



PEER VICTIMIZATION AND PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PREDICTORS OF SOCIAL PHOBIA AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN PORT HARCOURT METROPOLIS, RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated peer victimization and personality traits as predictors of social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Four research questions and four corresponding null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The participants in the study were 448 (males = 166, female = 282) adolescents drawn from public secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to draw the sample of the study. Three instruments titled: Peer Victimization Scale (PVC); Five Factor Model Personality Scale (Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism) (NEO-PR-I) and Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) were used for collection of data in the study. The reliability indices of the instruments were estimated using the Cronbach Alpha method of internal consistency with coefficient values of; Peer Victimization Scale $r=.86$ Personality traits Scale $r=.76$, the sub-scale (OCEAN) with the values of (.62, .69, .68, .73, .78) and social phobia inventory $r=.89$ respectively. The descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and multiple regression were used to answer research questions while two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA); ANOVA and t-test associated with multiple regression were used to test hypotheses. The tenability of all the null hypotheses was tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The result revealed that, Peer victimization, gender and personality traits significantly predict social phobia but peer victimization based on gender and location agreeableness and conscientiousness had no significant prediction on social phobia. Openness to experience and neuroticism had a positive independent prediction while extraversion had a negative independent prediction on social phobia. Based on these findings recommendation were made.

Index Terms: Peer victimization, Personality traits, adolescents and social phobia

1. INTRODUCTION:

As part of normal life, every normal individual feels uncomfortable or fearful at times about certain objects or situations. If such experience becomes feared and disrupts life to a point where we are unable to enter social situations or to carry out our work and everyday activities, it becomes a social phobia or social anxiety disorder. Social phobia also known as social anxiety disorder (SAD), is the most common anxiety disorder in childhood, adolescence and also affecting adult, with prevalence rates in general population between 1.10 and 13.10% (Costello, Egger & Angold, 2004; Ollendick & Hirshfeld-Becker, 2002). It is also the most common psychiatric disorder with 12% Americans having experienced it in their life time (Kessler, Berglund, Dumler, Merikangas & Walter, 2005). Social phobia is an anxiety that typically has onset in early to mid-adolescence, with the mean age of onset between 10 and 17 years. Before the age of 12 its prevalence is below 1% but by the age of 12-17 years it is already 2-3% (Wittchen, Stephen & Kessler 1999; Stein & Stein, 2008). The adolescent with social phobia avoid any social situation that involves interaction, being the centre of attention and performing task (Wittchen, et al, 1999; Stein & Stein, 2008). Although data support the validity of social phobia as a distinct clinical entity in adolescent, the vast majority of adolescents with social phobia go unrecognized by both parents and professionals, including school personnel (Beidel, 1991; Strauss & Last 1993). By definition, adolescents with social phobia are highly concerned about others' perception of them and therefore, tend not to "act out" in ways that would draw attention to themselves. They tend to be "invisible" and neglected in the classroom and do not come to the attention of school personnel unless the disorder progresses to the point that they refuse to attend school (Beidel & Morris, 1995). Most

parents are similarly unaware of social phobia. Because certain degree of concern over others' perceptions and the experience of social anxiety are common, many parents simply see their children as "shy" and do not realize that they suffer from a potentially treatable anxiety disorder. Shyness is temperament style well known to people and because it is common, most persons do not realize how handicapping it can be. Shyness occurs in degree and at its extreme form it becomes social phobia.

Furmark (2006) and Scheiner (2006) defined social phobia as a debilitating and chronic illness characterized by marked and persistent fear of one or more social or performance situations involving exposure to unfamiliar people or possible scrutiny by others. The DSM – IV (1994), stipulates that for it to be described as social phobia, it must last for at least six (6) months, but not limited to the first few months of school for adolescents under 18 years. Social phobia should not be diagnosed if the adolescent's fear is due to direct physiological effects of substance (for example drug abuse or medication) or general medical condition and is better accounted for by another mental disorder and if avoidance, anxious anticipation, or distress in the feared social or performance situations does not interfere significantly with the adolescents' normal routine, academic functioning or social activities or relationship or there is no marked distress about having phobia. For instance, an adolescent who is an introvert, makes few or no friends, but performs relatively well academically, and exposure to social situation does not provoke anxiety and should not be classified as social phobic.

