secondary one and two. Next, a proportional sampling technique was used to select thirty students from each of the ten selected secondary schools. Finally, a simple random technique using balloting was employed to select fifteen students in each of the two classes, Senior Secondary School One and Two, in each school. The sample included both male and female students from the senior secondary school category.

3.4. Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire was utilized for data collection to ensure the reliability of the study's outcomes. SECTION A of the questionnaire gathered demographic data of the respondents, including gender, age, religion, and family structure. Other valid and standardized instruments were also employed for data collection in the study.

3.5. Peer influence scale

The peer influence scale was developed by (Creswell, 2014). The scale was developed to measure peer influence on students' behavior. The scale has a variety of items with different response scales and formats. The scale consists of 15 items and each item was rated using 5 5-point Likert scoring scale which includes; Strongly Agree=5 to Strongly Disagree=1. Two sample items are: 1). The developers reported a reliability of 0.79

3.6. Social Media Addiction Scale

The scale was developed by Aylin Tutgun-ünal and LeventDeniz (2015), the scale is composed of four factors and it has 41 items explaining 59% of the variance altogether. The correlation between the scale and the "Facebook Addiction Scale" adapted from the Internet Addiction test of Young for Facebook (Çam and İşbulan, 2012) was found to be 0.75. Again, the correlation between the scale and "Generalized Problematic Internet Use Scale 2". The internal consistency coefficient (α) was found to be, 967. The test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be 0.84

The scale was reduced to 20 items and the rating scale was also changed from never, Rarely Sometimes, Often, and Always to the Likert scale (Strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree). However, a pilot study was conducted to determine the reusability of the instrument and a reliability of 0.75 was obtained.

3.7. Adolescent mental health scale

The scale was developed by the researchers using Likert scale (Strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree). It has 11 items. The scale was given to 3 experts to determine its validity. The scale was piloted using 30 students from college of education and the reliability of 0.89, however a pilot study was conducted to determine the reusability of the instrument and reliability was obtained. There is no reverse statement in the scale hence the score of the items is summed to know the total score of the respondents, high score shows high mental health.

3.8. Gender Discrimination scale

The scale was developed by the researchers using Likert scale (Strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree). It has 11 items with a reliability of 0.79

3.9. Procedure of Administration

The instrument was administered to the respondents in their respective schools with the assistance of research assistants. The students were briefed on the importance of their cooperation, emphasizing that the study aimed to enhance emotional intelligence. Respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The data collection process spanned two weeks, during which approximately 300 questionnaires were administered. Subsequently, the data were scored and input into SPSS for analysis.

4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). Descriptive and inferential statistics, such as simple percentages, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Multiple Regression Analysis, were employed at a significance level of 0.05.

4.1. Testing of Research Questions

4.1.1. Research question 1: What is the relationship between social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background impact on adolescent mental health in Ibadan North local government?

Table 1 Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationship between social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background impact on adolescent mental health.

Variables	Mental health	Gender Discrimination	Family Background	Peer pressure	Social media
Mental health	1	0.165**	0.106**	-0.080	-0.188**
Gender Discrimination	0.165**	1	-0.059	-0.091	0.369**
Peer pressure	-0.080	-0.091	-0.494**	1	-0.104
Social media	0.188**	0.369**	0.184**	-0.104	1
Mean	35.4100	12.9200	43.800	35.2900	17.4533
STD.D	3.2316	3.30909	6.27358	6.11.4223	6.13841

The table shows that there was positive significant relationships between Gender Discrimination ($r = .165$; $p < 0.05$), social media ($r = .188$; $p < 0.05$) and Mental health. Also, there was negative significant relationship between Peer pressure ($r = -.080$) and adolescent mental health. This implies social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background are influential factors of mental health.

4.1.2. Research question 2: What is the composite contribution of social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background to adolescent mental health?

Table 2 Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis on Composite Contribution of Independent Variables to mental health.

