

## Exploring the impact of home environment and digital socialization on self-efficacy and social adjustment among secondary school adolescents

**Samuel Adeniyi**<sup>a1</sup>, University of Lagos, University of Lagos, University Road, Lagos Mainland, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, [soadeniyi@unilag.edu.ng](mailto:soadeniyi@unilag.edu.ng)

**Olaotan Oladele Kuku**<sup>b</sup>, University of Lagos, University of Lagos, Lagos Mainland, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, [kuku.oladele@fcetakoka.edu.ng](mailto:kuku.oladele@fcetakoka.edu.ng) <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0500-0558>

**Opeyemi Ogunyomi**<sup>c</sup>, University of Lagos, University of Lagos, University Road, Lagos Mainland, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, [oogunyom@ttu.edu](mailto:oogunyom@ttu.edu)

**Deborah Anuoluwapo Demurin**<sup>d</sup>, University of Lagos, University of Lagos, University Road, Lagos Mainland, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, [demurin.deborah@lcu.edu.ng](mailto:demurin.deborah@lcu.edu.ng)

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### Abstract

The study investigated how home factors and digital socialization influence self-efficacy and social adjustment among secondary school adolescents. The research was motivated by the growing concern about adolescents' adaptive functioning in an increasingly digital society and the limited understanding of how family environments interact with online experiences to shape developmental outcomes. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, involving 558 adolescents selected through a multi-stage sampling process. Validated instruments were used to assess home environment, digital socialization, self-efficacy, and social adjustment. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that both home factors and digital socialization significantly contributed to adolescents' self-efficacy and social adjustment. The results emphasized the importance of supportive home environments and responsible digital engagement in promoting adolescents' confidence and social competence. The study provides insights for educators, parents, and policymakers on fostering healthy digital behaviors and enhancing family support systems to strengthen adolescents' psychosocial development.

**Keywords:** Adolescents; digital socialization; home environment; self-efficacy; social adjustment

### 1. INTRODUCTION

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\* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Samuel Adeniyi, University of Lagos, University of Lagos, University Road Lagos Mainland Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria. E-mail address: [soadeniyi@unilag.edu.ng](mailto:soadeniyi@unilag.edu.ng)

The ability to adaptively live in a community depends on so many factors. These factors vary widely and can be sociological, psychological, or contextual nature. Most importantly, the period of adolescence is a critical time in the developmental process of man. This is because major personality traits are developed during this period of time, culminating in what an adult will become. Adolescence is a developmental stage that ends the childhood stage and transitions to adulthood. The age ranges between 10 and 19, though it can vary across cultures and developmental dimensions of individuals. This period is characterized by significant physical, psychological, emotional, and social changes as individuals undergo puberty, form identity, and gain independence. The period is often accompanied by stress, confusion, and crises, which may make or mar an individual's life adjustment. On the other hand, social adjustment can be seen as the process by which an individual blends with the values, norms expectations of authoritative adults and the behavior of a particular environment in relation to others in the community. It is often accompanied by the development of life skills (such as self-efficacy, esteem, and self-regulation), emotional regulation, and appropriate behaviors that can aid an individual to adjust and navigate social situations effectively. While complying with social norms and values of any environment, believing in oneself is paramount. This is an aspect of social skill that is regarded as self-efficacy. Bandura (2006) defined self-efficacy as the individual's perception of his ability to perform or cope with a specific task at a given time in a particular environment. Hence, the confidence that one has propels performance and adaptation in a particular environment.

The constructs of social adjustment and self-efficacy, which are regarded as characteristics for adaptive living, are two members of one body and catalysts that define man as a distinct entity. While social adjustment is a social construct, self-efficacy is a psychological construct. The relationships between social adjustment and self-efficacy in adolescents are deeply interconnected, as both concepts play a crucial role in shaping their development and overall well-being during this critical stage of life. Research has shown that self-efficacy helps to determine both task performance and confidence to cope with or adjust to such tasks. For instance, Commodari et al. (2022) noted that the confidence to establish good relationships with peers could foster social adaptation of adolescents. In fostering good relationships, someone could have developed a level of adjustment that could be the motivation factor for peaceful coexistence. There is no gainsaying that social adjustment and self-efficacy are interconnected and may influence adolescents' pattern of personality formation; however, some other factors may also mediate the ways the two constructs are developed during the adolescent stage. Studies have identified a number of factors that could predict the developmental process of adolescents. These factors range from types of homes, personality of parents, socio-economic status of parents, socialization pattern, and a host of others (Kuroc et al., 2022; Omeje & Omeje, 2012; Valkenburg et al., 2022). However, as society becomes more evolved in terms of development, there is a tendency for complexities in factors aiding the developmental process, adjustment, and personality formation of adolescents, which might be the result of complex behavioral trends among young adults in modern society. The digital age and all its complex intricacies may also influence the pattern of life, which is worthy of investigation. A cursory look at all the factors holistically will help in shaping the lifestyle of the younger generation who are digital natives and have their lives depending on the digital environment.

