

PEER INFLUENCE SCALE FOR SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Adolescent culture may not be a reflection of adult culture, but it cannot be an alienated one also. A known fact is that western culture having its own uniqueness differs distinctly from our Indian culture. This is easily observable in behaviours, attitudes and orientations towards life in most of the adolescents. The prolonging economic dependence of Indian adolescents on parents, conservative social attitude especially on hetero-sexual development etc., naturally give us the scope to doubt whether Indian adolescents are having any distinctive culture either supportive or distractive. At the beginning of this twenty first century, an accelerating change is felt in every aspect of life. It is therefore necessary to know more about the trend of development of future generations of the coming century.

Studies done outside India gives ample evidence to believe that peer groups and friends provide the adolescent with an arena for much of the learning that occurs in early adolescence. But the direct approaches used in most of the studies, provide the concept of peer group as a problem instead of an asset. Experimentation with an indirect approach is therefore justified which can offer the possibilities of conscious and constructive direction of the peer group. This possibility is more intense in early adolescent classroom peer group, which leads to a worth probing issue viz., 'whether adolescent peer group in educational setting can be used as a supplementary structure.'

The role of classroom peer group as membership group and reference group has already been discussed. But how far adolescents use it as a referential framework? Undoubtedly, peer group provides motivation for achievement. But to what extent can it exert influence in the field of education? Success in education or achievement cannot be evaluated properly without knowing one's educational aspiration. In the process of aspiration formation, the influence of significant others is an issue supported by social psychologists. But whether classroom peer group can be attributed as significant in aspiration formation process of Indian adolescents is a field to explore.

Although is of recent origin, a significant trend has been observed amongst the researchers to explore possible' relationship between social aspect and cognitive domain of the individual. No doubt they are not mutually exclusive, as empirical evidence supports for partial-overlapping between the two. The scope is therefore promising that-a fuller sampling of the child's social behaviour, both in and out of school might yield greater evidence for the distinctive influence of social functioning on cognitive development.

School peer-group as discuss is an important agency of socialization, which can at the same time operate the comparative function of reference group also. The possibility of using school peer group especially during adolescence as a supplementary structure in the field of education leads to the context and need of the investigation undertaken.

So the investigator realizing the importance of peer influence because the today life is very busy and parents doesn't have sufficient time for their children. Peers/Friends play very

important role in their life. They influence their life with both aspects positively and negatively some students take it positively and they succeeds in their life but rest that take it negatively they may destroyed their life. That's why investigator decided that there is a need to study.

RATIONALE

Peer influence is a critical factor affecting adolescents' development, particularly during the senior secondary school years. During this stage, students undergo significant psychological, social, and academic changes, making them particularly susceptible to peer influence. Understanding the extent and nature of this influence is essential for educators, parents, and policymakers to foster positive development and mitigate potential negative impacts. The aim of developing a tool on peer Influence Scale by exploring five domains of peer influence and their relationships to adolescents' problem and pro-social behaviours to assess the peer influence on their career, education or decisions about their life. Whatever may be the views and contradictory ideas regarding the developmental process during adolescence in any social context, it is obvious that to understand the adolescents fully, one needs to consider the cultural context, where they have been brought up and the social institutions where they are constant interactors. The primary objective of this study is to develop and validate a Peer Influence Scale tailored for senior secondary school students. The specific objectives include:

1. ***Identifying Key Dimensions*:** To determine the key dimensions of peer influence relevant to senior secondary school students, including academic, social, and behavioral aspects.
2. ***Scale Development*:** To construct a reliable and valid scale based on identified dimensions, incorporating both positive and negative aspects of peer influence.
3. ***Validation and Reliability Testing*:** To test the scale's validity and reliability through rigorous psychometric analysis, ensuring it accurately measures peer influence among senior secondary students.

The present scale was meant for assessing the different levels of peer influence. The scale is meant for the individuals at the age of 15 (i.e. Higher Secondary).

PREPARATION OF ITEM POOL

For the development of the "Peer Influence scale" the researcher had studied different research related topics and develops items on the similar lines. Researcher had also scrutinized the tool from expertise team. They verified it and suggestion are included by researcher. Despite the extensive research on peer influence, there is a lack of standardized tools specifically designed to measure peer influence among senior secondary school students. Existing scales often cater to broader age groups or different educational contexts, potentially overlooking the unique experiences and challenges faced by this demographic. Developing a specific Peer Influence Scale for senior secondary school students is essential for several reasons:

1. ***Adolescent Vulnerability*:** Senior secondary students are at a critical juncture in their lives, making crucial decisions about their future. Understanding peer influence during this period can help identify factors that promote or hinder academic achievement, mental health, and overall well-being.
2. ***Educational Outcomes*:** Peer influence can significantly impact students' academic performance, motivation, and engagement. A specialized scale can help

educators and researchers identify how peer dynamics influence educational outcomes, enabling targeted interventions.

3. ***Behavioral and Social Development*:** Peer relationships during adolescence play a crucial role in shaping social behaviors, attitudes, and identity formation. A tailored scale can provide insights into how peer influence affects behaviors such as substance use, bullying, and pro-social activities.

