



## Impact of Gender and Peer Group on the Academic Performance of Biology Students in Federal College of Education Zaria, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

*This study set out to examine the Impact of Gender and Peer Group on the Academic Performance of Biology Students (IGPQ). The study was based on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which considers learning as an interaction between environment, behaviour and one's psychological processes. The research adopted a Correlation Research Design with Likert's scale used in a structured questionnaire IGPQ. Open Data Kit (ODK) and Google Link Form (GLF) were used to administered questionnaires to the Respondents. Data was collected from a sample of 1,730 students comprising 603 males and 1,127 females from Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) 1, 2 and 3 Regular, Part-Time and Bachelor in Science Education (B.Sc Ed) 100, 200, 300 and 400 level students 2021/22 session using Krejcie and Morgan Table 1970. A 21 item instrument IGPQ developed by the Researchers with the reliability coefficient of 0.7 Cronbach's alpha was used for data collection. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions. Independent t – test at 5% level of significance for testing hypothesis 1 while one tailed Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) at 5% level of significance for testing hypothesis 2. The results showed that, there was no significant ( $P>0.05$ ) difference of the impact of gender on the academic performance of Biology students, whereby  $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 0.27$  and  $F = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 0.30$ . There was significant ( $P<0.05$ ) difference of the impact of peer group influences on the academic performance of Biology students, whereby  $F_{cal} 82.23$  is greater than  $F_{tab} 1.94$ . Based on these findings, it was recommended that there is need for Parents and Teachers to have greater supervisory and regulatory roles on their children and students while they are interacting at home and school because this will enhance the type of peer group they will belong to. Also trained Counsellors should play prominent and leading roles in the matter of peer group influences by organising lectures, seminars, career talk and symposia that can create positive awareness on influence of peer group on academic performance.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Education is undoubtedly the greatest instrument in which mankind has devised for his own progress and development in all its ramifications. Our societies have one form of education or another, utilising the knowledge in varying degrees. It is often considered the only way of being recognised as elite in the society, failure of which may bring untold hardship and frustration to the individual. Education commences at birth and progresses throughout one's life. Schooling begins averagely at the

ages of three and six years, when children are gathered together for the purpose of specific guidance related to skills and competencies that society deems important. Previously, once the formal primary, secondary and post-secondary schooling were completed, the process was terminated. However, in contemporary information age, adults are quite often learning in informal setting throughout their working lives and even into retirement (Agina-Obu, Amakiri and Emesiobi, 2011).

Globalization is a broad and complex



concept, Optimists view it as a novel source of optimism in the world. Globalization has radically changed the globe in every aspect of life. But it has specifically transformed the global economy which has become increasingly interconnected and inter-dependent. Beside this, it makes the world economy increasingly competitive and more knowledge based, especially in the developed western nations. Global education interconnects techniques of teaching from worldwide systems to encourage the international development of environmental sustainability, as well as contribution toward fortifying global industries (Gupta, 2017). Educational initiatives prioritize world access to school from primary to university levels, inculcating learning experiences that prepare students for multinational leadership roles. Education is the bedrock to global stability, the development of multicultural awareness from an early age may integrate ideologies sourced from various societies in order to arrive at well balanced conclusions regarding issues that surround the world as a whole. Globalization vis-a-vis education influences one another through mutual goals of preparing young people for successful futures during which their countries will grow increasingly connected (Bakhtiari, 2017).

Globalization transcends the boundaries of space and time. Utilizing advanced Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), a new system of knowledge, education and learning should use wide ranges of synchronous and asynchronous activities that help teachers and students in breaking boundaries of space and time (Scholte, 2018). In the past years, the researches into the factors that influence academic performance of Students have attracted the interest and concern of Teachers, Counsellors, Psychologists, Researchers and School Administrators. This is as a result of the public outcries concerning the abysmal academic performance in the country. Nuthana and Yenagi (2009) reported that students' academic achievement occupies a very paramount place in education as well as in the learning process. It is considered as a key parameter to judge one's total potentialities and capacities, which are frequently measured by the outcomes of examinations. It is used to assess the quality of education offered by academic institutions. Contemporarily, it is still

the most topical debate in citadels of learning that poses great concern to Educators, Educationists and Researchers due to the poor examination achievement of students.