## **1.1. Literature review**

### **1.1.1. Home factors and Self-efficacy of secondary school adolescents**

Home forms the first and most important avenue where children interact with the world around them. The family, whether extended or nuclear, forms the first learning environment. Norms and values of the society are introduced to a child by parents, siblings, grandparents, and other authoritative adults (Xie et al., 2024). So, the process of life building and personality formation starts at home. The pattern of growth and development, therefore, depends on the kind of home in which an individual comes in contact during their formative years. The home factors comprise parenting style, socio-economic status, level of education, and parental involvement. These factors may shape the social and psychological dispositions of adolescents. Mazur et al.'s (2014) study on

changes in family socio-economic status as a predictor of self-efficacy in 13- 13-year-old Polish adolescents reported that change in socio-economic status impacted self-efficacy of their respondents, with mother educational change encouraging the buildup of developmental assets in older children.

Also, Lv et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between parental involvement and children's self-efficacy profile using a person-centered approach found that fathers and mothers' educational aspirations, father-child activity, and mother-child communication can help a child to develop favorable self-efficacy. These findings imply that parents play a crucial role in what becomes of their children in adulthood. In this regard, parents must be able to give necessary support to their wards. Lv et al. (2018) noted that family is an immediate social system for children's development. This is because children continuously interact with parents and siblings at home for the development of their self-efficacy. The bio-ecological model affirmed that family process (parental involvement) is more important in children's self-efficacy. This expressed the need for more parents' conscious interaction with their children as early as possible to promote self-confidence and worthiness. Numerous studies have also suggested that parental involvement is positively associated with children's self-efficacy (Yap & Baharudin, 2016; Givertz & Segrin, 2014)

### **1.1.2. Home factors and Social adjustment of secondary school adolescents**

Home is adjudged to be one of the strongest predictors of adolescents' positive social adaptation (Vandeleur et al., 2007). So, growing up in a comfortable home with secure emotional bonding between family members creates an opportunity for the formation of the right perception of life and the development of a positive psychological disposition. Kurock et al. (2022) did a systematic review of family climate and social adaptation of adolescents' community samples, reporting that family climate was shown to be a good predictor of social adaptation of adolescents. Clinical research has also revealed that positive family climate is a protective factor for adolescents' social problems and also impacts their well-being (Brinksmas et al., 2020; Park & Schepp, 2015). Hence, involvement in adolescents' activity and parents' concern and interest can help in social adjustment and psychosocial competence (Park & Schepp, 2015).

The dynamism and complexity of the effects of family interactions have an intractable influence on the adolescents which making the issue parental involvement crucial in a child's upbringing. It should be noted that unhealthy parenting interaction and expectations on children may make heavy demands and thereby stress adolescents beyond their limits. In situations where adolescents are not allowed by their parents to have their own opinions, they may think that they are not good enough and may begin to lack belief in themselves, leading to poor adjustment. Also, Guo (2022) investigated the impact of parenting style on social adjustment of adolescents employing a cross-cultural perspective, noting that parental control may portend an adverse effect on social adjustment of adolescents. There is much empirical evidence showing that improvements in family socioeconomic status may induce beneficial effects in children in the form of adjustment and psychological stability (Malakar, 2021; Simons, Boot, et al, 2016; McGrath et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2015). The abundance of research evidence supporting the interaction between the socio-economic status of parents and social adjustment of adolescents in some developed economies is an indicator that such may influence the social adjustment of adolescents in developing economies.

### **1.1.3. Digital socialization and Self-efficacy of secondary school adolescents**

Technology has become a significant part of our lives in the 21st century. In this century, both academic and non-academic lifestyles are mediated by mobile instruments, online applications, and social media tools (Yang & Wu, 2012). Hence, the social life of children, adolescents, and adults has been typically influenced. Since the technology is open to all, it has both positive and negative aspects (Williams & Mc Kercher, 2023; Günüç & Kayri, 2010; Etemi et al., 2024). This is because various activities are always going on the internet space, which

sometimes might have a significant effect on the social and psychological lives of both young people and adults. Some major activities that affect the well-being of individuals in the internet are cyber stalking and cyberbullying.

