



**INFLUENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS ON ADOLESCENT DEVIANCY
AMONGST PUPILS FROM SINGLE-MOTHER FAMILIES IN PUBLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

The study looked into how psychological factors affect teen deviance in single-mother families and in public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. Specific goals of the study were to find out how common deviant behavior is among adolescents from single-mother families; to find out how emotional involvement and deviant behavior are linked. This is how the study worked: It had 100 participants. The tools for collecting data were questionnaires and interview schedules. The study was based on Erikson's phases of psychosocial. Proportionate simple random sampling was used to get a sample from each stratum totalling 164. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 24 was used to look at quantitative data and do both descriptive and inferential statistics. Multiple regressions were used to test the study's hypotheses. Qualitative data, on the other hand, was used to find themes. Data was shown in frequency tables, mean tables, and figures. The study concluded that after completing all of the analysis of the objective, which aimed to investigate the prevalence of adolescent deviancy among single-mother families in public primary schools, the study came to the conclusion that the majority of the students have experimented with drugs and alcohol, abused other students at school, cheated and physically fought with other students, and did not forget that the majority of them skipped school. Additionally, the majority of students do not attend courses and engage in inappropriate behavior such as clothing inappropriately, using harsh language, and displaying arrogance toward professors and other students in general. The study recommends that parents should try and observe their children to mitigate experimenting on; drugs and alcohol abuse also they should advice against abusing others, in indecent dressing, cheating at school or even physical fight with others students. Also, the school should have a strong fence to reduce cases of sneaking out of school.

Keywords: *Psychological Factors, Adolescent Deviancy, Pupils, Single-Mother Families*

INTRODUCTION

The family has long been recognized as a crucial institution in societies worldwide, playing a vital role in providing support and services to its members (Kothari, 2021). Families serve multiple

purposes, including enhancing economic security, facilitating intergenerational socialization, and providing emotional support to children and adolescents. During childhood and adolescence, the family exerts a significant influence on an individual's development. Relatives serve as a source of emotional support, encouragement, and social connections, making them a primary source of support for individuals. The family holds a unique position in society, performing functions that other groups or organizations cannot fulfill. These roles include imparting knowledge, caring for children, instilling religious values, and engaging in recreational activities with them. The well-being of a family depends on how effectively it meets the emotional needs of its members, as it serves as the primary context where young individuals acquire essential social skills. Parents play a crucial role in teaching their children how to become responsible and contributing members of society as they grow up. Deviant or antisocial behavior is typically defined as actions that deviate from societal norms, occur infrequently, and have a negative impact on others (Mustapha & Odediran, 2019). This notion aligns with the use of statistical analysis to determine the presence of outliers in behavior. In such cases, individuals struggle to integrate well within society, fail to meet their own needs, and their behavior negatively affects the lives of others.

The significance of the family extends to every individual's life. From a very young age, the family serves as a means of communication with the world and profoundly influences a child's physical, mental, moral, and social development throughout their entire lifespan (Roska & Potter, 2011; Cavanagh & Fomby, 2012). Children represent the future of communities, and it is essential to educate them about societal rules and expectations as they grow older. Davis (2011) emphasizes that the foundation of an individual's role in society as an adult is established within the home by their parents. It is also worth considering that single parents, despite the challenges they may face, have the capacity to fulfill parental responsibilities in certain circumstances, such as after a separation or divorce. Various factors contribute to single parenthood, including divorce, infidelity, different types of separations, and the loss of a spouse (Thwala, 2011; Falana, Bada & Ayodele, 2012). Societal conflicts and disputes can have detrimental effects on teenagers' development.

Studies reveal that a significant number of single mothers in Africa reside in impoverished urban slums, with over 30% of them facing such living conditions (UNDP, 2016). Additionally, single women in Africa often encounter limited economic opportunities and inadequate access to food compared to their male counterparts, making it challenging for single mothers to sustain their households (UNDP, 2016). The lower incomes, reduced employment prospects, and limited job availability contribute to the poor living standards experienced by single-mother households.

Adolescents in Kenya and other developing countries encounter unique challenges during their teenage years. The economic, social, and health transformations during this period make it particularly difficult, especially for young women (Njue & Evelia, 2009). Adolescence is marked by physical, social, mental, and psychological changes. Various physical changes occur, including alterations in body shape, voice, sexual characteristics, height, and weight. Adolescents start developing romantic attractions towards the opposite sex, and they become highly emotional, often responding consistently to certain events or stimuli (Moime, 2019).

