

The Influence of Sociodemographic Factors on Anti-Social Behavior among Children: A Case of Bobaracho Area, NyaribariChache, Kenya

Abstract:

Introduction: Children have been exhibiting antisocial behavior, and their family background which includes family factors has been blamed for these cases. The study's primary goal was to ascertain the impact of sociodemographic variables on children's antisocial behavior in the Bobaracho area of Kisii County. Methodology: The study used a descriptive survey approach with 200 students as its target population. Questionnaires were utilized to gather quantitative data from a sample of 150 children, and interview guides were employed to collect qualitative data. Quantitative data from open-ended questions was sorted into various thematic categories and presented in a narrative style in conjunction with the display of quantitative data using the SPSS version 20 Programme. Findings: The gathered data revealed early parenting, media influence, inadequate counseling, family separation, and a lack of parental care. Additionally, the study showed that children's anti-social behavior was influenced by family conflict, parents' responses to their children's activities, and the discipline applied or not applied. The study suggests that in addition to receiving seminars on effective parenting, parents, and guardians should be encouraged to monitor their children's behavior, adjust household conditions to promote healthy child development, and monitor their kids' behavior. School heads who report to the board of management ought to consult specialists when providing advice and counseling.

Keywords: anti-social behaviors, parenting, sociodemographic, family separation

Introduction

The conduct code that characterizes an individual's undesirable behavior is known as anti-social behavior. Ibegunam and Wachikwu (2012) [8] define anti-social behavior as crimes done by young people under the age of eighteen that involve a breach of societal norms and established values. Vandalism, aggressiveness, disobedience of the law, and a breach of social standards are examples of anti-social behavior (Ibegunam and Wachikwu, 2012) [8]. Anti-social behavior is described by Wellegrini and Solberg (2010) [10] as disruptive behavior coupled with hidden animosity and global aggressiveness toward other individuals. Consequently, the foundation for a society where people can

live in harmony with one another is a general lack of adherence to societal norms and standards (Hanrahan and Akers, 2017) [3].

Children may be diagnosed with mental conduct behaviour if their troublesome behaviors are severe enough to interfere with normal development and last for extended periods of time. These actions could include not paying enough attention, having trouble with discipline, fighting frequently, or purposefully hurting other people. Additional behaviors could be lying, stealing, doing damage to property, abusing drugs, engaging in sexual activity when young, hanging about with negative peer pressure, disobeying community norms or expectations, or, in extreme circumstances, breaching the law Ibegbunam and Wachikwu (2012) [8].

Antisocial conduct is a significant issue in Kenyan society and schools (Nyaga, 2015) [16]. Drug addiction, truancy, and aggressiveness are some of the delinquent behaviors that define it. These activities are linked to unfavorable relationships with peers, parents, and teachers. The behavior pattern is internalized and learned; it will stop if it is not rewarded, but it will continue if it is (Omote, Thinguri, and Moenga, 2015) [18]. Antisocial behavior is directly correlated with the degree, likelihood, and frequency of reward it receives.

In terms of gender, boys are more aggressive than girls; they carry dangerous weapons, abuse drugs, and fight more frequently. These aggressive behaviors are associated with low parental supervision and bad parenting (Jurado, 2017) [11]. Teachers' attitude tends to minimize their personalities and prestige in the eyes of students, and broken households strongly impact schoolchildren's maladaptive behavior (Aboh, 2014) [1]. The relationship between community violence and teenage antisocial behavior is strongly correlated, with parental supervision moderating this relationship (Rovis, Basic, and Jonkman, 2016)[20].

The criminological and drug literature have established a strong correlation between the use of illicit drugs and various forms of criminal behavior, including the use of marijuana (bhang), alcohol, and inhalants, which can lead to anti-social behavior when under the influence of drugs (Rovis, Basic, and Jonkman, 2016) [20]. According to a study by Ojo (2017) [17], inadequate school administration, broken households, a lack of parental care, media, and peer influence, and a lack of counselors in schools are some common causes of anti-social behavior. The results demonstrated that exam malpractice, abortion, rape, stealing, tardiness, rudeness, and cultism were the most prevalent forms of anti-social behavior among minors. The anti-social behaviors and their causes were closely studied by Akande and Ikediasi (2015) [2], who referred to several elements, including gender,

sociodemographic, residential location, peer influence within the group, and their impacts. According to Omondi, Ongaro, Gitonga, and Muriungi (2017) [7], conduct disorder was more common in men than in women, it got worse as kids got older, and religion had a big influence.