Adolescents with social phobia fear that they will be evaluated negatively or that they will act in humiliating and embarrassing way thus, exposure to social or performance situations like public speaking, group work, interacting with people, writing or working in front of others, class participation invariably leads to panic or marked anxiety and such situation tend to be avoided or endured with extreme distress. In addition, adolescents with SP often suffer "anticipatory" anxiety- the fear of a situation before it even happens for days or weeks before the event. In many cases, the person is aware that the fear is unreasonable, yet is unable to overcome it. The underlying fact in social phobia is the fear of being scrutinized, judged or embarrassed in public (APA, 2004; Awujo, Ugwu & Amadi, 2011). Some adolescents experience social phobia in most social and performance situation known as generalized social phobia, while others experience phobia in specific situations such as speaking to strangers, eating at restaurants or going to parties. The most common specific social phobia is fear of public speaking or performance in front of audience.

Social phobia generally does not develop in vacuum. Many factors contribute to the development of social phobia ranging from biological, social and psychological vulnerabilities like, self-concept, peer victimization, personality traits, parenting styles, deficit in communication skills, victimization; consistent poor performance, past experiences and beliefs and lack of confidence in one's ability.

Theoretical and empirical research indicates that adolescents spend much of their leisure time with their peers, rely on peer as an important source of social support and as a basis for social comparison (Parker, Rubin, Erath, Wojslawowicz & Buskirk, 2006; Harter, 1996 & Herter 1999). The gradual establishment of personal autonomy from parents is gained through peer relationship. Thus being subjected to overt or covert forms of aggression from peers, such as bullying is likely to interfere with important developmental processes and cause emotional adjustment problems (Prinstein, Boergers & Vernberg, 2001). Overt or direct victimization is defined as bullying, hitting, name-calling, threatening, or otherwise directly and deliberately hurting a weaker peer while covert or indirect forms of aggression such as gossiping or spreading rumours and social exclusion deliberately excluding a peer from a group seemed to be relatively common.

Peer victimization is especially prevalent and damaging in middle school as during this period, adolescents are defining themselves by creating self schemas and establishing self-esteem, both of which will create impact on their adult life. They are also more vulnerable to rejection from peer because the need for belonging and intimacy may be especially strong during early adolescence, when adolescents are working to solidify their peer groups (Gaw & Beutler, 1995). Research has proven that victimization has consistently been associated with mental health problem among children and adolescents. Clear associations have been found between being victimized and internalizing (emotional) symptoms, such as depression, low self-esteem and social phobia which could manifest in form of school avoidance, lower school achievement, learned helplessness (Hawker & Boulton, 2000; Grills & Ollendick, 2002).

On the other hand, personality consists of the constant aspects of our individuality. Personality includes one's outward appearance, one's role in life, and the totality of one's qualities or attributes, the way one really is, one's general habitual behaviour, politeness, submissiveness, talkativeness (Furnham & Zucheri, 2005). Ukwuije (2007), defined personality as the unique pattern of behaviour of an individual which is made up of problem solving mental ability, interests, attitudes, temperament, thoughts, feelings, values and behaviour, moral and interpersonal relationship. Kaplan and Saccuzo (2005), define personality as the relatively stable and distinctive patterns of behaviour that characterize an individual's reaction to the environment.

Personality concerns the most important, most noticeable part of an individual's psychological life. It concern whether someone is happy or sad, energetic or apathetic, smart or dull and it is who you are. The big five factor model of personality traits is proposed by Robert McCrea and Paul Costa. According to McCrea and Costa (1996), personality traits are conceptualized as dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions across events, developmental periods and contexts. Research into the field of personality lays more emphasis on the interface between personality and psychopathology, including social phobia. Thus, big five factor dimensional model assumes there are individual differences in personality structures regarding their vulnerability or resilience to social and mental distress, with regards to social phobia.

