

Effect of Peer Pressure on Mental Health of Students

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Abstract

Peer pressure has a tremendous impact on an individual's life by another individual. Positive peer pressure can be helpful for an individual to adopt good lifestyle, habits, and activities. Your peer can treat you effectively in a way to motivate you towards doing right and good things. Every human has variety in his behavior, like if we see a person around us is engaged in doing something for a good cause it would consequently leave a pleasant impression on one's mind and personality. We went through many research papers to get an idea how actually other countries have peer pressure faced by their senior students, so we decided to provide that database that everyone must be looking for. We had a discussion on aspects to be covered in this survey. Our survey designing included two stages. Initial, we created a sampling plan. 210 students from universities of Pakistan participated in the survey. Our target were students, mostly between 18-25 years old. The survey was accessed by male and female students with a participation of 38% and 62%, respectively. It concluded that students actually experienced both positive and negative peer pressures. 21% students have experienced positive peer pressure whereas 24% marked negative peer and the 55% responses were in favor of equal peer pressure. The survey tells that positive peer pressure victims are (3%) less than negative peer pressure. We conducted an anonymous survey report to know the honest reviews of students.

Keywords: Positive Peer pressure, Negative Peer Pressure, Students.

Introduction

Peer pressure has a huge impact on people's lives. It is a feeling that makes you do the same things like other people of your age or social group in order to be liked or respected by them. Peers may inspire or convince you somehow to bring in progressive changes in your life. So exposure to such people (positive peers) can nourish one's individuality and him from inside as well. They can help you in making right choices and better decisions for yourself that would provide you opportunities

to choose the best from what one has been offered to [1]. Likewise, there exists a negative peer pressure in your life, exerted by your peers to do some particular activities or have ideas, adopt lifestyle, experience behavioral changes that are personally disliked or unacceptable for you [3].

However, you may be compelled to experiment these by your peer group against your own will. If you surrender to peer pressure and take wrong decision, this would land yourself in a grievance and you feel disappointed and regretful about the entire situation. Blindly following to peers will let you indulge in many vices such as drinking, smoking, becoming drug addict, which are commonly found in teenagers especially now a days, Drugs consumption and alcohol are the main concerns regarding peer pressure. According to the survey conducted by ‘The Canadian Lung Association’ found that 70% of the teenager started smoking due to peer pressure. Another survey conducted by ‘Underage Drinking Research Initiative’ two-thirds of 10th graders and two-fifth of 8th graders have consumed alcohol [5].

The main idea is to investigate that to what extent peer pressure can influence an individual lifestyle, behavior, attitudes, habits, values, ability of decision making, the way an individual thinks. Therefore the peer pressure is important in deciding the behavioral changes an individual experiences in his life.

Methodology

Project participants went through many research papers to get an idea how actually other countries have peer pressure faced by their senior students. Now it’s time to analyze this effect in our country too. As we do not have much database related to our country Pakistan, our group decided to provide that database that everyone must be looking for. We had a discussion on aspects to be covered in this survey. Our survey designing shown in Figure. 1 included stages of prediction, investigation, data collection and analysis. Initial, we created a sampling plan. The sampling plan is the technique which we utilized to choose the sample from the population. With the help of this plan we portrayed the methodology that is utilized to choose the sample, how a sufficient sample size will be resolved, and the decision of media through which all the survey will be directed. Survey media incorporate phone, postal or electronic mail.