Research conducted by the Security Research and Information Center indicates a growing prevalence of single-mother households and delinquent behavior among youths in Nairobi (2014). However, there remains limited understanding of the relationship between psychological characteristics and deviant behavior in young people raised by single mothers. The present study seeks to explore this connection and shed light on the interplay between the two variables.

Statement of the Problem

The institution of marriage and family is going through a lot of changes, and this is having an effect on how parents raise teenagers. People are splitting up, dying, and having children outside of marriage, which changes the way families work. Teenagers who grow up in these families may have a hard time with their mental health. There seems to be a rise in the number of single-parent families, and especially single motherhood families. Solitary parenting had a negative effect on children's well-being. Single parents who work often break up with their kids because they don't have enough time to help their kids deal with the stress of having only one parent in the house. A lot of Nairobi County is made up of informal settlements, and most of its people live below the poverty line.

There are more single moms in Nairobi County than anywhere else in Kenya, even though poverty is high in Kenya and the world as a whole. The goal of the study is to better understand how psychological factors and deviant behavior are linked in adolescents from single mother families who go to public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Objectives

To determine the prevalence of adolescent deviancy among single-mother families in public primary schools, Nairobi County, Kenya

Significance of the study

Ultimately, researchers believe that the results of the study will aid single-mother households as well as the broader public in their understanding of how psychological variables might impact deviant conduct in teenagers, as well as how these factors can be modified. Policymakers will be able to utilize the results of the research to develop strategies for assisting single moms in raising their children successfully. It is anticipated that the results of this research will be used to assist single mother parents with their parenting styles and tactics in order to prevent their children from becoming delinquent. This includes teachers, school counselors, carers, and probation officials. In addition, other academics want to utilize the results as a point of reference in further studies by doing a literature study on the subject matter.

Literature Review

Adolescence is a crucial stage in an individual's life, during which they undergo various developmental tasks that contribute to their maturation (Oyinloye, 2001). Parents play a significant role in supporting their teenagers in accomplishing these tasks. The assistance provided by parents is essential for the healthy growth and development of adolescents. It is widely acknowledged that parents who live together as a family tend to be more attentive to their children's growth and actively contribute to their development. However, the impact of parental divorce or separation on their children's self-esteem, behavior, social skills, and academic performance is often underestimated. Research conducted by Baker and Ben-Ami (2011) highlights that these changes can persist into adulthood and pose challenges that are difficult to overcome. Adolescents who experience parental divorce are more likely to experience mental distress, low self-esteem, and negative mood states (Baker & Ben-Ami, 2011; Huitt, 2011).

Studies conducted by Copeland (2010), Roska and Potter (2011), and Cavanagh and Fomby (2012) have examined the effects of single parenting on infants. The research indicates that single parents, due to not being married, may have less time for general supervision and daily monitoring of their teenagers. Consequently, they may struggle to effectively communicate with their children regarding their needs and desires compared to parents in traditional two-parent families (Copeland, 2010; Roska & Potter, 2011; Cavanagh & Fomby, 2012). Consequently, teenagers may feel

responsible for their parents' disagreements, leading to feelings of guilt and low self-esteem. Parental conflict can also impede parents' ability to provide adequate care, damaging the parent-child relationship. This weakening of the relationship can result in adolescents experiencing a loss of self-control, leading to negative behaviors that harm others (Crump & Saylor, 2001).

Crosnoe's (2007) study in the United States investigated the relationship between poor grades and alcohol consumption during high school among teenagers from single-parent families. The study revealed that teenagers from single-parent families are more susceptible to experiencing deprivation of certain rights and opportunities. Another South African study conducted by Moime (2009) emphasized the potential dangers and unhappiness that arise when parents and teachers fail to meet a child's psychological needs during specific developmental stages. Furthermore, a study by Salami and Alawode (2000) conducted in Nigeria demonstrated that when both parents are present and actively involved in parenting, they contribute to the optimal care and socialization of the child. This form of collaborative parenting positively influences the individual's self-worth in later life (Santrock, 2006).

In recent years, divorce rates and non-marital births have increased, while rates of marriage and remarriage have declined. This has resulted in diverse family structures (Copeland, 2010; Scott & Lilja, 2010; Azuka-Obieke, 2013). Research suggests that the diverse family contexts significantly influence the mental and social well-being of young individuals as they grow older, with variations observed among different family types (Azuka-Obieke, 2013). Modern society has witnessed a shift in family dynamics, and more young people are growing up in non-traditional households. However, having a healthy and supportive background during adolescence increases the likelihood of developing positive self-esteem and a strong sense of identity.