One of the pressing problems that confront the present-day teacher is how to train the efficiency of the students in their procedures of study in the various school subjects. Many techniques of supervised or directed study are being tried. The socialized recitation has become a part of the regular classroom routine in many high schools. By this method, pupils actively participate in defining the problem under consideration, in obtaining data, in presenting these data for class criticism, and in raising questions. Contemporarily, classroom study is imitating much of the former home study, especially in the elementary and junior high schools (Oluwatimilehin & Owoyele, 2012). Peer group is a social and primary group of people who have identical interests, age, background or social status. Members of this group are likely to affect the person's beliefs and behaviour; peer groups possess hierarchies and distinct behavioural patterns. Peer group pressure are divided into two, which could be positive or negative (Ryan, 2001). Young people in their adolescence deliberately join different peer groups and identify themselves with these groups by participating in their activities in order not to be rejected. Peer group is a source of great influence during the time of adolescence (Majeed, 2010). In a modern society, peer groups have become an increasingly important context in which adolescents spend time. Modernization has resulted to age segregation in school, work place, and in the community. The length of time one spends with friends plays a vital roles in the development of the adolescent into the mature adult (Tome, Margarida, Celeste & Joao, 2012). Most adolescents spends much of their time with the members of their peer groups. They follow the ideals of the group; they would want to be fully accepted. Nothing can be more devastating to the adolescents than to be rejected by their age mates. Adolescents are mostly influenced by their peers in ways that their attitudes, beliefs and behaviours are conditioned by what is conceived to be okay by other people (Valentine, 2018).

It is against this back drop that this research seeks to examine the nexus between gender and peer group influences on students'



academic performance in Biology with a special reference to Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) and Bachelor of Science Biology Education (B.Sc Ed) students' of Federal College of Education Zaria, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Colleges of Education and University students' have many obstacles to overcome in order to achieve optimal academic performance in their studies. A number of researches have been conducted looking at the correlation between the influence of gender and peer group that Colleges of Education and University students' experience and its effects on their Grade Point Average (GPA). Students' outcomes and academic successes is greatly influenced by the type of schools they attend. Most Educators believe that peer pressure exerts influence on Children's academic performance and peer groups are an important socialization agent (Kirk, 2000). The most subtle form of peer pressure is known as peer influence, and it entails changing one's behaviour to meet the perceived expectations of others (Burns & Darling, 2002). Formation of peer groups may take place from each extensive interactions with others, which initiate and develop relationships and by these contacts life influencing attitudes and values are formed. These attitudes may affects the child's academic performance either positively or negatively. The negative aspects could be detrimental to students' academic work and consequently their performance such as truancy, persistent lateness to school, disregarding school rules and regulations. While the positive aspects could be geared towards positive aspects of student's academic performance such as forming reading group, going to the library, making friends with brilliant students.

Often times, the teachers are blamed for the poor academic performances, and even when the children are blamed, explanation is proffered only in terms of the children's cognitive or intellectual abilities. Little or no attention is paid to the child's self-concept of himself or herself and the subject vis-a-vis the influence of peer group pressure on the student in the course of his study, which could influence his performance in the subject. Causes of poor academic performance in biology are diverse and cannot be associated with a single major

factor alone. Therefore, it is the opinion of the researchers that gender and peer group pressure have serious impact to biology students at NCE and B.Sc Ed levels, which affects the academic performance of students. This study therefore, seeks to study the "impact of gender and peer group influence on the academic performance of biology students at Federal College of Education, Zaria, Nigeria"

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- i. To determine whether gender has impact on the academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria.
- ii. To determine the influence of peer group on the academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the impact of gender on the academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria?
2. What is the impact of peer group influences on the academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following Null hypotheses were propounded based on the research questions:

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference on the impact of gender on the academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference on the impact of peer group influences on the academic performance of biology students at FCE Zaria.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study areas were Departments of Biology, Schools of Secondary Education (Sciences), Federal College of Education, Zaria – Kaduna State and Kaduna State College of Education Gidan-Waya.

The research design used for this study was Correlation Research Design (CRD). This is a non-experimental research technique, in which the researcher measures two or more variables, understands and assess the statistical relationship between them with no



influence from any extraneous variable. The study is hinged on the Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura, which posits that people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modelling (Bandura, 1977).