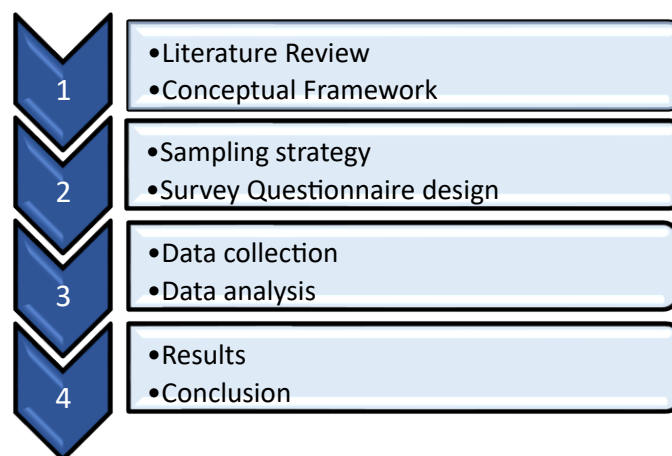


Fig 1: Chevron list representation of Methodology procedures to conduct a survey

Second, we obtained the population estimates from the data sample for the reliability of population. This included desired response rate identification and preferred accuracy level. This survey included a questionnaire for senior students i.e. university and above. This survey in Table. 1 was conducted in September 2020. The objective of this survey was to estimate the effect of peer pressure on one's mental health, differentiate between positive and negative peer pressure and effect of peer pressure on one's actions and beliefs. The survey is designed using google docs forms and spread through electronic media, as in this pandemic of COVID 19, printed survey distribution cannot prove to be a good option. The survey had closed- ended questions that require the respondents to opt from a given set of responses.

Considerations while survey designing were.

- Easy question wording
- Feasible and ethical questions
- Zero-Biasness

After the survey spread, plenty of time was decided to collect data and responses. This survey lasted 5 days. After reaching the desired responses, the form stopped accepting. After getting the pools of data we geared up to data analysis. Data compilation was done based on frequency of responses. We analyzed whether Senior Pakistani students face more positive or more negative peer pressure, whether Peer pressure affects their actions and beliefs, whether they have a personality that can't be affected by peer pressure or they have a personality that exerts peer pressure on someone. After all this data analysis we talked in numbers for every response. This analysis led us to final results and conclusion.

In present day demography, statistical strategies are utilized chiefly in four categories:

- 1) To acquire data on populace and segment measures, including the cycles reproduction utilizing deficient informational collection.
- 2) To deal with information and give statistical description of the segment measures.
- 3) To examine the segment designs and socio-segment relations.
- 4) To unite the qualities of the segment measures and figure a few totals of proliferation and populace development.

There are different categories of using statistical techniques; however, here we have utilized descriptive statistics that depicts the connection between factors in a specimen or populace. Descriptive statistics give an outline of information as mean, middle and mode The arithmetic mean, more generally known as "the average," is the addition of a record of numbers separated by the quantity of units on the record. We have determined the mean factor from the conducted survey using following mean formula;

$$\Sigma x \text{ (sum of entries)}$$

$$Mean (\mu) = \frac{\quad}{n \text{ (total number of entries)}}$$

Mean is helpful in deciding the general pattern of an informational index or giving a fast preview of the information. Another benefit of the mean is that it's exceptionally simple and speedy to compute.

Table 1: Tabular Representation of Survey Questionnaire of the study “EFFECT OF PEER PRESSURE ON MENTAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS”

Survey Questions		Responses in Percentage (%)			
1	Age Range	18-25 (95%)	25-30 (4%)	30-35 (1%)	----
2	Gender	Male (38%)	Female (62%)	----	----
3	Do you have same gender friends only?	Yes (38%)	No (62%)	----	----
4	Have you pressured a friend into doing something you could tell they were uncomfortable with?	Yes (12%)	No (60%)	Maybe (28%)	----
5	So far, what sort of peer pressure have you experienced the most?	Positive (24%)	Negative (21%)	Both (55%)	----
6	To what extent, peer pressure influenced you mentally?	Very much (29%)	A little (50%)	Not at all (11%)	----
7	What form of peer pressure seems to work best on you?	Threat (13%)	Request (55%)	Ridicule (5%)	Guilt (27%)
8	From where do you get peer pressure the most?	Academic life (43%)	Social life (46%)	Professional life (11%)	----
9	Does peer pressure distract you from your normal life?	Yes (71%)	No (29%)	----	----
10	So far, if you have been experiencing any sort of peer pressure, what strategies do you use to recover from it?	Counselling (9%)	Self- Motivation (79%)	Others (12%)	----
11	Have you ever pressurized doing things that make you feel out of you comfort zone?	Yes (70%)	No (30%)	----	----
12	Do you believe that your actions/beliefs are influenced by others?	Yes (65%)	No (35%)	----	----

13	Have you lied about liking and disliking something just because your friends will make fun of it?	Yes (48%)	No (28%)	Maybe (24%)	----
14	What kind of person are you?	Academic (24%)	Social (18%)	Both (58%)	Other (1%)
15	Do you often get compared at your home with your peers?	Often (39%)	Sometimes (20%)	Never (41%)	----
16	Have you ever experienced peer pressure from your very close friends?	Often (45%)	Sometimes (26%)	Never (29%)	----

Results

Around 210 students from different universities of Pakistan participated in the conducted survey. Our main target were undergraduate students who were mostly aged between 18-25 years old. The survey questionnaire was accessed by both male and female students with a participation proportion of 38% and 62%, respectively. From the responses we got, it is concluded that students are actually experiencing both positive and negative peer pressures. A pie chart representation in Figure. 2 shows 21% students have experienced positive peer pressure whereas 24% marked themselves as a victim of negative peer pressure whereas a big portion, 55% students have faced both positive and negative peer pressures.