Children's criminal behavior is influenced by a variety of complicated elements, including peer and parental influences, socio-psychological factors, economic position, and drug usage (Nation, Pastore, Santinello, and Vieno, 2009) [19]. The majority of secondary school pupils are teenagers, and they deal with issues related to emotional intelligence, intellectual awareness, social identity, and interests (Unachukwu and Nwankwu, 2001) [23].

Contributory factors to the development of anti-social behavior include inadequate parental supervision and discipline, family conflicts between parents and children or between parents, a family history of behavioral problems, parental attitudes, ways of justifying problem behavior, and a social home environment (South Holland District Council, 2004) [6]. Children's indulgence in internalizing values and personalities is determined by their upbringing (Mart and Palma, 2010) [12]. Children from low-income families may behave in an antisocial manner (Slattery and Meyer, 2014) [14]. According to the study, specific parenting styles are strongly associated with antisocial behavior in young children, which develops into more severe behavior in adolescents. A cycle of coercion or punishment can arise in the home when children place demands on parents who are not skilled at parenting.

The causes of anti-social behavior, according to Black (2006) [5], include the fact that the parents of delinquent boys were either criminals or, more frequently, alcoholics and that their families were regularly disturbed by parental absenteeism and separation. Adequate supervision and inappropriate discipline have been linked to children's anti-social behavior. Parents who are worried or involved often control and supervise their kids' behavior, establish ground rules for the family, keep an eye on their locations, make sure their kids aren't getting into trouble, and tease them into following the rules. However, because parents are unavailable and antisocial parents lack the drive to regularly check on their kids, children in busy households and broken homes receive less supervision (Black, 2006) [5]. Research on behavioral genetics involving twins and adoptees has shown that genetics contributes to anti-social behavior like aggression and criminality and that personality traits like sensation-seeking, impulsivity, risk-taking, and callous-unemotional traits are partially influenced by genetics (Raine, Baker, and Bezdjian, 2006) [4]. Studies conducted by Molero (2017) [11] examined the interpersonal values and anti-social behaviors of high school students. The findings showed that male and senior students were more likely to engage in anti-social behavior and that students who scored highly on

stimulation, independence, recognition, and leadership and poorly on conformity and benevolence were more likely to engage in anti-social behavior.

Low anti-social behavior, such as lower pro-social behavior, higher self-regulation, and lower aggressive behavior in schools, was predicted by children who attend school infrequently (Sammons, 2014) [18]. High levels of externalizing behavior have been linked to poor relationship quality, such as high levels of conflict and inadequate emotional bonding between parents and children (Wissink and Meijer, 2004) [24, 25]. The familial history of the child is often regarded as the most important component in the development of anti-social behavior, despite other factors that are continually affecting the child including low socioeconomic position, single-parent families, and marital strife. An analysis was conducted on the relationship between age, gender, personality, socioeconomic status, social skills, family environment, and self-concept in connection to manifestations and transgressions of anti-social behavior in men and women.

Methodology

The research design used in the study was a descriptive survey. Two hundred schoolchildren were the intended audience. 150 kids took part in the study, and samples were taken using a straightforward sampling approach. The questionnaire was used to get quantitative data, and the interview guide was used to gather qualitative data. A pilot research was conducted to assess the validity of the questionnaires, the participants' comprehension of the questions, and the time required. While qualitative data was organized into many theme areas and presented using a narrative method, quantitative data was analyzed using the SPSS version 20 Programme.

Children Operation	No. of Children	Percentage
Boarding	2718	
Day	12382	
Total	150100.0	

Table 1. Sample size of children

Results

Response Rate

The sample size of the study was 150 school children. Those who participated in the interview, filled out the questionnaires, and returned were 143(95.3%),children, while those who didn't respond and never returned the questionnaires were 7(4.7%) children as presented in *Figure 1*.

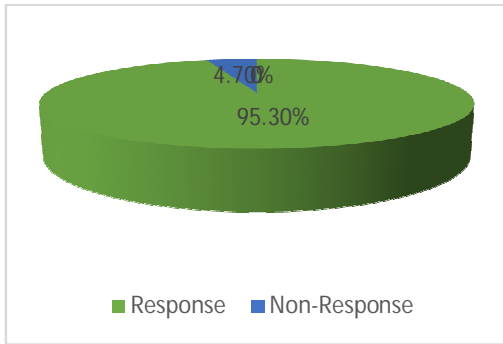


Figure 1. Response Rate

Gender of the Respondents

The study established gender distribution because the level of anti-social behaviors differs significantly in females and males. The majority of children were male 79(55.2%), while 64(44.8%) were female.