Studies on the Neo-Pi-R personality dimensions have maintained that extraversion is characterized by being sociable, outgoing, talkative, active, assertive, cheerful, excited and high on positive affect. Adolescents' lows on extraversion are likely to be socially withdrawn and fearful. Neuroticism (N) describes a tendency to react with emotional distress, depression and hostility. Individuals who are high on this dimension are more sensitive to fear, sadness, embarrassment, anger, guilt and disgust because their responses are more rapid, more intense and slower to return to baseline. Conversely, those who are low on neuroticism traits find it easier to "shake off" such negative events (Paris, 2000). Openness to experience has been defined as a way of relating to the world through active imagination, aesthetic, sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings, performance of variety of task, intellectual curiosity and independence of judgement (McCrea & Paul, 1992). Openness to experience operates as a protective factor at the individual level in the face of potentially phobic events. Adolescents who are low on OE tend to be more sensitive to anxiety provoking events, while those who are high on this trait develop

resistance to the development of social phobia (Smith & Mackenzie, 2006). Agreeableness is the primary dimension of interpersonal tendencies. Individuals who are agreeable value getting along with others. They are generally considerate, kind, generous, trusting and trustworthy, helpful, and willing to compromise their interest with others; individuals who are high on this trait develop resistance to the development of social phobia reaction, while those who are low on this trait are egocentric, skeptical of other's intention, competitive rather than co-operative, unfriendly and are likely to be socially withdrawn (Vanvelzen & Emmelkamp, 2000). Conscientiousness is a tendency to show self discipline, act dutifully, and aim for achievement against measures or outside expectations. It is related to the way in which people control regulate, and direct their impulses. Individuals who are low on this trait tend to be more disorganized, sloppy, aimless and anxiety prone, while those high on this trait develop control over anxiety provoking events.

In recent times, to combat the issues of phobias facing students, a lot of research has been carried out in the area of social phobia. For instance, the study by Tillfors, Persson, Willam, and Burk (2012) examined the bi-directional links between social anxiety and multiple aspect of peer relations (peer acceptance, peer victimization and relationship quality) in a longitudinal sample of 1528 adolescents assessed twice with one year between (754 females and 774 males; with a mean score of 14.7 years of age). The study was conducted in Irebor, Sweden. The results showed that lower levels of peer acceptance predicted increases in social anxiety. Social anxiety predicted decreases in relationship support for males and increases in peer victimization for females. Collectively Tillfors et al findings suggest that peers seem to play a significant role for adolescent mental health and social anxiety seems to interfere with healthy peer relations. Importantly, they asserted that developmental pathways for social anxiety seem to differ for adolescent females and males.

Schwartz, McFadyen-Ketchum, Dodge, Pettit and Bates (1998) investigated the role of victimization in the development of children's behaviour problems, focusing on both internalizing and externalizing problems. They hypothesized that higher levels of victimization would led to increased level of behavioural problems. Indeed, Schwartz et al found that peer victimization in middle childhood was associated with behavioural maladjustment on both a concurrent and prospective basis. Additionally, externalizing behaviours were more strongly associated with victimization than were internalizing behaviours. Seals and Young (2003) investigated relationships between bullying and victimization with gender, grade level, ethnicity, self-esteem, and depression. Results showed that victims reported lower levels of self-esteem than did bullies and non-bullies/non-victims. Additionally, victims had the highest depression scores as compared to bullies and non-bullies/non-victims.