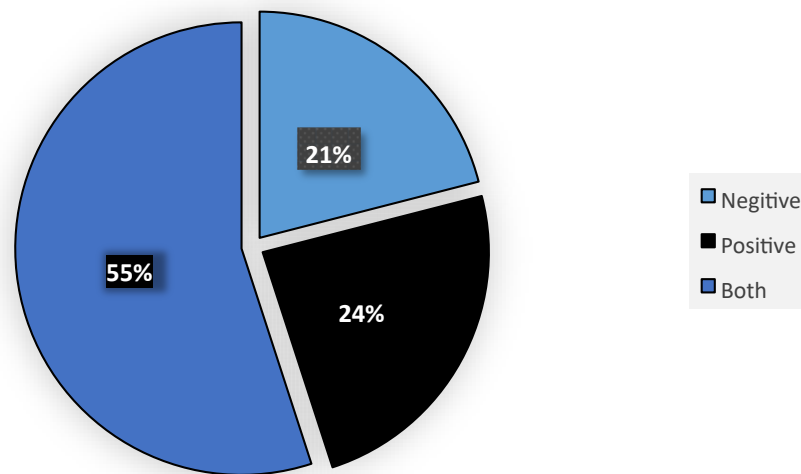


Fig 2: Analysis of Peer Pressure from the conducted survey

There is always a need to find the cause behind the effect so we considered various sources of peer pressures, but we focused on the most common among students which includes academic, social and professional life. According to the feedback, 46% students marked social life as a source of

peer pressure, 43% considered their academic life and remaining 11% marked their professional life. From another data collection, it is figured out that a comparatively large ratio of students around 65% confirmed that their actions and beliefs are highly influenced by their friends whereas only 35% gave opposite responses. It is a factor to think on how their parents are inducing such kind of peers so we also summarized through this survey that a big proportion of students think that they often get compared with their friends at home in regard to results or other curriculum activities. Only a small portion of students confirmed that they are not compared at all.

Discussion

The obtained results meets the validation of hypothesis proposed to an extent of 70%. Overall, the responses reflects how much positive & negative impact of peer pressure has been imposed on them. Around 75% of reviews lead towards the negative impact of peer pressure on our mental peace. With the support of questionnaire, the study has supported in exploring the other areas of prevailing peer pressure apart from academics. It can be dealt in the form of comparison by family, in a social gathering, challenging yourself out of your comfort zone due to influence, feeling of deprivation, and feeling of being used and taken granted, distraction from healthy routine. The major finding indicates the emergence of peer pressure from close friend's circle and family members. It also resulted that majority of reviews prefers self- motivation in order to get rid of peer pressure. Considering the rest of 25% of findings, the reviews were based on positive side of peer pressure. The results indicate healthy peer support, remaining firm to one's own personal choice as a refrain to influence of others, around 50% of reviews concluded no any negative impact of peer pressure but somehow their other responses were controversial to it. Here Figure. 3 represents whether students felt if peer pressure makes them feel out of their comfort zone or not.

