Original Paper

Influence of Family Supervision and Peer Pressure on Female Students Behavior in Public Secondary Schools: A study conducted in Ubungo Municipality, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

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Abstract

Young female students are often torn between family supervision, which can be positive or negative, and peer pressure to conform to the pressures on life decisions and behavior orientation as they grow up and learn. Little is known as to how they cope especially in a large city and with the media influence they face. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influences on female students' behaviour (focusing on family supervision and peer pressure) in public secondary schools. Specifically, the study intended to determine the nature of family supervision and peer pressure among female students; to identify the main forms of behavioural issues that affect female students' learning; and to find out in what ways family and peer pressure influences female students' behaviour focusing on time management, work habits and truancy. The study has used a descriptive research design employing questionnaires and interview guides to collect data from a sample of 133 students, 50 teachers, 10 parents and 4 school heads. Qualitative data [mainly interviews with students, parents and teachers] collected were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques while quantitative data from a questionnaire used descriptive statistics approach. The study found that parents, school environment, peers and school management have both negative and positive effects on female students' behaviour inside and outside school. It has also revealed that some students learn bad behaviour from their homes and community with some of the friends influencing to affect their academic performance. The most predominant disciplinary cases among female students were involvement in sexual relationships while schooling. The study concluded that parental supervision and teacher-parents coordination is essential in providing learning support to female students. The study recommends that administering corporal

punishment in school should focus on shaping childrens' behaviour rather than cause psychological torture. Frequent seminars and meetings between students and teachers on the importance of schooling are essential in raising awareness. Additionally, schools may invite experts from a government institution or private organization responsible for transforming students' behaviour who will talk to students about adolescence and its social impact. Owners and managers of schools should establish a friendly schooling environment that promotes and enhance the teaching and learning process. Schools should be fenced to avoid external interactions and prevent truancy.

Keywords

Family supervision, Peer pressure, Behaviour

1. Introduction

Although many nations in the World are determined to create more opportunities for girls' education to meet the Millennium Development Goals, girls still face numerous challenges, particularly in poor countries. According to UNESCO (2008), among 150 million children who are out of school, 100 million (66.6%) are girls. The importance of education cannot be over-emphasized. It helps girls avoid going backwards and experiencing oppression, it is known that most of the poorest people in the World are those who are less educated. Girls' education is even more importance since about three-quarters of the poorest people in the World are women. (Klasen, 2002). When girls are equipped with education, they develop knowledge and skills that help them to live actively, hence contributing to socio-economic development.

Children in adolescent age share their problems and feelings with their friends, the nature of the relationship with friends depends on the parenting style (Tope, 2011). Past research has found that a strong relationship with parents may result in a weak relationship with friends and vice versa (Tope, 2011; Carvallo & Gabriel, 2006)). Research findings from Carvallo and Gabriel (2006) have shown that regardless of what people claim, we all need to belong and thus have affiliation needs. Accordingly, people make friends for social acceptance out of curiosity to become socially influenced to get to know people around them.

Previous literature indicates that family engagement in supporting female students' discipline is necessary for the growth of female students in achieving their academic goals. Posti-Ahokas and Lehtomaki (2014) have revealed that National Examinations are used as the primary tools for selection and transition. Students who aim to proceed to upper secondary education, the form four examinations form the bottleneck. Transitions from lower to upper secondary education are a critical stage for girls, in particular, and the dropout rates of girls in secondary education are higher than those of boys. Lammer (2007), revealed that sharing views between parents, teachers and students can reach a better solution not only for school but also for students' academic progress. Albert Hein and Steinberg (2013), said good communication and a positive relationship with a girl's child might encourage her to talk if she is feeling negative influence from peers. Hardcastle (2002), has noted that peer pressure is one that

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all teens have in common and is found everywhere no matter how popular you are, how well linked you may be or how together you feel, sooner or later you will have to adapt to a group standard (like dressing style, or participating in particular activities and clubs) or pressure to act (like having sex, drug abuse or alcohol, or estranging another teen).

How successful you handle peer pressure depends a great deal on how you feel about yourself and your place in the World (Haynie, 2002; Hardcastle, 2002). Hard castle (2002) noted that social influence can occur at three levels; families, friends, and communities and the media. Boujlaleb and Owens (2006) found that peers normally have a more powerful influence on adolescents as compared to families while Haynie (2002) revealed that "adolescents get their self-esteem from a group they belong to and they cannot imagine themselves outside the gathering". Without a group of friends, one has low self-esteem and they are powerless. They see friends or peers as a vital component in their life without which they cannot live. Now the one goes where the peers go if they are good in studies to have healthy competition everyone in the group will be academically good and a high achiever but if they are indulged in negative activities then it's difficult for one to prevent him not to involve in it. So they will be low achievers.