Male children indicated anti-social behaviors more as compared to females as outlined in **Figure 2**

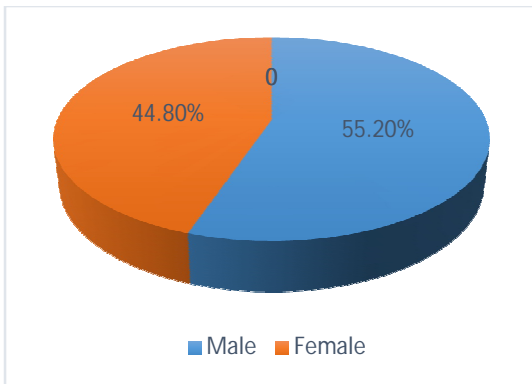


Figure 2. Gender of the Respondents

Religious Background of the Respondents

Data on religious background were gathered for the study since it improved the correlation between children's religious viewpoints and beliefs and their degree of discipline. The study expected that the correlation between children's religious background and their degree of discipline or indiscipline would shed light on how children's religious identities interact to shape anti-social behavior. About 54(37.8%) of the population identified as Catholic, followed by Pentecostal churches 33(23.1%), pagans 26(18.1%), Seventh Day Adventist churches 21(14.7%), and other churches 9(6.3%). Given that Catholicism predominates in the area, it is evident that most households practice this religion primarily.

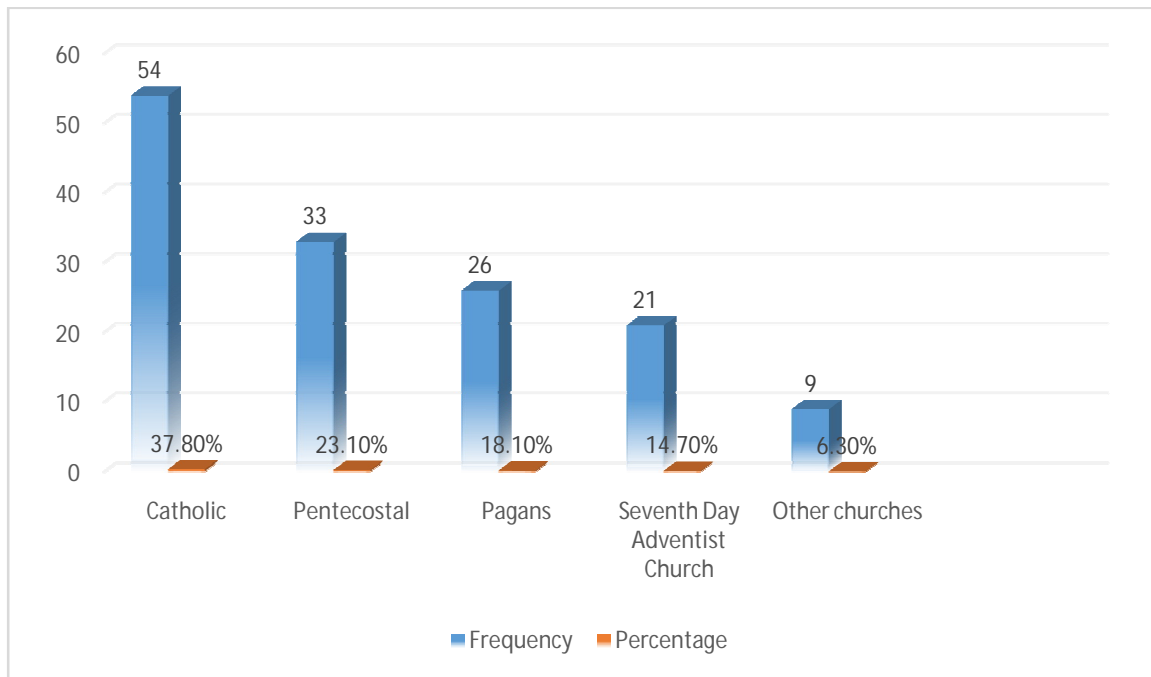


Figure 3. Religious Background of the Respondents

Class level of Children

The study collected data on the class level of children because class level might participate in a significant role in making decisions since it determines the academic achievements of children and decision-making capability. Children in form two were much showing anti-social behaviours (48.3), and the study assumed was due to the middle of adolescence, as shown in below *table 2*.