The population of the study comprised of the following components of Biology students at NCE 1 - 3 regular and part-time; and B.Sc Ed 100 – 400 levels of Federal College of Education, Zaria, Nigeria. According to the academic records of 2021/2022, there are

three thousand three hundred and fifty seven (3,357) students with the following breakdown: NCE 1 800, NCE 2 1,007 and NCE 3 1,550. NCE Part-time were seven hundred and thirty (730) students with the following breakdown: NCE 1 350, NCE 2 230 and NCE 3 150 while B.Sc Ed were six hundred and seventy (670) with the following breakdown: 100 level 80, 200 level 300, 300 level 150 and 400 level 140. Given a grand total of four thousand seven hundred and fifty seven (4,757).

**Table 1:** Population of the study

S/no	Course/Level	Frequency
1	NCE 1	800
2	NCE 2	1007
3	NCE 3	1550
4	NCE 1 Part-time	350
5	NCE 2 Part-time	230
6	NCE 3 Part-time	150
7	B.Sc Ed 100	80
8	B.Sc Ed 200	300
9	B.Sc Ed 300	150
10	B.Sc Ed 400	140
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4, 757</b>

**Source:** Department of Biology, Federal College of Education Zaria 2021/2022

Krejcie and Morgan Table was used to select two hundred sixty (260) respondents from NCE 1, two hundred and seventy-eight (278) respondents from NCE 2, three hundred and six (306) respondents from NCE 3, one hundred and eighty-one (181) respondents from NCE 1 Part-time, one hundred and forty-eight (148) respondents from NCE 2 Part-time, one hundred and eight (108) respondents from NCE 3 Part-time, sixty-nine (69) respondents from B.Sc Ed 100 level, one hundred and sixty-nine (169) from B.Sc Ed 200 level, one hundred and eight (108) from B.Sc Ed 300 level and one hundred and three (103) from B.Sc Ed 400 level

(Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The total number of NCE regular students that were sampled for 2021/2022 session were eight hundred and forty-four (844), NCE Part-time students were four hundred and thirty-seven (437). While the B.Sc Ed Biology students were four hundred and forty six (446); giving a grand total of one thousand seven hundred and thirty (1,730). The samples for NCE were derived from the following combinations:

- i. Biology/Computer science
- ii. Biology/Integrated science
- iii. Biology/Mathematics

**Table 2:** Sample of the Study

S/no	Course/Level	Frequency
1	NCE 1	260
2	NCE 2	278
3	NCE 3	306
4	NCE 1 Part-time	181
5	NCE 2 Part-time	148
6	NCE 3 Part-time	108
7	B.Sc Ed 100	69
8	B.Sc Ed 200	169
9	B.Sc Ed 300	108
10	B.Sc Ed 400	103
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1, 730</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2022



Instrument used in this research was structured questionnaire titled “Impact of Gender and Peer Group Influence on Academic Performance of Students’ Questionnaire (IGPQ). Open Data Kit (ODK) or ODK Collect software and Google link was used to administered questionnaires to the respondents. ODK, is an open-source mobile data collection platform. It enables Users to fill out forms offline and send form data to a server when connection is found. Once on the server, the data can be viewed, downloaded, and acted upon. ODK Collect is an open source Android app that replaces paper forms used in survey-based data gathering. It support a wide range of question and answer types, and is designed to work well without network connectivity. For the Google form which was send as a link to the respondents used network. Questionnaire was used since the study is mainly concerned with variables that could not be directly observed or manipulated. A questionnaire was also preferred because it took care of confidentiality and was Likert – type questionnaire.

The Researchers collected letter of introduction from Chairman, TETFUND Institution Based Research (IBR) in collaboration with the Deputy Provost; Federal College of Education Zaria to Kaduna State College of Education Gidan-waya for the pilot study whereby NCE 1 to 3 students were used. The Researchers visited the different levels of the NCE and B.Sc Ed Biology students in Federal College of Education Zaria to educate them on how to fill the Google forms online.

Open Data Kit (ODK) or ODK Collect software was also used as a back up to administered questionnaires to the respondents. All necessary instructions needed for the successful completion of the academic exercises were clearly stated and explained to the students during the orientation before the commencement of the exercise.

The data collected for this study was analysed using Microsoft Excel 2021 and the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 23 to calculate the correlation coefficient. The data was subjected to regression analysis to explore the magnitude and direction of relationship between independent and dependent variables. For descriptive statistics, percentages, means and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Independent T-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance and one tailed Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to tests hypotheses 1 and 2. All data were analysed and managed by the Data Processing Unit of Iya Abubakar Computer Centre, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents and describe the results of this study according to the research questions and hypotheses of the study. The research investigated “Impact of Gender and Peer Group Influence on Academic Performance among Biology Students’ in Federal College of Education Zaria, Nigeria”

### Demographic Representation of Respondents

**Table 3:** Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	603	34.9
Female	1127	65.1
Total	1,730	100.0

Table 3 shows that out of the 1,730 respondents; 603 (34.90%) were males while

1,127 (65.10%) were females.