R = .232					
R Square = 0.54					
Adjusted R Square = 0.41					
Std. Error of the Estimate = 3.16461					
Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Regression	168.213	4	42.053	4.199	0.000*
Residual	2954.357	295	10.015		
Total	3122.5370	299			

Table reveals that the composite contribution of social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background to adolescent mental health was significant ($F_{(4,295)} = 4.199$; $p < 0.05$). The Table further revealed a multiple regression coefficient ($R = 0.55$) and multiple regression adjusted ($R^2 = 0.41$), This implies that 55% of the variation in mental health among the respondents were accounted for by the joint effect of the independent variables when taken together while the remaining may be due to other factors and residuals.

4.1.3. Research question 3: What is the relative contribution of social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background to adolescent mental health?

Table 3 Summary of Multiple Regression Showing Relative Contribution of Independent variables to mental health

Model	Under Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
	Beta (β)	Std. Error	Beta (β)		
(Constant)	31.107	2.565		12.126	0.000
Gender Discrimination	0.120	0.061	0.122	1.970	0.050
Peer pressure	-0.008	0.035	-0.015	-0.221	0.825
Social media	0.066	0.033	0.126	2.012	0.045

Table 3 reveals the relative contributions of gender discrimination, peer pressure and social media to adolescents' mental health. The relative contributions of gender discrimination ($\beta = 0.122$; $t = 1.970$, $p < 0.05$), and Social media ($\beta = 0.126$; $t = 2.012$, $p < 0.05$) to adolescent mental health were significant. It follows that social media predicts adolescents' mental health most, followed by gender discrimination and family background in that order.

5. Discussion

The study revealed that there was positive significant relationships between Gender Discrimination, Family Background, social media and adolescent mental health. Also, there was negative significant relationship between Peer pressure cybercrime. This implies social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background are influential factors of mental health.

Also that 55% of the variation in mental health among the respondents were accounted for by the joint effect of the independent variables (social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background) when taken together while the remaining may be due to other factors and residuals.

More so, social media predicts adolescents' mental health most, followed by gender discrimination and family background in that order.

6. Conclusion

The study investigates social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background impact on adolescents' mental health in Ibadan North local government.

It was discovered that gender discrimination and social media has a positive relationship with adolescents' mental health. It showed that social media, peer pressure, gender discrimination, and family background are influential factors of mental health,

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study.

- Counsellors should constantly be in contact with the youths to educate them on mental health creating awareness and how best to manage their feelings and emotions without getting depressed and stigmatized.
- Develop peer support groups where adolescents can openly discuss challenges related to peer pressure, friendships, and social dynamics in a safe, non-judgmental environment. Mental health professionals or trained facilitators can guide these groups, helping to reinforce positive social interactions.
- Also, parents should endeavor to provide the adequate love and care for their adolescents in order to protect their mental health. Parents should ensure that useful pieces of information on adolescents mental health, positive affirmative words should be provided for adolescents at home in order guide against been influenced by destructive information from friends and media.
- Schools should incorporate gender-sensitive content in their curriculum, ensuring that both boys and girls are equally represented in textbooks, lesson plans, and teaching materials.
- The influence of the gender discrimination and social media need to be given priority attention, the social media could be made to provide filtered and strict messages that protect adolescent mental health.

Limitations of the Study

This study embarked on an investigation on impact of Gender Discrimination, Family Background, social media on adolescent mental health despite all effort to make the work fault free there are still some short coming, which are:

- The scope of the study was limited to one local government in Ibadan which may impede the generalization of the result when considering other local government on Ibadan, Oyo state and the country (especially the south western part of the country).
- There are other variable that could predict adolescents mental health that are not include in the study e.g self-concept, self-esteem, self-control. However despite all odds the findings of this study was still able to provide answers to the research questions raised.

6.1. Suggestions for Further Studies

Though attempt have been made in this study to investigate impact Gender Discrimination, Family Background, social mediaon adolescents' mental health in Ibadan North local government. However, the following are suggested for further research.

- A Broader sample size should be adopted
- The population should be increased to enhance the generalization of the result. That is, selected secondary school in Ibadan can be included and even in the local government we studied.
- Other promising variables could be included as predictors to mental health in this 21st century

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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