Behavioural scientists such as Erickson also agreed that adolescence is a period of storm and stress, several studies have been conducted to investigate peer pressure and its relationship with academic and social factors. For instance, Tope (2011) investigated the influence of the peer group on adolescent's academic performance and recommended that parents and teachers may provide adequate guidance to adolescents to help them understand how friends can positively or negatively influence their academic performance. On the other hand, studies such as the one carried out by Qolesa (2017), has found that teenage pregnancy is influenced by many interrelated factors, these factors include risky sexual, family supervision, peer influence and poor child communication. Thus, literature has shown a close relationship between involvement of family in supervising female student's behaviour and managing peer pressure.

Therefore this study has investigated the influence of family supervision and peer pressure on female student's behaviour in Ubungo Municipality by determining the nature of family supervision and peer pressure among female students.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Families have a great influence on children guidance towards achieving self-goals (Dickson et al, 2015; Kambunga, 2017). The attachment between the parent and child is important for the child's social and emotional development while family supervision is a major factor responsible in influencing adolescent behaviour. Studies have found that high family monitoring decreases the likelihood of risky practices (Dickson et al., 2015; Kambunga, 2017).

Peer pressure is a normal part of growing up but affects many of the teenagers in the world today (Bobbies & Elhaney, 2005). Peers can be in a form of family members, friends or those persons who work together and can have either positive or negative impact to a person.

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Several studies have further shown a negative impact of poor family supervision and peer pressure in adolescent's development (Kirk, 2000; Bobbies & Elhaney, 2005; Dickson et al., 2015; Kambunga, 2017). Some studies found that in certainty, girls are affected more by the pressure to conform than boys (Dickson et al., 2015).

The literature has reported that in Tanzanian schools students' disciplinary problems often include, among others, truancy, padding drugs, drug abuse, bullying, taking alcohol, smoking, sexual affairs, abusive language, running away from home, early marriage, escaping school and theft (Uslu, 2013). Other discipline cases include classroom noise, late coming to school, the improper wearing of the school uniform, laziness and failure to complete a school assignment (Zindi, 1995). In combating such behaviour, parents, guardians and teachers sometimes resign applying corporal punishment (Zindi, 1995).

Accordingly, there is a need in Tanzania to design appropriate strategies that can assist female students to overcome challenges of peer pressure and establish the root cause whether it's the lack of guidance and counselling during their maturity process or an irresponsible family. Most families throw blames to peer pressure, but some analysts put all blame on poor family upbringing (Albert et al., 2013; Qolesa, 2017). However, there is a need to investigate this issue with respect to female adolescents in the country. Therefore, this study has been centered in investigating reasons for female student's misbehaviour by focusing on family supervision and peer pressure in Dar es Salaam city using selected Ubungo Municipality Public Secondary Schools as case study.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design and Sample

The study employed descriptive research design; this was used by a researcher to collect opinions and views from a group of individuals and demonstrate a clear picture of the situation on how the peer pressure and family supervision influences female student's discipline. It attempted to explore and explain while providing additional information about describing people, groups, organizations and give the clear view of given situation in time management, work habits and truancy. The target population of this study was heads of schools, teachers, students and parents. The sample of the study incorporated 4 heads of schools, 50 teachers, 133 female students and 10 parents to make a total of 197 respondents.

2.2 Data Collection Instruments

The study used interview guide and questionnaire as the methods of data collection based on influence of family supervision and peer pressure on female student's behaviour in Secondary School. Questionnaires were distributed to teachers and students while heads of school, parents and few students was interviewed. The study administered closed – ended questionnaire to students and teachers to get short and clear information on the problem studied. Questionnaire included two parts; first part of the questionnaire had questions on demographic information. It enabled the researcher to collect background information from respondents. Part two of the questionnaire covered specific questions about female

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behaviour related to family supervision and peer pressure. The study employed semi-structured interview to heads of schools, parents and few students, on how they think peer pressure and family supervision influences female discipline. Semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to ask probing questions for more elaboration in their day to day practices in school setting and in their home surrounding.

3. Result

This part presents findings on the nature of family supervision and peer pressure among students in secondary schools. We used interview guide and questionnaire to collect data and to find out how the nature of family supervision and peer pressure influences female behaviour. Table 1 summarizes key findings from the questionnaire.