**Table 4:** Level of Respondents Education

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
NCE Regular 1	260	15.0
NCE 2	278	16.0
NCE 3	306	17.7
NCE Part - time 1	181	10.5
NCE 2	148	8.6
NCE 3	108	6.2





Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
B.Sc Ed	100	69
B.Sc Ed	200	169
B.Sc Ed	300	108
B.Sc Ed	400	103
Total	1,730	100.0

Table 4 shows the level of respondents' education based on the three categories. NCE 1, 2 and 3 regular consists of the following number of respondents as 278 (16.1%), 306 (17.7%) and 181 (10.5%) respectively. NCE 1, 2 and 3 part-time consists of the following number of respondents as 148 (8.6%), 108 (6.2%) and 69 (4.0%) respectively. While the B.Sc Ed 100, 200, 300 and 400 levels

consists of the following number of respondents as 69 (4.0%), 169 (9.8%), 108 (6.2%) and 103 (6.0%) respectively.

#### Answering Research Questions

**Research Question One:** What is the Impact of Gender on the Academic Performance of Biology Students at FCE Zaria?

**Table 5:** Impact of Gender on the Academic Performance of Biology Students

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Male	603	34.9	1.651	0.476
2	Female	1127	65.1	1.657	0.475
Total/aggregated mean		1730	100.0	1.654	0.476

The result of the study presented in Table 5 showed the aggregated mean score of 1.65, therefore gender has no impact on the academic performance of Biology Students at FCE Zaria.

**Research Question Two:** What is the Impact of Peer Group Influences on the Academic Performance of Biology Students at FCE Zaria?

**Table 6:** Means and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Impact of Peer Group Influences on the Academic Performance of Biology Students at FCE Zaria.

S/N	Variables	SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Stand. Dev
1.	Classroom peers influence learning by teaching each other	1126(65%)	568(33%)	19(1%)	12(.7%)	5(.3%)	4.62	0.579
2.	The effectiveness and efficiency of peer teaching depends on classroom composition in terms of peers' ability	59(32%)	1131(65%)	28(2%)	10(.6%)	2(.1%)	4.29	0.536
3.	Peer to Peer teaching improves learning among low ability subjects, the positive effects are substantially offset by tracking	616(36%)	1081(63%)	28(2%)	4(.2%)	1(.1%)	4.33	0.525
4.	Peer group provides the students with a wide variety Of experiences which can boost academic performance	615(36%)	1084(63%)	23(1%)	5(.3%)	3(.2%)	4.33	0.543
5.	Peer group provide opportunities for the development Of loyalties that goes beyond the immediate family such As political and social loyalties, which are vital for future adjustments	629(36%)	1058(61%)	36(2%)	5(.3%)	2(.1%)	4.33	0.519
6.	Peer interaction teaches students how to make and keep friends and how to work, learn and play together	538(31%)	1153(67%)	33(2%)	4(.2%)	2(.1%)	4.28	0.519
7.	A peer can be a bully or can lead a student towards social vices	388(22%)	815(47%)	115(7%)	326(19%)	86(5%)	3.63	1.165
8.	Peer relationships are essential for teaching students on how to function in the society	551(32%)	1113(64%)	43(3%)	19(1%)	4(.2%)	4.26	0.582
9.	Peer relationships help in academic competence	545(32%)	1124(65%)	44(3%)	15(.9%)	2(.1%)	4.27	0.560