Operational Definition of Peer influence: It is operationally defined in terms of areas such as academic, Family & Personal, Social, Recreation and Habits of the peers. Such areas act as influencing agents for others.

PILOT TRY-OUT

The preliminary draft consisted of 75 items was administered on 100 senior secondary school students from Barnala district. The scale was also given to experts of different professors of higher education including professors of University and colleges for determining the face validity. The scale is modified in the light of views obtained from language experts, research school of various universities on the basis of their suggestions. Some statements are modified, some added and some are removed and at last 50 items were retained. The five (5) components were selected by checking different items in the questionnaire and 50 statements as in Table 1

Table 1
Dimension-wise Item Pool in Peer influence Scale

Sr. No.	Dimensions	Total
1.	Academic	10
2.	Family and Personal	10
3.	Social	10
4.	Recreation	10
5.	Habits	10
Total 50		

SCORING

Responses were collected from 5-point Likert scale that is 5-Always, 4- Mostly, 3, Sometimes, 2-Rarely and 1- Never. It is a five point rating scale relatively always, mostly, sometime, rarely and never. The subjects have to select any of the option as per their level of agreement. All the items in the scale are positive, hence the items are scored as 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for the responses always, mostly, sometime, rarely and never respectively.

There is no time limit for completion of the scale. Proper instructions must be given to subjects that there is no right or wrong responses.

SAMPLE FOR TRY-OUT

For final tryout, sample of 300 senior secondary school students were randomly selected from senior secondary school students of Barnala district. The sample was divided according to demographic variables as shown in Table 3

Table 3
Sample distribution

Stream \ Gender	Male	Female	Total
Arts/Science	150	150	300
Urban/Rural			
Govt./Non-Govt.			

Item Analysis

Item analysis was also done. In this scale 10 items were modified and then retained. Thus the final form of the scale with 40 items were selected.

INSERT TABLE SHOWING THE ITEM-WISE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF HIGH AND LOW SCORING GROUP

Table 2
Major Dimensions of Peer Influence Scale

Sr. No.	Dimensions	Items	Total
1.	Academic	4,7,27,28,29,32,34,35,11	09
2.	Family and Personal	20,21,26,30,33,24,12,40	08
3.	Social	6,8,13,14,23,25,5	07
4.	Recreation	1,16,18,19,36,10,9,39,15	09
5.	Habits	2,3,17,22,31,37,38	07
Total			40

NORMS

Norms have been prepared for the Peer Influence Scale which has been shown in Table-3:

Table-3
Norms for Peer Influence Scale

Levels of Peer Influence	Range of Scores
High Influence	151 & Above
Average Influence	121-150
Low Influence	120 & Below

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF FINAL DRAFT OF PEER INFLUENCE SCALE
(for senior secondary school students)

RELIABILITY

The reliability of the peer influence scale was estimated through the test-retest and split-half method. The scale was administered on 50 college students and both male and female were selected randomly for administration and clarification was given regarding the use of the test. The scale was again administered on the same sample of 50 individuals after 15 days. Data were collected and scores on the items were calculated. The correlation of the scale has been found to be 0.85 which was found significant at 0.01 levels. Thus the final form of the scale was found to be reliable. After that split half method was used. There are 40 items which are divided into odd and even category. Then the score was calculated. The reliability of the scale through this method was found 0.80 which was found significant at 0.01 levels.

VALIDITY

The validity of the tools was determined by one method: face validity determined by the experts of education and languages from university and colleges of Education.

CONCLUSION

The researcher has carefully adhered to the required procedures in developing an instrument to measure senior secondary school students' perceived peer influence. Through a comprehensive process of construction and validation, the tool has demonstrated strong psychological soundness, reliability, and validity. This ensures that it can accurately assess peer influence among students. Given its methodological rigor and validation, the instrument is well-positioned for use in future studies within the Indian context. Its applicability in educational research will contribute to a deeper understanding of peer dynamics and their influence on students at the senior secondary level.

FINAL DRAFT OF THE TOOL PEER INFLUENCE SCALE

Sr. No.	STATEMENT	A	M	ST	R	N
1.	I believe in doing friendship with opposite gender.					
2.	I attend social functions with my friends.					
3.	I usually go for group study.					
4.	I participate in anti-social activities with my friends.					
5.	I tease opposite sex when I am with my friends.					
6.	I believe in taking intoxicants in the company of peers.					
7.	I make an annoyed gesture when my parents refuse me to go with friends.					
8.	I believe in studying late at the night.					
9.	I copy my friend's fashion.					
10.	I would do something that I know is wrong just to stay with friends.					
11.	I miss classes because my friends do that.					
12.	I ignore my parents for my friends.					
13.	I like to make friends on face book.					
14.	I spend the most time with friends.					
15.	I enjoy being with my peers.					
16.	I like shopping with my friends.					
17.	I travel without fare when I am with my friends.					
18.	I tell lie something just because I think friend would make fun of me.					
19.	I drive after drink when I am with my friends.					
20.	I take part in strike without any reason with my friends.					
21.	I take initiative for my friends.					
22.	My friend easily convinces me to go for a cinema.					
23.	I break traffic rules when I go out with my friends.					
24.	I believe that helping friends in exams is good.					
25.	I Gossip more when I am in group.					

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