Abbasi-Asl, Naderi & Akbari (2016) on Predicting female students' social anxiety based on their personality traits, shows that all the predictor variables presented 44% of variance of social anxiety and the predictor variables have a significant effect on social anxiety ($F=51.66$, $P<0.000$). Also their finding showed that, neuroticism was a positive significant predictor of social anxiety ($P=0.000$, $\beta=0.50$) and extraversion was a negative significant predictors of social anxiety ($P=0.000$, $\beta= -0.32$). Also Agreeableness was negative significant predictors of social anxiety but openness and conscientiousness was not predictor of social anxiety. This is similar to the findings of Mokhtaree and Aghamohammad (2017) who found that 11.6% of the students had severe social phobia and 4.6% very severe relationship between social phobia and neuroticism was reversed and significant and other personality characters were significantly. Neuroticism and openness predicted social phobia significantly. In the same vien, Kaplan, Lavinson, Rodebaugh, Menatti & Weeks (2015) findings in two studies using undergraduate samples ($N = 502$; $N = 698$), examined the relationships between trust, self-efficacy, the Big Five, and SA. SA correlated positively with neuroticism, negatively with extraversion, and had weaker relationships with agreeableness, openness, and trust. In linear regression predicting SA, there was a significant interaction between trust and openness over and above gender. In addition to supporting previous research on SA and the Big Five, it was found that openness is related to SA for individuals low in trust. Their results suggest that high openness may protect against the higher SA levels associated with low trust.

As mentioned earlier, literature suggested that social phobia do not operate in isolation but has factors contributing to it. However, peer victimization and personality traits as it relate to social phobia has received little or no empirical attention. Precisely, conducting the study amongst secondary school adolescents in Nigeria is warranted, because studies (Tillfors et al 2012; Schwartz, et al 1998; Seals & Young, 2003; Mokhtaree & Aghamohammad, 2017; Kaplan, et al 2015 & Abbasi-Asl, et al 2016) have shown that the issue of social phobia is becoming more prevalent among students. The extent to which a child is adjusted as regards their peer relationship and personality goes a long way in determining the level of a child's anxiousness concerning activities in the school especially in area of social interacting including class participation, test taking which gives an index of a student's achievement in school that in turns determine how the students sees self and also the society. The issue of social phobia is becoming more prevalent and the effect worrisome as when students' are social phobic, they exhibit high levels of depression, school refusal and dropout; poor interpersonal relationship, lowered self-esteem, poor social skills, narrow career decision, reduction in quality of life, a risk of suicide and performance and achievement in academics is compromised . These are thus valid and important research concerns and in response, calls for more empirical studies. Therefore, the primary aim of the present study was to examine the prediction of peer victimization and personality traits on social phobia. In guiding this study the following questions were asked and hypotheses formulated

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent does peer victimization predict social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on gender?
2. To what extent does peer victimization predict social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on location?
3. To what extent does personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) jointly predict social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis?
4. To what extent does personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) independently predict social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis?

2.2 HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant prediction of peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on gender.
2. There is no significant prediction of peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on location.
3. There is no significant joint prediction of personality super-traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) on social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis.
4. There is no significant prediction of personality super-traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) independently on social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed the multiple prediction design within the correlational research design; Correlational design is used in a situation where the researcher seeks to establish the relationship between two or more variables. The population for the study was 32,770 senior secondary school students (SS1 and SS2) in 56 schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers state. Multistage sampling procedure was used to draw the sample for the study. Stratified sampling technique was used to create two strata based on urban and metro/rural where 1 Local Government Areas (Port Harcourt) while 2 Local Government Areas (Eleme and Ikwerre) were chosen respectively. Simple random sampling technique via balloting method was used to obtain 4 schools from the 3 Local Government Areas given a total of 12 schools and 1,000 students; and purposive sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 448 adolescents (166 male and 282 female) who were social phobic.

Three instruments Peer Victimization Scale (PVS), Big Five Personality Scale (NEO-PR-I) and Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN). The Peer Victimization Scale (PVS) was self developed and consist of 15 items. The Big Five Personality Scale (NEO-PR-I) was adapted from McCrea and Costa (1992) but was modified slightly and it consist of 31 items. The Social Phobia Inventory (SPI) which is self-developed instrument consists of 17 items. The instruments were all structured in the modified Likert Scale. The reliability and construct validity of these instruments were estimated using Cronbach alpha method of internal consistency. These instruments were pilot tested on a sample of 30 respondents. In line with Cronbach alpha method, every item in the instrument was analyzed for quality and selection. Item inclusion for the final instrument were based on the inter item analysis and item total statistics. Items which were considered inadequate were removed based on their weak position on coefficient compared to other items in the pool a system which ensured construct validity of the items in the instruments. For Peer Victimization scale (PVS) $r=.86$, Big Five Personality Scale (NEO-PR-I) $r=.76$ Openness to experience Scale $r = .62$, Conscientiousness Scale $r = .69$, Extraversion Scale $r = .68$, Agreeableness Scale $r = .73$ and Neuroticism Scale $r = .78$ and for Social Phobia Inventory $r = .89$, from the these, there were clear and adequate evidence that the scales had good psychometric properties of validity and reliability.