Class	Frequency	Percentage
Form one	41	28.7
Form two	69	48.3
Form three	21	14.7
Form four	12	8.3
Total	143	100.0

Table 2. Respondents' Class Level

Family Background

The information about children's family backgrounds was gathered because children's behavior is influenced by their parents' presence and care. The behaviors of partial and total orphans differ from those of their parents. It is proof that 79 children, or 55.2%, had parents who raised them, whereas 43

children, or 30.1%, were partially orphaned, and 21 children, or 14.7%, were orphans. A child's behavior development is greatly influenced by their parents.

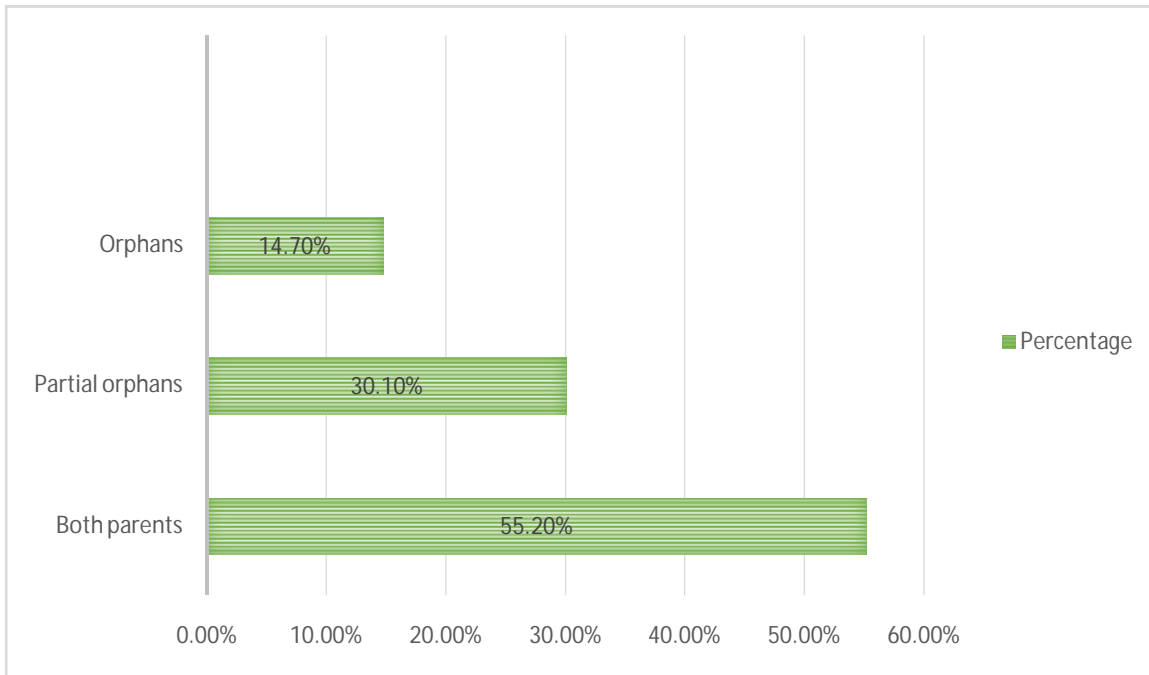


Figure 4. Family Background

Predictors of Anti-Social Behaviour

The study examined the variables that impact children's antisocial behavior, including peer pressure, media influence, broken households, ineffective counseling, and drug addiction by parents as displayed below.