Cyber stalking is a crime in which someone harasses a victim using electronic or digital means, such as social media, email, instant messages posted to a discussion group, to intimidate the victim. Using this may have consequences on the social and psychological dispositions of individuals. Similarly, cyberbullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, and embarrass another to inflict social and psychological injury on the victim (Jo, 2025). Hellfieldt et al. (2020) noted that cyberbullying has emerged as a distinct form of social aggression that portends great consequences on the life adjustment of the victim. Contrary to the expectation that social media may promote negativity in an individual as widely perceived, Jia et al. (2024) studied the impact of social media on users' self-efficacy and loneliness and found that social media usage frequency (SMUF) enhances self-efficacy and loneliness through social support.

#### **1.1.4. Digital socialization and social adjustment of secondary school students**

Social media has become a global phenomenon and an especially important means of communication among peers, families, and friends, and sometimes for educational purposes (Çelik et al., 2023). The engagement is through social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Instant Messaging Services (IMS) such as WhatsApp, Viber, and IMO, and video calling services like Skype (Teka et al., 2019). Several studies have linked attachment to digital socialization to several social and psychological issues. For instance, Pantic (2014) reported that the time spent on social media positively correlated with depression among users. This may adversely affect the social adjustment of some younger generation, especially adolescents. In a related research by Teka et al. (2019) on the effects of social media on the psychosocial adjustment of secondary and preparatory private school adolescents in Hawassa, they reported that engagement in social media has a significant relationship with self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and social connectedness. By implication, digital socialization could interplay with the total development of man with both positive and negative impacts on social and psychological dispositions. While researcher like Marshall et al., (2013) found that social media positively relate to social adjustment, sustain friendship and facilitation regular communication, Others have reported that digital socialization has negative impact on social adjustment of individual both young and adults (Andreassen, 2015; Teka et al., 2019; Kalpidou, et al., 2011; Morrison & Gore, 2010). The two sides of digital mediation remain contestable and need to be further investigated.

#### **1.2. Purpose of study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of home factors and digital socialization on adolescents' self-efficacy and social adjustment in secondary schools. Specifically, the study sought to determine how the quality of the home environment, including parenting style, socio-economic status, and parental involvement and patterns of digital engagement, collectively shape adolescents' confidence, adaptive functioning, and social competence in a rapidly digitalized society. The study's hypotheses are as follows:

H1- There is no significant relative contribution of Parenting style, socio-economic status, level of education, parental involvement, and digital socialization on the social adjustment of adolescents in secondary school in Southwestern Nigeria

H2- Home factors and digital socialization will not jointly predict social adjustment of adolescents in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

H3- There is no significant relative contribution of Parenting style, socio-economic status, level of education, parental involvement, and digital socialization on the self-efficacy of adolescents in secondary school in Southwestern Nigeria.

H4- Home factors and digital socialization will not jointly predict self-efficacy of adolescents in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

## **2. METHOD AND MATERIALS**

### **2.1. Participants**

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The populations for the study were secondary school adolescents in three states in Southwestern Nigeria, namely Lagos, Oyo, and Osun States. Multi-stage process participated in selecting samples for the study. We employed stratified sampling to select the states and simple random sampling to select three local governments in the states that participated in the research. Two secondary schools were selected in each local government in the state, selected using a convenience sampling technique. Purposive sampling was employed to select a stratum of Senior Secondary School Two (SSS2). This was because this level was believed to accommodate sizable numbers of adolescents, and also because they would not be participating in any external examination. We also employed simple random sampling by the hat and draw method to select the respondents in the schools. The samples are as stated: Schools A: 95; B: 73; C: 113; D: 135; E: 65 and D: 77. This made a total of 558 adolescents that participated in the study.

### **2.2. Data collection instruments**

The instruments for data collection were the home environment inventory, digital socialization scale, self-efficacy scale, and social adjustment scale. The home environment inventory has 2 majors divisions with 3 scales. Section A comprised the demography of the respondents. i.e., level of education, gender, marital status. Section B comprised socioeconomic status, parental involvement, and parenting styles scales. The socio-economic status scale was adapted from the Kuppaswamy socioeconomic scale by Radharkrishnam and Nagaraja (2023), parental involvement was adapted from the parental involvement scale by Nasema and Gafoor (2001), and the parenting styles scale was adapted from the parenting styles and dimensions questionnaire by Robinson et al. (1995). The digital socialization scale was self-constructed. The self-efficacy scale was adapted from the general self-efficacy scale by Scharzer (2012), and the social adjustment scale was also from Lee et al. (2020).