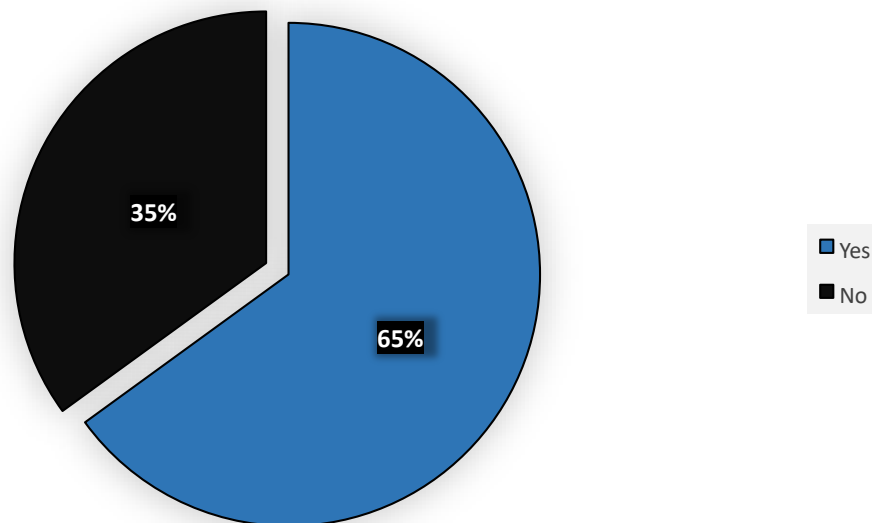


Fig 3: Influence of Peers to oppose the comfort zone of an individual

Relating this survey to the previous studies, we conclude this survey as an addition to it. It covers various dimensions of the peer pressure, impacts & causes. This survey was conducted anonymously so as to bring the honest reviews related to peer pressure & assuring privacy of the audience. This help us to deduct & assure the honest reviews that helped in this study. Due to difference in foreign and local systems, the studies related to the topic were also different. However, not many findings were received at local level over this topic. It was quite difficult for us to compare our results with existing reports due to lack of resources on peer pressure. Our survey report marks a fine addition to the existing surveys at local level. The results obtained are mostly covered at local level including reviews from both rural & urban background, male & female, academic & social background students, introvert & extrovert. This variety in respondents helps us to cover a population data of more than 200 respondents that prevents any biasness of the outcome. With this approach, we have realized and evident of negative impact of peer pressure on mental state of students.

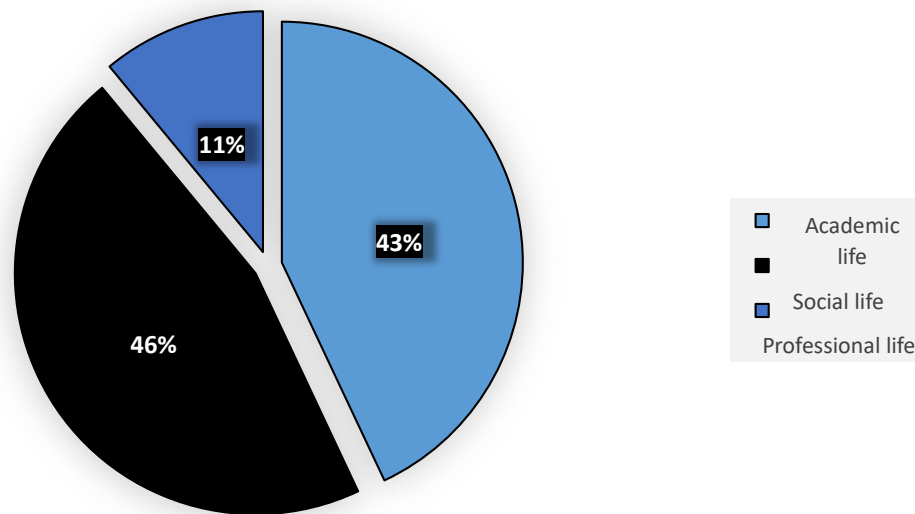


Fig 4: Sources of Peer Pressure with their ratio of concentration in impact

This study covers some personal & honest opinions which were not possible to get, unless conducting this survey anonymously. Nearly 80% reviews marked self-motivation as a way to maintain healthy mental state but it proved fail while reviewing through other responses of same respondents. Through this study, some major considerations are indicated in Figure. 4 related to peer pressure at personal, professional & academic lifestyle.

Conclusion

It is concluded that larger percentage of affected individuals (55%) has claimed to be influenced by peer pressure equally, that is both positive and negative. Rest of the (24%) are positive peer pressure supporters and remaining (21%) are the ones with opposite. We have witnessed the higher ratio of negative peer pressure around us that messes with heads of individuals' bitterly, and get

them developed depression and deteriorated mental health. But our finding reveal to be a little different. Besides the 55% responses in favor of equal peer pressure impact. It is to be acknowledged that our survey helped us to gather the positive outcomes of individuals regarding peer pressure. This survey report concludes a better approach in outcomes in regards of peer pressure victims.

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