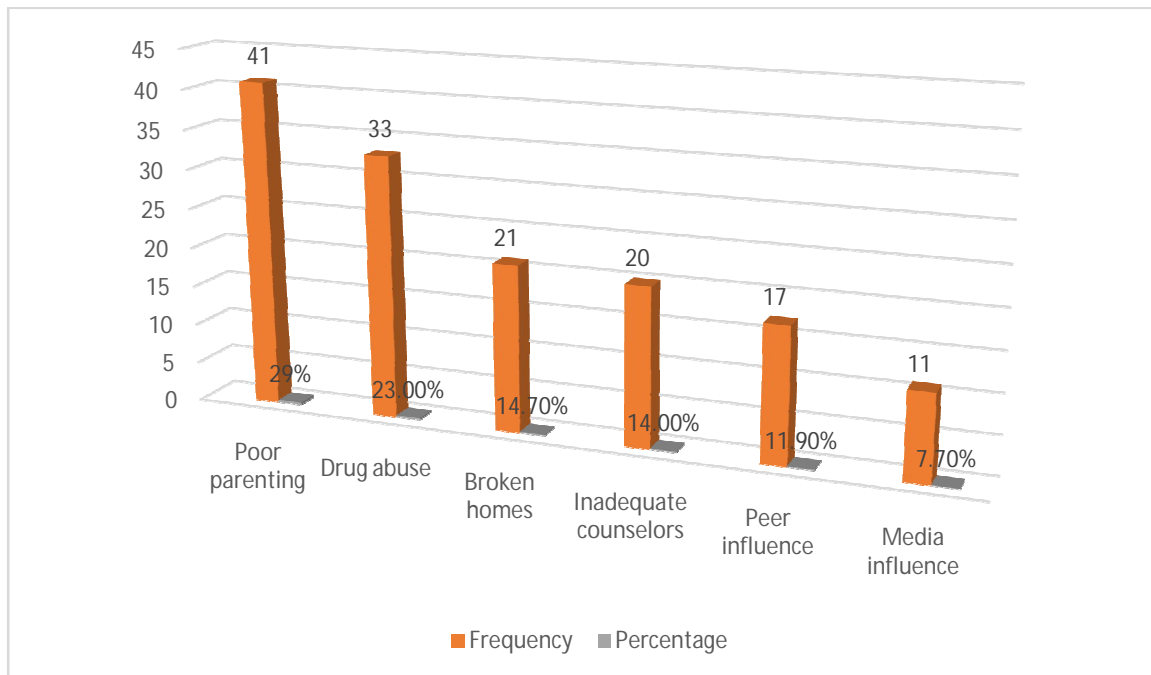


Figure 5. Predictors of Anti-Social Behaviour

Contributory Factors and Anti-Social Behaviours

Inadequate family discipline, parent-child and parent-parent disputes, parental attitudes, the home and social context, and a family history of behavioral issues were identified and examined. A significant proportion of youngsters (37.8%) said that insufficient parental discipline was the primary cause of anti-social behavior among children. The core of a child's development is their parents' views toward them, and these sentiments have a quarterly impact on the antisocial behavior of the kids. The antisocial behavior exhibited by children was not significantly influenced by the behavior of their family as indicated in Table 3.

Family Features	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate parental discipline	54	37.8
Parent-parent conflict	13	9
Parent-child conflict	17	11.9
Attitude of parents	29	20.3
Home and social environment	21	14.7
Family history on behaviours	9	6.3
Total	143	100

Table 3. Contributory Factors and Anti-Social Behaviours

Family Economic Status and Anti-Social Behaviour

The children were asked to disclose if they were from a wealthy, poor, or both types of households. Tabulated results showed that, whereas 36.4% of children indicated both affluent and poor backgrounds, the majority of children (45.5%) recognized that anti-social problems originated from impoverished backgrounds. The impact of anti-social behaviors was less mentioned by children from wealthy backgrounds (18.1%). Figure 6 illustrates how antisocial behavior in youngsters may be influenced by a disadvantaged familial background, according to Meyers (2014) [14].