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer research questions 1 and 2 while two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test hypotheses 1 and 2. Multiple regression was used to answer research questions 3 and 4 while ANOVA and t-test associated with multiple regression were used to test hypotheses 3 and 4. The tenability of all the null hypotheses was tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

4. RESULTS: Results of statistical analysis are presented in the following tables;

Table 4.1: Mean and standard deviation showing the prediction of the peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents based on gender.

Peer Victimization Level	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	MD
Low	Male	46.670	5.340	91	
	Female	47.518	5.227	83	
	Total	47.075	5.288	174	.848
High	Male	47.533	5.493	75	
	Female	49.960	7.261	199	
	Total	49.296	6.899	274	2.427
Total	Male	47.060	5.410	166	
	Female	49.241	6.809	282	
Total	Total	48.433	6.408	448	2.181

As shown in table 4.1, the descriptive output of social phobia for peer victimization based on gender includes; male adolescents peer victimization (low/high) $n=91$, $M = 46.670$, $SD = 5.340$ and $n = 75$, $M = 47.533$ and $SD = 5.493$ and female adolescents peer victimization (low/high) are; $M = 47.518$, $SD = 5.227$ and $M = 49.960$, $SD = 7.261$. The total mean and standard deviation scores for male and female $M = 47.060$, $SD = 5.410$ and $M = 49.241$, $SD = 6.809$ respectively. The mean difference on peer victimization level (low/high) based on gender are; $MD = .848$ and 2.427 . While the total mean difference on gender is 2.181 . This provides answer to the research question 4 that peer victimization (low/high) influence social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on gender. Also, the mean difference of 2.181 is in favour of female adolescents' implying that female adolescents experience higher social phobia as a result of being victimized than their male counterpart.

Table 4.2: Two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showing the influence of peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents based gender.

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Corrected Model	876.813 ^a	3	292.271	7.424	.000
Intercept	88756.335	1	88756.335	22545.906	.000
Peer Victimization Level	263.826	1	263.826	6.702	.010
Gender	258.975	1	258.975	6.578	.011
Peer Victimization Level and Gender	60.208	1	60.208	1.529	.217
Error	17479.178	444	59.368		
Total	1069256.000	448			
Corrected total	1.8355.991	447			

In order to test hypothesis 1, the descriptive statistics output of mean and standard deviation of gender and peer victimization as shown in table 4.1 were subjected to two-way ANOVA. For peer victimization level, the computed values yielded an F-ratio of 6.702, $df = 1$, $p = .010$, which was significant at 0.05 alpha level. This implies that peer victimization significantly predict social phobia. The result also revealed that gender had an F-ratio = 6.5578, $df = 1$, $p = .011$, $p < 0.05$. This implies that gender significantly predict social phobia.

Again, table 4.2 revealed that there is no significant prediction of peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on gender. This can be seen from the computed value which yielded an F-ratio of 1.529, $p = .217$, $p > 0.05$ which was not significant at 0.05 alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis 4 was retained.

Table 4.3: Mean and Standard deviation showing the prediction of peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents based on location.