Table 1. Nature of Family and Peers among Students

	Strong Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strong Agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
The School environment can affect student behavior	31	24.1	16	12	-	-	67	50. 4	19	14.3
Some students learn bad behavior from their friends	-	-	-	-	-	-	64	48.1	69	51.9
Some students learn bad behavior from their home/community	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	40.6	79	59.4
I spend most of my time to study and learn	03	2.6	04	3	07	5.3	41	30.8	78	58.7
I spend much of my time to hang out with friends	70	52.6	37	27.8	06	4.5	11	8.8	09	6.8
I am very careful when I choose a friend to be with	-	-	33	24.8	10	7.5	-	-	90	67.7
Some of my friends' influence has a negative effect on my academic achievement	08	6	36	27	09	6.8	54	40.6	26	19.5

The school environment is closely linked to the interpersonal relations between students and teachers. According to Crosnoe *et al.* (2004), school climate is the general atmosphere of the school. The researcher sought to find out how the school environment influences student behaviour. The school environment is also including aspects such as the presence of school fence, community living near the school, economic and social infrastructure like shops, market, road and grocery.

Responses from 133 female students who were given questionnaires, suggest that the school environment has an effect on students behaviour. This was agreed by (64.7%) of the respondents while (36.3%) disagreed. The open fence tempts students to sneak out of school and "dissolve" into the city, joining gangs of drinkers, smokers, idlers etc.

The findings imply that the school environment which including school surrounding and availability of school fence affect students' moral practices. The way the teacher uses a variety of pedagogical techniques inside the classroom might affect the classroom environment. Students may manifest disruptive behaviour when he/she makes ineffective use of innovative pedagogy; shows little interest in students; does not provide academic feedback and guidance; does not communicate effectively; fails to plan in a proactive manner; uses punitive or reactive measures; teaches an irrelevant curriculum; comes late to class and uses the mobile phone in class. Gutuza and Mapolisa (2015) and Edinyang (2017) found the following school features that encourage students to misbehave: overcrowded classroom and too much harsh discipline measures. Students were also required to state how teachers reacted when they behave unlawfully. Figure 1 summarize the students' responses.
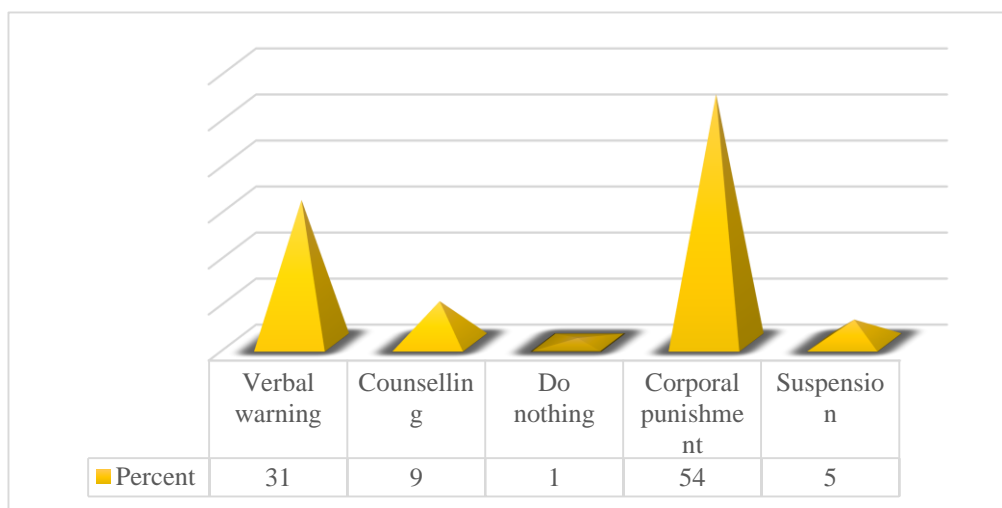

Percent	Verbal warning	Counselling	Do nothing	Corporal punishment	Suspension
	31	9	1	54	5

Figure 1. Teachers' Reactions when Students Misbehave

Figure 1 above shows that the most reaction which teachers prefer corporal punishment (54%) and verbal warning (31%). Corporal punishment is the most favorable response from teachers when

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students misbehave however there is quite a debate on its effectiveness and whether it helps to shape the students, especially when used as a daily routine

It was also revealed by the respondents that some students learn bad behaviour from their community. Communities include neighbours from home, parents, siblings and other socialization agents. From the findings, (59.4%) strongly agreed while (40.6%) agreed that some of the inappropriate behaviour from the students originated from where a student was nurtured. Some parents do not have adequate time to take care of their children at home. Children lack parental guidance as they engage in unwelcome acts in societies and schools. Some other parents are bad models to their children because they teach them bad behaviours. Gorret (2010) notes that teachers and parents work together as a group to provide mutually agreed-upon obligations and expectations regarding discipline, the results of academic performance as related to discipline should not only be attributed to teachers but to parents as well. Findings also tallied with Opdenakker and Damme (2005) who suggested that the parents' attitude (parent pressure) and activities like coaching and support to the formal education of their child has a unique and positive effect on effort and achievement of children; although it is weakly related to the socio-economic status of parents.