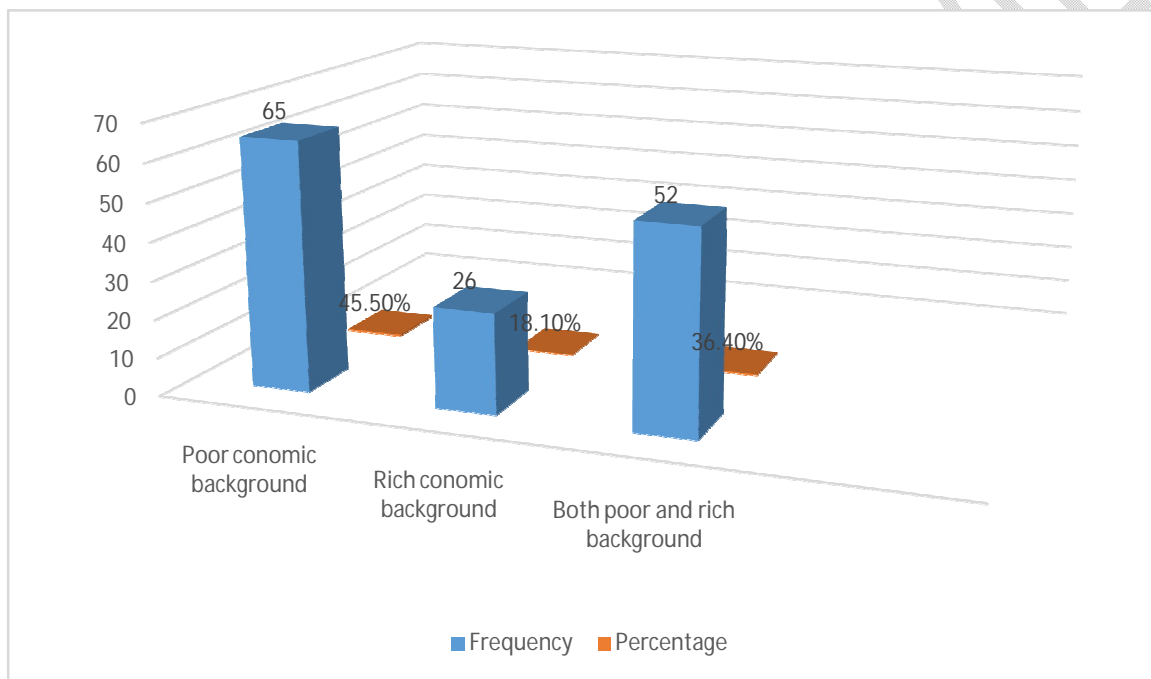


Figure 6. Family Economic Status and Anti-Social Behaviour

Conclusions

Based on the study's aims, the following conclusions are drawn:

- i. The study discovered that the home and school environments were the main causes of the prevalence of aggressive tendencies and anti-social behaviors among secondary school pupils.
- ii. The study comes to the conclusion that a variety of family- and school-based factors, including student sociodemographic characteristics, have an impact on anti-social behavior.

- iii. The study found that antisocial behavior is influenced by family-based factors. The study comes to the conclusion that family-related factors, such as family conflict and a history of problematic behavior, have an impact on secondary school students' anti-social behavior.
- iv. The study suggests that anti-social behavior is triggered by school-based variables, including peer pressure, the school atmosphere, and insufficient supervision and counseling.
- v. The study found that there are notable differences between the values and attitudes taught in schools and the home environment. Thus, the study shows that students' behavior is significantly shaped by their families, which serve as the fundamental socialization unit.

Recommendations

After a thorough analysis of the study's findings, the following list of policy recommendations was developed by the researchers:

- i. Analysis of the data revealed that peer and media pressure, a lack of school counselors, and insufficient parental supervision all contribute to the incidence of anti-social behavior among secondary school pupils.
- ii. Consequently, this research suggests that In addition to encouraging parents and guardians to keep an eye on their children's behavior, school administration should provide guidance and counseling.
- iii. The study discovered that anti-social behavior is caused by and/or influenced by family factors, such as parental conflict and attitudes that support problem behavior. In light of this, the study advises parents to establish guidelines and provide guidance and counseling in order to control the home environment in a way that promotes children's overall development.
- iv. The study's conclusions show that a variety of school-related factors, including peer pressure, a lack of effective teacher direction, and the length of the school year, have an impact on problem behavior among secondary school pupils. Because this strategy would allow teachers to identify when there is a shift in behavior, the study advises heads of schools to create a monitoring system that tracks behavioral changes in children.
- v. It was clear that values taught in schools and families could differ; for example, reporting aggressive behavior is something that students can conceal at school but voice at home. In light of this, the study advises parents to be aware of their responsibilities when it comes to behavior

monitoring, including the use of rewards and penalties, and schools to employ morally resolute instructors and staff who can serve as role models for students, as students learn to mimic their behavior.

- vi. The present study did not include all the variables that could have an impact on the prevalence of anti-social behavior among secondary school pupils. In addition, the study was carried out in Kisii County's Nyaribari Masaba Constituency, suggesting that more research in other Kenyan constituencies and counties is necessary to see whether the findings will be consistent or inconsistent.

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