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**GST 122 ASSIGNMENT**

Perceive a problem in your present environment, formulate a researchable topic for it and write an essay on it.

**SOLUTION**

**PEER PRESSURE IN NIGERIAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES: ABUAD IN PERSPECTIVE**

**INTRODUCTION**

There are so many issues of concern in our present environment. Some of these issues include racism, rape, gender inequality, cultism, peer pressure etc. These issues most times have many negative effects on their victims. Out of these several issues of concern, this essay will be focusing on the issue of peer pressure in Nigerian Private Universities taking a case study of ABUAD, being my present environment.

Peers can be referred to as people of the same age bracket or age group. Pressure can be defined as the use of persuasion or intimidation to make someone do something. Therefore, peer pressure is the direct influence on people by peers, or the effect on individuals who become encouraged to follow their peers by changing their attitude, values or behaviors to conform to those of the influencing group or individual. Peer pressure mostly occurs among teenagers. The peak tends to be around the age of 15 then it declines. Teens get better at setting boundaries with peers by age 19 according to Laurence Steinberg a psychology professor at temple University. This age bracket 15-19 constitute the age of most students of 100-300 levels of Nigerian private universities especially ABUAD. The aim of this essay is to discuss peer pressure in Nigerian private universities, particularly in ABUAD, with a view to bringing out some preventive measures. The essay will cover causes of peer pressure, types, advantages and disadvantages as well as how to prevent peer pressure in ABUAD.

**CAUSES OF PEER PRESSURE**

There are so many reasons why people give in to peer pressure. Some of the reasons why people give into peer pressure include; low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence, uncertainty about one’s place within a given peer group and the desire to be liked or to fit in. Other reasons are to avoid rejection and gain social acceptance, hormonal inconsistencies, lack of proper home training etc. Some people may yield to peer pressure because they are curious to try something new that others are doing. The idea that everyone is doing it may influence some people to leave their better judgement or their common sense behind. All these were observed among young undergraduates of ABUAD.

**TYPES OF PEER PRESSURE**

There are two types of peer pressure; the positive and the negative peer pressure. Both types are observed among students of ABUAD.

* Positive peer pressure is the type of peer pressure wherein one’s friends or peers push one to do excellent things and behave accordingly or properly. Positive peer pressure occurs in ABUAD but at a lower rate than negative peer pressure.
* Negative peer pressure is when one’s peers influence one to do things against the rules, unethically, immorally, dishonestly, improperly or dishonourably. Negative peer pressure could be direct, indirect and self-direct.

1. Direct negative peer pressure is when your friend asks you to do something that you could hardly resist. This negative peer pressure results in blackmailing and threatening. This is not common in ABUAD.
2. Indirect negative peer pressure is imitating what you see and hear from your peers. Though indirect negative peer pressure is not as powerful as direct, still it could greatly influence your decisions and behaviors.
3. Self-direct peer pressure is placing stress on yourself to fit in with a specific group of people because of the comments or standards directed towards you. Indirect negative and self direct peer pressure are common in ABUAD.

Furthermore, if a person is peer pressuring you for a good cause, then it is motivation. Motivation is essential for the growth of a person. While peer pressure for a bad cause will always lead you to a disastrous situation. Therefore, it is necessary for students to analyze the outcome of a deed in a strict manner so that they don’t do or engage in something harmful to themselves. Human environment is full of vices therefore, people need to be very careful and watchful.

**ADVANTAGES OF PEER PRESSURE**

Although peer pressure is mostly known for having negative effects on the society, there are also several benefits associated with peer pressure which include the following: Peers inspire you to do your best in your studies, they help you develop positive traits and good values, they motivate you in your everyday life and gradually make you a better version of yourself, they help you to abandon negative habits, they encourage excellence and they help you to develop empathy.

**DISADVANTAGES OF PEER PRESSURE**

Peer pressure is also responsible for creating negative impacts on youngsters. This situation is peculiar within the university environment, especially in private universities where you have younger students than public universities. Negative peer pressure can be detrimental to self-esteem, influence clear decision making and increase stress, it can lead to harmful or dangerous behaviors that could result in death, such as car accidents due to drunkenness, drug addiction and so much more. It can lead to a lackadaisical attitude towards academics which eventually leads to failure. It can also lead to depression that result to fear. This allows teenagers to follow their peers without a second thought. Peer pressure can cause loss of identity, it can change your focus on progress and it can create harmful circumstances that impact your life in adverse ways.

**HOW TO PREVENT NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE IN ABUAD**

Peer pressure could be prevented among ABUAD students by exhibiting the following habits: Knowing when to say no, following your heart or intuition and remembering quality over quantity especially with friends. ABUAD students should also know that getting help from more matured people or grown-ups is okay. Students should build self-confidence and ensure that whatever one is doing is based on own choice and not due to someone else’s influence.

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, peers together with how they were trained by their parents, their upbringing, how they live and decide for their lives choices could lead students to another world that may provide a positive or negative impact on their behavior and personality. It may affect the way they perceive things in their environment whether in a good way or bad way. Therefore, peer pressure could either be an advantage or disadvantage to every individual. It is important to avoid negative effects of peer pressure and embrace the positive values that come with it. ABUAD students should always remember that, if you don’t stand for something, you will fall for anything.