### **2.3. Data analysis**

The adapted instrument, validated, and reliability index were as follows: socio-economic status scale 0.65; parental involvement, 0.71; parenting styles, 0.66; digital socialization scale, 0.65; self-efficacy scale 0.77. And the social adjustment scale, 0.68. The researchers and their research assistants visited different schools, used and personally administered the instrument, and waited to collect the responses. The data were adequately coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Linear Regression, and ANOVA.

## **3. RESULTS**

### **3.1. Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relative contribution of Parenting style, socio-economic status, level of education, parental involvement, and digital socialization on social adjustment of adolescents in secondary school in Southwestern Nigeria.**

The outcome of the analysis in Table 1 indicates that parental involvement, parenting styles, and levels of education were the significant predictors of social adjustment. However, digital socialization and socio-economic status are negatively related.

**Table 1**

*Coefficient – relative contribution of independent variables for social adjustment*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-4.254	0.949		-4.481	0.000
Digital Socialization	-0.018	0.012	-0.022	-1.475	0.141
Parenting Styles	0.096	0.024	0.069	4.039	0.000
Socio-Economic Status	-0.032	0.013	-0.029	-2.453	0.014
Level of Education	0.331	0.024	0.296	13.805	0.000
Parental Involvement	0.652	0.024	0.642	26.845	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Adjustment

### 3.2. Hypothesis 2: Home factors and digital socialization will not jointly predict social adjustment of adolescents in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

**Table 2**

*Model analysis for home factors, digital socialization, and social adjustment*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.967	0.935	0.934

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parental Involvement, Socio-Economic Status, Digital Socialization, Parenting Styles, Level of Education

The results of the linear regression analysis in Table 2 indicate a very strong positive relationship between the predictor(s) and the dependent variable, as evidenced by an R value of 0.967. The value of R suggests that there is a high degree of correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The R-squared value of 0.935 indicates that approximately 93% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the predictors included in the model. This high R-squared value demonstrates that the model is highly effective in explaining the variability in the data.

**Table 3**

*ANOVA result for joint contribution to social adjustment*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20309.9	5	4061.97	1586.44	0.000
	Residual	1413.36	552	2.56043		
	Total	21723.2	557			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Digital Socialization, Socio-Economic Status, Parenting Styles, Level of Education, Parental Involvement

b. Dependent Variable: Social Adjustment

The ANOVA results (Table 3) indicate a significant joint prediction of the dependent variable by the independent variables, Parental Involvement, Socio-Economic Status, Digital Socialization, Parenting Styles, and Level of Education, with an F-value of 1586.44 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, leading to the conclusion that home factors and digital socialization collectively predict the social adjustment of secondary school adolescents in Southwestern Nigeria.



### 3.3. Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relative contribution of home factors (Parenting style, socio-economic status, level of education, parental involvement) and digital socialization on self-efficacy of adolescents in secondary school in Southwestern Nigeria.

**Table 4**

*Coefficient – relative contribution of independent variables on self-efficacy*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	10.114	1.324		7.641	0.000
Digital Socialization	-0.129	0.017	-0.184	-7.634	0.000
Socio-Economic Status	0.171	0.018	0.176	9.272	0.000
Level of Education	0.448	0.033	0.463	13.398	0.000
Parental Involvement	0.117	0.034	0.133	3.458	0.001
Parenting Styles	0.226	0.033	0.189	6.846	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Self-Efficacy

Analysis in Table 4 shows that home factors of level of education, socioeconomic status, parenting style, level of education and parenting involvement, as well as digital socialization, possess a significant relative contribution to self-efficacy. While each of the home factors relates positively to self-efficacy, social digitalization inversely relates to self-efficacy.

### 3.4. Hypothesis 4: Home factors and digital socialization will not jointly predict self-efficacy of adolescents in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria

**Table 5**

*Model analysis for home factors, digital socialization, and self-efficacy*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.912 <sup>a</sup>	0.831	0.830

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting Styles, Socio-Economic Status, Digital socialization, Level of Education, Parental Involvement

The results of the linear regression analysis in Table 5 indicate a very strong positive relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable, as evidenced by an R value of 0.912. The value of R suggests that there is a high degree of correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The R-squared value of 0.831 indicates that approximately 83% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the predictors included in the model. This high R-squared value demonstrates that the model is highly effective in explaining the variability in the data.