Peer Victimization Level	Location	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	MD
Low	Urban	47.232	5.354	99	
	Rural	46.867	5.228	75	
	Total	47.075	5.288	174	.0365
High	Urban	50.348	8.464	92	
	Rural	48.764	5.909	182	
	Total	49.296	6.899	274	1.584
Total	Urban	48.733	7.179	191	
	Rural	48.210	5.774	257	
	Total	48.433	6.408	448	.523

As shown in table 4.3, the descriptive statistics output of peer victimization on social phobia based on location are; for urban peer victimization level low $n = 99$, $M = 47.232$, $SD = 5.354$ and high, $n = 92$, $M = 50.348$, $SD = 8.464$ while for rural low $n = 75$, $x = 46.867$, $SD = 5.228$ and high $n = 182$, $M = 48.764$, $SD = 5.909$. The total mean and standard deviation score for urban and rural are $n = 191$, $M = 48.733$, $SD = 7.179$ and $n = 257$, $M = 48.210$, $SD = 5.774$ and the overall mean and standard deviation score are $n = 448$, $M = 48.433$, and 6.408 respectively. The mean difference on the various peer victimization (low/high) levels based on location are; .0365 and 1.584 while the mean difference on location (urban/rural) is .523 This in effect shows that peer victimization predict social phobia among secondary school adolescents based on location. It can also be discerned from the result as shown in table 4.3 that urban adolescents experience or exhibit higher level of social phobia than their rural counterparts as a result of being victimized by their peers.

Table 4.4: Two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showing the prediction of peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents based on location.

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Corrected Model	683.958 ^a	3	227.986	5.728	.001
Intercept	937985.050	1	937985.050	566.352	.000
Peer Victimization	631.329	1	631.329	15.862	.000
Location	95.519	1	95.519	2.400	.122
Peer Victimization Level and Location	37.302	1	37.302	.937	.334
Error	17672.033	444	39.802		
Total	1069256.000	448			
Corrected total	18355.991	442			

As shown in table 4.4, the descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were subjected to two-way analysis of variance and computed score for peer victimization yielded an F-ratio of 15.862, $df = 1$, $p = .000$, which was significant at 0.05 level of probability. This implies that peer victimization significantly predict social phobia. Also from the table above, location had an F-ratio = 2.400, $df = 1$, $p = .122$, $p > 0.05$ and was not significant. This implies that location does not significantly predict social phobia.

Again, the result revealed that, the interaction prediction of peer victimization level and gender yielded an F-ratio = .937, $p = .334$, $p > 0.05$ and was not statistically significant. Since, the calculated p value .334 is greater than the critical value 0.05, the null hypothesis 2 which state that there is no significant prediction of peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on gender was retained. That is to say the observed mean difference of .523 in favour of urban peer victimized adolescents was not statistically significant.

Table 4.5: Multiple regression analysis showing the joint prediction of personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) on social phobia among secondary school adolescents.

Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.254 ^a	.065	.054	6.23227

a. Predictors: (Constant), Neuroticism, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion. n = 448

As shown in table 4.5, the result of the multiple regression analysis revealed the joint influence of personality super-traits on social phobia which yielded a regression coefficient $R = .254$, R square = .065, Adjusted R square = .054 and Standard Error of the Estimate = 6.23227. It can be seen that the regression coefficient yielded an R -value of .254 implies that the combined strength of the joint prediction of personality traits of (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) on social phobia is about 25.4%, the coefficient of determination R Square is 6.5% and Adjusted R Square is 5.4%. This means that only about 6.5% of the variation of the proportion in social phobia can be explained by personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism), and the remaining 93.5% maybe explained or accounted for by other variables not included in this model.

Table 4.6: ANOVA associated with multiple regression showing the joint prediction of personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) on social phobia among secondary school adolescents.

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	1188.185	5	237.637	6.118	.000
1 Residual	17167.806	442	38.841		
Total		447			

a. Dependent Variable: Social Phobia. n = 448

b. Predictors: (Constant), Neuroticism, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion

The computed regression yielded an F -ratio of 6.118, $df = (5,442)$, $p = .000$, $p < 0.05$ as shown in table 4.6. Since the calculated p value .000 is less than the critical p value .005 the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant joint prediction of personality super-traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) on social phobia was rejected. The conclusion was drawn that personality traits jointly predict (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Table 4.7: t-test analysis associated with multiple regression showing the relative predictive contribution of each personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) on social phobia.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficient Beta	T	Sig
(Constant)	42.774	2.925		14.623	.000
Openness to Experience	.209	.103	.103	2.025	.043
Conscientiousness	-.102	.085	-.061	-1.191	.234
1 Extraversion	-.295	.113	-.136	-2.615	.009
Agreeableness	.120	.092	.067	1.311	.190
Neuroticism	.305	.075	.202	4.045	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Phobia