S/N Variables	SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Stand. Dev
Decision							
most especially among adolescent							
10. Peer acceptance relates positively to Grade Point Average (GPA)	396(23%)	1118(55%)	93(5%)	112(7%)	11(.6%)	4.03	0.774
11. Peer influence helps in developing employability skills	558(32%)	1113(64%)	34(2%)	19(1%)	6(.3%)	4.27	0.587
12. Peer influences boost intellectual level, Personality, motivation, skills, interests, study habits and self esteem	788(46%)	902(52%)	17(1%)	19(1%)	4(.2%)	4.42	0.597
13. Most of my friends in school perform well in examinations	526(30%)	1046(61%)	95(6%)	60(4%)	3(.2%)	4.17	0.695
4. My friends encourage me to work hard in school	579(34%)	1050(61%)	49(3%)	49(3%)	3(.2%)	4.24	0.6
15. My friends make fun of students who try to do well in school	188(11%)	548(32%)	209(12%)	536(31%)	249(14%)	2.94	1.278
16. I spend most of my time in school with friends discussing academic work or revision in preparations for examination	652(38%)	955(55%)	73(4%)	43(3%)	7(.4%)	4.27	0.693
17. Some of my friends are drug and alcoholic addicts	171(10%)	551(32%)	237(14%)	440(25%)	331(19%)	2.88	1.311
18. Most of my friends are disciplined in school ant at Home	495(29%)	1024(59%)	153(9%)	49(3%)	9(.5%)	4.13	0.721
19. My friends attends school regularly	565(33%)	1040(60%)	66(4%)	49(3%)	10(.6%)	4.21	0.696
20. My friends engage themselves in male-female Relationship	308(18%)	947(55%)	254(15%)	183(11%)	38(2%)	3.75	0.941
21. My friends sneak out of school for parties and Other social engagements	215(12%)	596(35%)	232(13%)	302(18%)	385(22%)	2.97	1.381
<b>Cluster mean</b>						<b>4.03</b>	<b>0.687</b>

The result of the study as presented in Table 6 shows the mean ratings and standard deviations of Impact of Peer group influence on the academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria. The result of the study showed the mean ratings for items 1-14, 16, 18 – 20 as 4.62, 4.29, 4.33, 4.33, 4.33, 4.28, 3.63, 4.26, 4.27, 4.03, 4.27, 4.42, 4.17, 4.24, 4.27, 4.13, 4.21 and 3.75 (4.21). These mean ratings are within the range of 3.60 – 4.50 set as criterion that peer group influences positively enhanced the academic performance of Biology students. While items 15, 17 and 21 with mean ratings of

2.94, 2.88 and 2.97 negatively affect the academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria as they are below 3.60 set as the lower limit of the criterion. In the overall response, peer group influences positively enhanced academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria.

#### Testing of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis One (HO<sub>1</sub>):** There is no significant difference on the Impact of Gender on the Academic Performance of Biology Students at FCE Zaria.

**Table 7:** Independent t – test on Impact of Gender on the Academic Performance of Biology Students at FCE Zaria

95% confidence interval		Levene's test		t – test for equality of means				
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean	Std
the difference								
error								
lower	upper					(2 tailed)		difference
Impact of Peer Group Influences on the	Equal variances assumed	11.459	.001	-	1728	.458	-.01091	.01469
-								
.01791								
on the Academic Performance of Biology	Equal variances not assumed		.743					.3972
Students at FCE Zaria					1347.127	.443	-.01091	.01423
-								
.01700								
					.767			
.03882								

#### 0.05 level of significant

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The result in Table 7 shows that the group did not differ significantly whereby,  $t(1728) = -0.74$ ,  $P = 0.46$ , 95% confidence interval (-0.39, 0.02). The mean for the male group ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 0.27$ ) was not significantly ( $P > 0.05$ ) different than the female group ( $F = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 0.30$ ). Therefore, the impact of gender on the academic performance of Biology students at

FCE Zaria is not significant, the null hypothesis is accepted. .

**Hypothesis Two (HO<sub>2</sub>):** There is no significant difference on the impact of Peer group influences on the academic performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria.

**Table 8:** ANOVA on Impact of Peer Group Influences on the Academic Performance of Biology Students at FCE Zaria

Source variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degree of freedom (d.f)	Mean Square (MS)
Fcal	Ftab	Decision	
Between groups	44.088	9	4.899
82.229	1.94	Sig.	
Within groups	102.006	1720	.060
Total	146.553	1729	

**0.05 Level of Significant**

The result in Table 8 reveals that the calculated F-value (Fcal) of 82.229 is greater than the F tabulated/critical value (Ftab) of 1.94 at 0.05 level of significant. Since the calculated F – value is greater than the tabulated F-value, therefore the hypothesis is rejected. Implying that, there significant ( $P < 0.05$ ) difference on the impact of Peer Group Influences on the performance of Biology students at FCE Zaria.