Dysfunctional family environments contribute to increased anxiety and concerns about the future among high school students, reflecting the challenges faced in contemporary society. Adolescents undergo physical, social, and mental changes during this phase of life, and those who lack knowledge about these changes may struggle with adaptation. The excitement and rebelliousness commonly experienced during adolescence may lead to behaviors such as bullying, rudeness, vandalism, fighting, stealing, as well as questioning and challenging authority (Munyua, 2007).

Theoretical Literature Review

Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development suggests that how individuals navigate certain challenges throughout their lives influences their overall well-being and success, from childhood to old age. Erikson proposed a series of eight psychosocial stages or conflicts that individuals encounter, which he believed contribute to their development (Erickson, 2019). According to Erikson, during the early stages of development, children rely on adult caregivers for their basic needs, such as food, love, and warmth. If a caregiver fails to provide sufficient attention and love, children may develop a sense of mistrust or dependency issues. The second stage is Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt. Erikson proposed that psychosocial development continues throughout childhood and revolves around children gaining a sense of control over their lives. During the preschool years, children begin to demonstrate their power and competence by engaging in play and social interactions.

The fourth stage is Industry vs. Inferiority, which occurs during a more extended period from ages 5 to 11. In this stage, Erikson suggested that children develop a sense of competence or inferiority based on their achievements and skills. Through friendships and positive experiences, young individuals start to feel proud of their accomplishments. Erikson viewed this stage as a pivotal turning point that can lead to increased self-doubt or greater opportunities for success.

Researchers have applied Erikson's theory to understand how single parenting in Nairobi, Kenya, impacts adolescent psychosocial development. By utilizing Erikson's framework, they can gain insights into how individuals may respond and behave in such circumstances. Erikson's theory is preferred in this research because it encompasses all stages of development, providing a comprehensive understanding from early adulthood to middle age and later life (Heffner, 2004). If a child's psychosocial needs are not met, Erikson suggests that they may experience personality disorders and overall dissatisfaction (Naug, 2000).

Methodology

Research Design

The study used a descriptive design to look at how psychological factors affect deviant behavior in adolescents who live with a single mother. The design is thought to be good because it allows for both quantitative and qualitative data to be collected and analyzed. Furthermore, Kothari (2011) says that the design allows for a lot of data to be collected from a lot of people in a short amount of time. This way, things can be reported the way they are in their natural setting without changing any variables.

Location of the study

The study was done in Mathare Sub County. It is made up of six county wards: Mlango kubwa, Hospital, Mabatini, Ngei, Huruma, and Kiamaiko. There are 193,416 people and 65,443 households in the 2.91 square km area.

Sample Size

According to Kothari (2004), sampling is the process of obtaining information regarding a whole population by investigating a part of that entire population. Purposeful simple random sampling was used to select three primary schools from the 13 primary schools in Mathare Sub-county, then select Class 7 and 8 as the pupils in these classes are most mature in primary school due to age. After this stratified sampling was used to get two strata: male stratum and female stratum in class 7 and 8 resulting in four strata. In the final stage, proportionate simple random sampling was used to get a sample from each stratum totalling 164. According to Borg and Gal (2003), 10-30% of a population which is less than 10000 is representative. Therefore, 10% of 1642 give a sample size of 164. This sample size is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Size Distribution

School	Class 7		Class 8		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Ndurumo Primary	19	16	19	16	70
Daima Primary	20	15	20	15	70
Kiboro Primary	6	7	4	7	24
Total	45	38	43	38	164

FINDINGS

Response Rate Analysis

The study respondent rate was 154 (76.23%) from a total of 202 (100%) in sample size. this means 48 (23.77) of the respondents did not participate in this study. Patten (2016) says that a response rate of 60% or more is good in the field of research when filling out a questionnaire. On the other hand, the Pew Research Center found that a response rate of 50% or higher on a questionnaire is very good, a response rate of 60% to 70% is good and a response rate of 70% or higher is excellent.

Based on what the research found, a response rate of 98.1 percent is enough and even great for the analysis table 3 with details.

Adolescent Deviancy

From the study ‘1’ represented strongly disagree, ‘2’ represented disagree, ‘3’ represented neutral, ‘4’ represented agree while ‘5’ represented strongly agree.