As shown in table 4.7, the partial regression coefficient (β) is a measure of the independent prediction of personality super-traits on social phobia. The Beta values for personality super-traits are; openness to experience = .103, conscientiousness = -.061, extraversion = -.136, agreeableness = .067 and neuroticism = .202 respectively. This implies that neuroticism had the highest prediction on social phobia, followed by extraversion, then openness to experience, and agreeableness, while conscientiousness had the least influence on social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Again, the table revealed the computed t -test value associated with multiple regression of the relative contribution of personality traits. For openness to experience $t = 2.025$, $p = .043$, $p < 0.05$, conscientiousness $t = -1.191$, $p = .234$, $p > 0.05$, extraversion $t = -2.615$, $p = .009$, $p < 0.05$, agreeableness $t = 1.311$, $p = .190$, $p > 0.05$ and neuroticism $t = 4.045$, $p = .000$, $p < 0.05$. The result above showed that openness to experience and neuroticism personality traits had a positive significant independent prediction on social phobia, extraversion had a negative significant prediction on social phobia at 0.05 alpha level, while conscientiousness and agreeableness do not significantly predict social phobia among secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

5. Discussion and CONCLUSION

This study focused on the prediction of peer victimization and personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) on social phobia among secondary school adolescents. The finding of the present study indicated that peer victimization as shown in table 4.2 yielded an F-ratio of 6.702, $P < .010$, $p < 0.05$ and Gender had an F-ratio of 6.578, $p < .011$, $P < 0.05$ which were significant in the prediction of social phobia. This shows that female adolescents exhibit higher level of social phobia than their male counterparts. The present study also revealed that there is no significant prediction of peer victimization on social phobia among adolescents based on gender. This implies that adolescents irrespective of their gender and being victimized by their peer, experiences similar social phobia. The study of Storch and Ledly (2005) and Masia-Werner, Crisp and Klein (2005) is in consonance with the present study, they found out that the prospective link between peer victimization and social phobia was similarly related to both adolescents female and male. The present study is also in agreement with those of Tillfors et al (2012) who found that peer victimization has a significant relationship with social anxiety. They also assert that development pathways for social anxiety seem to differ for adolescents' female than male.

The finding of this study differs from that of Rapee and Spence (2004) who found out a significant interaction relationship of peer victimization and gender on social phobia among adolescents. The divergence in both results may have resulted from the difference in design. The past studies used longitudinal design, while the present study used ex-post facto design. Again the differences may have been as a result of environment. The other studies are foreign while the present was done in Rivers State, Nigeria. The adolescents in these two countries have different orientations and views. The finding of the present study revealed that there is no significant prediction of peer victimization on social phobia among secondary school adolescents based on location.

The finding of the study revealed no significant prediction of location on social phobia as shown by the in table 4.4 $p > 0.05$ and also a no significant interaction prediction of peer victimization and location on social phobia among secondary school adolescent was found $p > 0.05$. This implies that irrespective of the adolescents' location and being victimized by peers, they experience similar levels of social phobia. This is similar to that of Tillfors et al (2012) who found no significant difference in the prevalence of social anxiety among victimized adolescents in rural and urban setting. This is in disagreement with the findings of Vega et al (1998) who found higher prevalence of psychiatric disorder in urban dwellers than in rural dwellers. The divergence in both studies maybe as a result of different sample size and location of the studies. While Vega et al (1998) used adolescents and adult for their study and it was conducted in California, the present study was carried in Nigeria and only in school adolescents were used.