of the female group is 4.04 with standard deviation of 0.30. Joseph, John, Eric, Yusuf and Olubunmi (2015) reported that there is no significant difference in Students’ academic achievement and retention in Computer Studies. This implies that there are no longer distinguishing cognitive, affective and psychomotor skill achievements of students in respect to gender. Ogbianigene (2014) in his study provide empirical evidence that students’ academic achievement in Secondary School Social Studies depends on the method of instruction adopted and are not influenced by gender. Therefore, gender of students whether male or female does not have any influence on the effectiveness of any of the treatment employed in the study. This is an indication that if both treatment and strategies are used effectively for male and female they are likely to produce the same result. Kisigot, Ogula and Munyua (2021) reported that there was a relationship between students’ gender and academic achievement in mixed and non-mixed schools. Students’ gender have effects on Secondary School Students achievement, notably male’s gender and female’s gender performed better than the mixed gender. Poor performance of girls in mixed gender as compared to boys is attributed to cultural issues such as early pregnancies, early marriages and house chores that are associated with girls in day’s schools. Fareo (2019) reported that, gender has no impact on the academic performance of Biology students. Also Wordu and Alphonsus (2018). Reported that that there

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The aim of this study was to find out the Impact of Gender and Peer Group Influences on the Academic Performance of Biology Students at Federal College of Education, Zaria (FCE Zaria). Two (2) research questions and two (2) hypotheses were raised to guide the study. Descriptive statistics via means and standard deviation while inferential statistics via Independent Samples t-test and Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) were used to answered the research questions and hypotheses. The results presented in Table five (5) answer the research question one (1) which showed that gender has no impact on the academic performance of Biology students. Because the mean score of male is 1.651 while that of the female is 1.657. Results presented in Table seven (7) answer the research hypothesis one (1) which showed that there is no significance difference on the impact of gender on the academic performance of Biology students. Because the group did not differ significantly, whereby mean for the male group is 4.02 with standard deviation of 0.27 while that

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is no significant difference between male and female students' academic achievement in Mathematics.

The results presented in Table six (6) provide answer to research question two (2), findings revealed that peer group influences positively has impact on the academic performance of Biology students with mean score of 4.21 when compared with cluster mean of 4.03 and a bench mark of 4.50. The data presented in Table eight (8) answer research hypothesis two (2) which showed that there is significant difference on the impact of peer group influences on the academic performance of Biology students. Because the calculated F value of 82.23 is greater than the tabulated F value of 1.94 at 0.05 level of significance. This study confirmed the findings of Kimbrough, McGee and Shigeoka (2017) who reported that peer group influences provides the students with wide variety of experiences which can boost academic performance. Also peer relationships boost academic competence especially among adolescents. Findings of Filade, Bello, Uwaoma, Anwanane, Bassey and Nwangburuka (2019) reported that peer group plays vital roles in the social, emotional and academic developments of students. Therefore, understanding the prospects and challenges of peer group is crucial for the productivity of educational processes and the organizational design of school systems in order to improve students' academic performance. Monyamane and Oreeditse (2021) reported that peer influences on learners' academic performance have both positive and negative effects on their academic performance. Hence, peers need to study which group they will fit in that will enhanced their academic performance. In line with this study, Bassey (2020) reported that peer group significantly influences the academic performance of Secondary School Students in English Language. Therefore, Peers should mind the group they fall in before they fall into bad friends who may influence them negatively.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the data collected, analysed and interpreted as well as the findings, it can be concluded from the study that:

1. Gender has no impact on the academic performance of Biology students. This implies that, there are no longer distinguishing cognitive,

affective and psychomotor skill achievement of students in respect to gender.

2. Peer group influences is a potent factor that influenced the academic performance of Biology students. Overall to shaping the behaviour of the students either positively or negatively. Most especially at adolescent stage which consequently will directly or indirectly affect the academic performance of the students positively or negatively.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Learners should be thoroughly and deliberately motivated to engender higher level of academic pursuits in Biology irrespective of gender.
2. Peer group have influence on students and such influence could be positive or negative, there is need for parents and teachers to have greater supervision and regulations on students while they are interacting in school and this will enhance the type of group they will belong to.
3. Trained Counsellors should play prominent and leading roles in the matter of peer group influences by organizing lectures, seminars, career talk and symposia that can create positive awareness on influence of peer group on academic performance of Nigeria Certificate in Education and Undergraduate students.
4. College Counsellors, teachers, parents and other government agencies should actively participate and get involved in role-modelling of students by introducing informative programmes that could educate them about peer group influence and thus, refocus them meaningfully towards excellent academic performances; this could help the development of the nations' academic future.

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