The study revealed that of the respondents were involved in deviant behaviour and had experienced drugs and alcohol use(mean of 1.70 with a standard deviation of 1.09). Respondents had been involved in abusing others (mean of 3.54 with a standard deviation of 1.14). The respondents had been involved in cheating at school (mean of 3.23 with a standard deviation of 1.23). The respondents had been involved in deviant behaviours of physical fight with others (mean of 3.38 with a standard deviation of 1.24). The respondents had been involved in deviant behaviours of sneaking out of school (mean of 3.78 with a standard deviation of 1.12). With a mean of 3.96 with a standard deviation of 3.94 the respondents had been involved in deviant behaviours of absenteeism. With a mean of 2.60 with a standard deviation of 1.50 of the respondents had been involved in deviant behaviours of indecent dressing. With a mean of 4.08 with a standard deviation of 1.43 the respondents had been involved in deviant behaviours of using abusive language while with a mean of 2.43 with a standard deviation of 1.13 the respondents had been involved in deviant behaviours of being arrogant to teachers and other. The majority of the respondents had experienced the had been involved in deviant behaviours of absenteeism (a mean of 3.96 with a standard deviation of 3.94) while a minority (mean of 2.43 with a standard deviation of 1.13) had been arrogant to teachers based on the study deployed to determine the influence of psychological factors on adolescent deviancy among pupils form single-mother families: in public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. Most of the respondent response mean was more than 3 which means that most of them responded with ‘agreed’ to scale statements. Table 2 shows the analysis in detail.

Table 2: Adolescent Deviancy

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Drugs and alcohol use	128	1.00	5.00	1.7031	1.09659
Abusing others	128	1.00	5.00	3.5469	1.14918
Cheating at school	128	2.00	5.00	3.2344	1.23266
Physical fight with others	128	1.00	5.00	3.3828	1.24938
Sneaking out of school	128	1.00	5.00	3.7891	1.12699
Absenteeism	128	1.00	44.00	3.9609	3.94330
Indecent dressing	128	1.00	5.00	2.6094	1.50712
Using abusive language	128	1.00	5.00	4.0859	1.43646
Being arrogant to teachers and other	128	1.00	5.00	2.4375	1.13464
Valid N (listwise)	128				

Prevalence of Adolescent Deviancy

Objective 1 sought to determine the prevalence of adolescent deviancy among single-mother families in public primary schools, Nairobi County, Kenya. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Prevalence of Adolescent Deviancy

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Deviant behaviour	26	20.3	20.3	20.3
	Normal behaviour	102	79.7	79.7	100.0
	Total	128	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 indicates deviant behaviour among the respondents was at 20.3%. The rest of the respondents (79.7%) exhibited normal behaviour. This finding shows that the prevalence of adolescent deviancy is 20.3% which is very high. Table 4 shows adolescent deviancy and drug abuse.

Table 4: Adolescent Deviancy and Drug Abuse

			Drug Abuse		Total
			Don't do drugs	Do drugs	
Adolescent deviancy	Deviant behaviour	Count	23	3	26
		% within Adolescent deviancy	88.5%	11.5%	100.0%
	Normal behaviour	Count	81	21	102
		% within Adolescent deviancy	79.4%	20.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	104	24	128
		% within Adolescent deviancy	81.3%	18.8%	100.0%

Table 4 shows that 88.5% of respondents with deviant behavior don't do drugs whereas 11.5% do drugs compared with 79.4% respondents with normal behavior who don't do drugs whereas 20.6% do drugs. Table 12 shows deviancy and absenteeism.

Table 5: Adolescent Deviancy and Absenteeism

			Absenteeism		Total
			Serial absenteeism	Occasional absenteeism	
Adolescent deviancy	Deviant behaviour	Count	16	10	26
		% within Adolescent deviancy	61.5%	38.5%	100.0%
	Normal behaviour	Count	25	77	102
		% within Adolescent deviancy	24.5%	75.5%	100.0%
Total		Count	41	87	128
		% within Adolescent deviancy	32.0%	68.0%	100.0%

Table 5 shows that 61.5% of respondents with deviant behaviour had serial absenteeism and 38.5% had occasional absenteeism. The table also shows that 24.5% of respondents with normal behaviour had serial absenteeism and 75.5% had occasional absenteeism. This observation concludes that respondents with deviant behaviour had high levels of absenteeism. Table 5 shows deviancy and indecent dressing.

Conclusions

After completing all of the analysis of the objective, which aimed to investigate the prevalence of adolescent deviancy among single-mother families in public primary schools, the study came to the conclusion that the majority of the students have experimented with drugs and alcohol, abused other students at school, cheated and physically fought with other students, and also that the majority of them skipped school. Additionally, the majority of students do not attend courses and engage in inappropriate behavior such as clothing inappropriately, using harsh language, and displaying arrogance toward teachers and other students in general.

Recommendations of the Study

Parents should try and observe their children to mitigate experimenting on; drugs and alcohol abuse also they should advice against abusing others, in indecent dressing, cheating at school or even physical fight with others students. Also, the school should have a strong fence to reduce cases of sneaking out of school.

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