The finding of the study revealed that personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism) jointly significantly predict social phobia among secondary school adolescents from table 4.5 and 4:6 where $P < .05$ when data was analyzed using multiple regression. Coefficient of determination shows that only 6.5% of the variation in the proportion of social phobia can be accounted for by the prediction of personality traits. The result was not surprising but expected since personality traits are conceptualized as dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent pattern of thoughts, feelings, and actions across events, developmental periods and contexts. Thus, the big five factor dimensional model or super-traits assumes there are individual differences in personality structures regarding their vulnerability or resilience to social and mental distress, in regards to anxiety. This is similar to the findings of Mokhtaree and Aghamohammad (2017) which showed very severe relationship between social phobia and neuroticism was reversed and significant and other personality characters were significantly. Neuroticism and openness predicted social phobia significantly.

The finding of this study revealed that there was a significant positive prediction of openness to experience and neuroticism while extraversion had a negative significant prediction on social phobia. However, conscientiousness and agreeableness personality traits do not significantly predict social phobia among secondary school adolescents as shown in table 4.7. Table 4.7 indicated the independent contribution prediction of personality traits on social phobia among secondary school adolescents. As a matter of fact; openness to experience $p < 0.05$; implies that openness to experience if increase social phobia increases. In the same manner, for conscientiousness $p > 0.05$; implies that a decrease in conscientiousness personality trait lead to decrease in social phobia. For extraversion personality trait $p < 0.05$; implies that when social phobia is high extraversion personality trait is low and decrease in extraversion personality trait leads to an increase in social phobia. The agreeableness personality trait $p > 0.05$ implies that when conscientiousness is high, social phobia is low and a decrease in social phobia result to an increase in agreeableness personality trait. Lastly, for neuroticism personality trait $p < 0.05$ implies that an increase in neuroticism personality trait results in an increase in social phobia. When social phobia is high, neuroticism is high. The present study is similar to the findings of Mokhtaree and Aghamohammad (2017) which showed very severe relationship between social phobia and neuroticism was reversed and significant and other personality characters were significant. Neuroticism and openness predicted social phobia significantly. In the same vein, Kaplan, et al (2015) findings revealed that SA correlated positively with neuroticism, negatively with extraversion, and had weaker relationships with agreeableness, openness, and trust. This is also partially in line with Abbasi-Asl, et al 2016 findings which showed, neuroticism had a positive significant prediction on social anxiety, extraversion had a negative significant prediction on social anxiety while conscientiousness had no significant prediction on social anxiety. But the result also differs on agreeableness which had a negative significant prediction on social anxiety while openness to experience had no significant prediction on social phobia. The divergence in the present study and past studies could be as a result of many factors. Abbasi-Asl et al (2016) used only female as sample while the present study used mixed sample male and female adolescents. Again, the environment where the present study and other past studies were conducted differs. For instance; while the present study was conducted in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria: that of Abbasi-Asl et al (2016) was conducted in a foreign country. The adolescents in these two countries have different orientations and views. Also the statistics used are different.

In conclusion social phobia of secondary school adolescents was seen to be high in females more than their male counterparts, peer victimization and personality traits was seen to predict social phobia but peer victimization based on gender and location was not significant as well as personality traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness in the prediction of social phobia.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore recommended that;

1. Secondary school management should have guidance counsellors who are professionally trained to help in handling students with social phobia in senior secondary school, as this disorder if not properly treated will hinder the students' academic progression and quality of life both now and in adulthood.
2. School administrators should put measures on ground like punishment for offence and rehabilitation intervention for bullies to curb and eradicate both physical and verbal victimization among adolescents in secondary schools. Rehabilitation should also be carried out for those with severe social phobia.
3. Appropriate therapeutic attention to promote preventive and curative measures for social phobia should be provided in secondary school in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The school administrators and counsellors in collaboration with other professional in behavioural sciences and those who are successful in various fields of endeavour should organize seminars and workshop on overcoming one's fear, assertiveness training and on how to build one's self-esteem which will go a long way in improving not only their level of assertiveness but also the academic performance.
4. Healthy debates, competition and group projects should be encourage among adolescents in school to help them overcome their fear of entering social situation, speaking up in class, interacting with other students and asking for help either from the teachers or students. This will also bring to the lime light those who are social phobic so they can be helped

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