Teachers agreed that there are other factors that lead to misconduct among students. Fig 2 illustrates this.
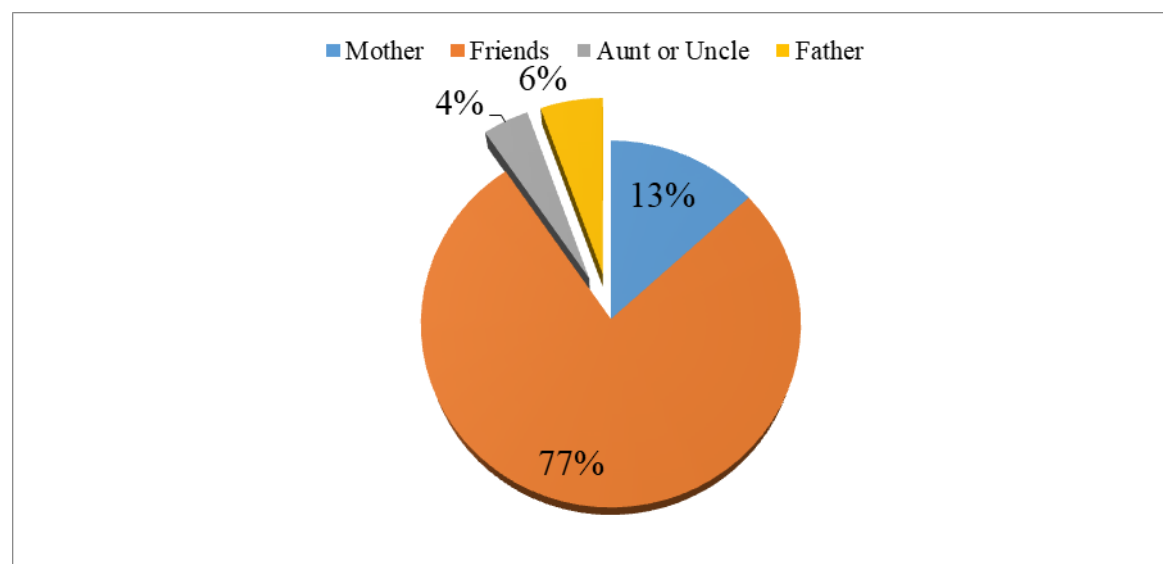

Figure 2. Closest Person to Consult

Figure 2 illustrates the closest person to consult before making a decision such as dressing, eating and visiting recreation areas. Students replied that friends are the closest person who consults first even before parents. From the findings 77% of the respondents stated that a friend is the first person to be consulted before making a decision, 13% stated that the mother is the first while 6% go to the father, and 4% mentioned aunt or Uncle. From the findings, it is evident that friends have much influence on

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female students' behaviour and decision-making. Friends can provide many positive elements in an adolescent's life. It is important, however, to remember that friends can potentially have a deadly impact or other various negative effects according to Howard (2004), friends have always been exposed to peer influence.

5. Discussion

The study found that most of the female students learn bad behaviour from their family and peers, and this has been observed in table 1, researcher was interested to know if the students learn bad behaviour from their home/community

79(59.4%) strongly agree, and 54 (40.6%) agreed with the statement. This means that the majority of students learn bad behaviour from their families. The study revealed that some students learn bad behaviour from their friends as it was shown in table 1, 69 (51.9%) strongly agree, and 64 (48.1%) agree that some students learn bad behaviour from their friends. Most of the forms of behaviour existing in schools are attributed from family and peer pressure. The study revealed that school environment affects students' behaviour as 67(50.4%) agree, 19(14.3%) strongly agree, that school environment affects students' behaviour.

Additionally, the researcher found out that (77%) of the students consult their friends on the social issue, (13%) consulted their mother, and (6%) consulted their father and (4%) aunt or uncle. Friends play a great role on influencing fellow friends on their behaviour.

Respondents asked to agree or disagree statement that fellow friends harm academic performance. The response indicated that 54(40.6%) agree and 26(19.5%) strongly agree that some friends influence harms academic performance. Furthermore, the study results indicated that students spend most of their time learning, it was shown by 78(58.7%) strongly agree, 41(30.8%) agreed, and only 3(2.6%) strongly disagree with the statement. This means leisure time is less than study time.

In general, a school in modern-day times regarding cultural assimilations and social relations has given a great chance that made it relied upon by the entire society to protect, guide and provide academic training and discipline to their children to become good citizens. Socialization a child gets at the family level must build a good foundation of ethics to experience good discipline in the future. The study concluded that parents, peers, school environment and school management can have a negative and positive effect on female discipline inside and outside school. The study further concluded that parental supervision is essential in providing good behaviour to female students that will support them in the learning process. Teacher–parent coordination and communication prevent female students from bad behaviour. Counselling/guidance and supervision from school heads and teachers bring a positive effect on female students' behaviour.

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