**Table 6**

*ANOVA result for home factors, digital socialization, and self-efficacy*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13544.218	5	2708.844	544.293	0.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	2747.202	552	4.977		
	Total	16291.419	557			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parenting Styles, Socio-Economic Status, Digital socialization, Level of Education, Parental Involvement

b. Dependent Variable: Self-Efficacy

The ANOVA results in Table 6 indicate a significant joint prediction of the dependent variable by the independent variables (Parental Involvement, Socio-Economic Status, Digital Socialization, Parenting Styles, and Level of Education) with an F-value of 220.41 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, leading to the conclusion that home factors and digital socialization collectively predict self-efficacy of secondary school adolescents in Southwestern Nigeria.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The findings revealed the relative contributions of home factors to social adjustment in the order of parental involvement, parenting styles, and levels of education, while digital socialization and socio-economic status related negatively. The results revealed the importance of parental involvement, parenting styles, and level of awareness (education) in the developmental process of children and young adults. The level of involvement of parents and the way we handle these growing adults, coupled with the level of parents' education, may mar or make the future of children in terms of adaptation and adjustment cum their relationship with the community, peers, and others in the community. The outcome of this study corroborated the findings of Kurock et al. (2022), Brinksma et al. (2020), and Park & Schepp (2015), who all reported the importance of home climate in the overall adjustment of growing children. Hence, if home environment and all that interplay within the home are not favorable, children and adolescents may develop adjustment problems later in life, which can make their adjustment to the environment very difficult.

The findings also revealed that home factors and digital socialization jointly predicted social adjustment of secondary school adolescents in Southwestern Nigeria. The joint prediction of the social adjustment of secondary school students in Southwestern Nigeria lends credence to the fact that home variables and modernization in the form of digital evolution are factors that can shape the social adaptation of adolescents. This means whatever happens in the environment of a child goes a long way to affect the later years of such a child. This outcome is in line with various research conducted by scholars in the area of adaptation and adjustment of adolescents in view of numerous factors predicting their adjustment. For instance, Guo (2022) investigated the impact of parenting style on social adjustment of adolescents employing a cross-cultural perspective reported that parental control may portend adverse effects on social adjustment of adolescents. Also, empirical evidence showing that the impact of family socioeconomic status on the adjustment and psychological stability of the adolescent abounds (Simons, Wickrama, et al, 2016; McGrath et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2015). In the same vein, empirical evidence of the impact of digital socialization revealed a correlation between digital socialization and the adjustment of adolescents. Hence, engagement in different forms of digital innovation and development may mark or make the lives of young adults.

Furthermore, the study revealed that level of education, socioeconomic status, parenting style, and parenting involvement, as well as digital socialization, relatively contributed to the self-efficacy of senior secondary school adolescents in southwestern Nigeria. The implication is that possessing self-confidence in doing things depends on several factors, which start from home, coupled with the influence of society. This is because home climate, the level of society's socialization and development, also determines the ability of a child to possess confidence and belief in achieving a particular task. The finding is in line with the study conducted by Mazur et al. (2014) on changes in family socio-economic status and self-efficacy of 13-year-old Polish adolescents. It was reported that a change in socio-economic status impacted on self-efficacy of their respondents, with mothers' educational change encouraging the build-up of developmental assets in older children. Also, Lv et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between parental involvement and children's self-efficacy profile using a person-centered approach found that fathers and mothers' educational aspirations, father-child activity, and mother-child communication can help a child to develop favorable self-efficacy. Also, Jia et al. (2024) reported that social media usage frequency (SMUF) enhances self-efficacy and loneliness through social support.



Again, the findings found that home factors and digital socialization collectively predicted self-efficacy of senior secondary school adolescents in Southwestern Nigeria. The joint prediction of self-efficacy by the two independent variables is overwhelming evidence that both home factors and digital socialization can impact positively or negatively on the self-efficacy of adolescents, bringing to bear that parents must make the home conducive for children, though other factors in the environment where a child is developing are also very important.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study is on the impact of Home Environment and Digital socialization on Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Secondary School adolescents in Southwestern, Nigeria. The results revealed the relative contribution to and joint prediction of home factors and digital socialization of self-efficacy and social adjustment among senior secondary school adolescents in Southwestern Nigeria.

Parents are encouraged to make the home environment conducive for the growth of children and adolescents because this goes a long way to affect social adjustment and self-efficacy, these cluster later in life. Authoritative adults are also admonished to help adolescents develop high self-efficacy by making both the home and the surrounding environment child friendly. Content being displayed on social media should also be monitored to prevent young adults from developing negative, poor social adjustment, and low self-efficacy.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Ethical Approval:** The study adheres to the ethical guidelines for conducting research.

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