

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Relationship between Authoritative Parenting Styles and Deviant Behaviour of Public Secondary School Students in Kandara Sub-county, Murangá County, Kenya

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Abstract:

The study set out to determine the relationship between authoritative parenting style and deviant behaviour among public secondary school students in Kandara Sub-county, Murangá County, Kenya. Bandura's Social Learning Theory provided a theoretical framework for the study while adopting a descriptive survey research design. Four hundred and seventeen students from girls boarding, boys boarding, mixed boarding and mixed day secondary schools participated in the study. Results indicated that students with authoritative parents are less involved in deviant behavior. Implications of the study are discussed.

Keywords: Parenting styles, authoritative parenting style, deviant behavior, Kandara sub-county, Muranga County, Parental involvement in deviant behaviour

1. Introduction

The role of the parent in the family is to prepare children for adulthood through setting rules and disciplining, thereby playing a vital role in the socialization of children and adolescents. It is a role that cannot be abdicated to the school or other institutions. As children mature into adulthood, whatever the parents have impacted on them is reflected in their lives and may be more profound than any other influence.

Parenting involves bringing up and looking after children, which may be done by either the biological or surrogate parents. It plays major roles in the overall development of a child and includes the social, educational and other adaptive behaviours that prepare the child for future life. Different parents carry out this function differently, owing to their diverse personalities and exposure, giving rise to different parenting styles and influences on the children they bring up.

A parenting style is the environment in which families operate and where child-upbringing behaviour of parents or other key caretakers manifest. Kelland (2007) observes that where a model parenting style is used in the home the children are disciplined, but where it is lacking cases of indiscipline often arise.

Deviant behaviour is defined as a violation of social values, community norms and a society's rules (Nyamoko&Ongole, 2014). Deviance in schools takes the form of truancy, habitual lateness, drug and alcohol abuse, smoking, inappropriate cross-gender relationships, skipping class, riots, vandalizing school properties, fighting, disrespect for authority, negative attitude and arrogance, and resistance to change (Nabiswa, Misigo&Makhanu, 2016). There is a tendency for deviant individuals to indulge in different forms of anti-social behaviour

Unchecked, deviance at school can be contagious and reach dangerous levels. The cultural transmission theory argues that like other behaviours, deviance is learnt. The Differential-Association theory holds that deviance can be learnt in the same way that conformity is, through interaction with deviant individuals. It therefore calls for deliberate efforts to tackle deviance when it manifests.

Cases of deviant behaviour leading to tragedy have been recorded in several countries. In Minnesota, United States, on the morning of March 21st 20005, a sixteen year-old killed nine people in a shooting spree, seven of whom were fellow students at the Red Lake Senior High School. In Kenya 67 students died at the Kyanguli High School on 24th March 2001 following arson by fellow students (Malayi, 2013). Loeber, Farrington and Petechuk (2008), in a study in the United States, observed that delinquent children increased by a third between 1990 and 2000.

The current study focused on deviant behaviour among secondary school students in Kandara Sub-county, Murang'a County, Kenya, which has been on an upswing.

2. Methods and Procedures

The study employed descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design aims to accurately and systematically describe a particular situation or phenomenon. The independent variables in this study were authoritative parenting style, indulgent parenting style and neglectful parenting style. The dependent variable is deviant behaviour. Four hundred and seventeen students (417) which is ten percent (10%) of the entire students population was used in the study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2007) a sample size of 10% is adequate to study traits in a population.

Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires. Parenting styles, deviant behaviours and strategies to curb deviant behaviours questionnaires were used.

3. Findings and Discussion

The study sought to examine the relationship between authoritative parenting styles and deviance among secondary school students. Table 1 presents the results.

		Deviant Behaviour		Total
		Less Involvement	Higher Involvement	
Authoritative parenting	Count	28	11	39
	% within Parenting Style	71.8%	28.2%	100.0%

Table 1: Authoritative Parenting Style and Deviant Behaviour

Source: Researcher, 2019

Table 1 indicates that 71.8% of the participants with authoritative parents had less involvement in deviant behaviour, while 28.2% had higher involvement of deviant behaviour. From Table 15, it is evident that the students with authoritative parents are less involved in deviant behaviour.

The findings agree with a study that established that children of authoritative parents fared better than their peers in terms of maladaptive behaviours and lessen problem behaviour (Williamset *al*, 2009). The above findings are in agreement with Dewar ((2013) who suggested that children reared by authoritative parents may be more impartial, self-directed, respectable and well-mannered. Chances of them engaging in deviant behaviour are less.

The research findings agree with a study done by Ajiboye (2015) in Nigeria on effects of parenting styles and peer pressure on delinquency amongst senior secondary school students which revealed that children from homes where authoritative parenting style is used are less likely to be delinquent. The results revealed that the relationship between authoritative parenting styles is inversely proportional to delinquent behaviour. The findings however differ with a study that was carried out at Kaimosi Teachers Training College by Changalwa, Ndurumo and Poipoi (2012) which showed that there is a notable connection between an authoritative style of parenting and abuse of alcohol amongst college going students; most students who abused alcohol had authoritative parents.

The research findings concur with a study that was conducted by Malayiet *al* (2013) amongst youngsters aged 8-18 years of age in Western Kenya which established that children brought up under an authoritative parenting were not likely to be delinquent. Overall, this style of parenting gives children a chance to choose what is best for them. Such children if guided by the parent/guardian most probably acquire good conduct due to the guidance and independence the children have been given.

To determine the significance of the results, a null hypothesis stating that there is no statistically significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and deviance amongst secondary school students in Kandara Sub-county, Murang'a County, Kenya was tested using Pearson product moment correlation. Results are presented in Table 2.

	Deviant behaviour	Authoritative parenting
Pearson Correlation	1	.216**
Deviant behavior	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	407
	Pearson Correlation	.216**
Authoritative parenting	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N	407	407

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Authoritative Parenting Style and Deviance

Table 2 shows that the correlation coefficient (.216) is greater than the critical r (.073) at 0.05 level of significance and therefore the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between authoritative parenting

style and deviance amongst secondary school students in Kandara Sub-county, Murang'a County, Kenya is rejected. The conclusion drawn from the research was that secondary school students who were exposed to higher level of warmth and monitoring would less likely to be involved in deviant behaviours. Kaufmann *et al*, 2008 found that authoritative parenting was negatively associated with children's maladaptive behaviours that manifested in behavioural and emotional challenges.

The findings confirm previous research outcomes that; Alizadeh *et al* (2011) established that there is a negative relationship between an authoritative parenting style and children's deviant behaviours. Chen, Dong and Zhou (2007) found that an authoritative parenting style was mostly negatively related with considerable childhood hostility.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the analysis and summary of the findings, the main conclusion is that though parenting styles are determining factors as to how the child will turn out, especially as they enter teenage, they may not be overly significant in determining deviance in school. The statistics seem to suggest that parenting style may not be the major contributor to deviant behaviour among secondary school students of Kandara sub-county of Murang'a County and that the answer lies elsewhere. This in turn means that schools and education authorities in the Kandara sub-county, Murang'a County, need to look elsewhere for answers as to why deviance is manifesting. They need to investigate the school environment more, while parents need to relook into the home environment for factors other than parenting styles that could be leading students in the Kandara Sub-county to deviance.

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