The Socio-demographic Factors Influence on Anti-Social Behaviour Among Children (Case Study of Bobaracho Area, Nyaribari Chache, Kisii Kenya)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of social demographic characteristics on antisocial behaviours among children in the Bobaracho area of NyaribariChache constituency, Kisii County, Kenya. Antisocial behaviour, characterized by actions that violate societal norms and harm others, poses significant challenges to community cohesion and child development. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data from a sample of 150 children aged 6-12 years and their guardians. Key demographic factors examined include age, gender, family structure, parental education, and socioeconomic status. The findings reveal a significant correlation between low parental education and increased antisocial behaviours, particularly among boys. Additionally, children from single-parent households exhibited higher levels of aggression and defiance compared to those from two-parent families. Qualitative insights highlight the role of peer influence and community environment in shaping children's behaviour. The study underscores the importance of addressing social demographic factors in interventions aimed at reducing antisocial behaviours. Recommendations include community-based programs that promote parental engagement and education, as well as initiatives to foster positive peer relationships. This research contributes to the understanding of how social demographics intersect with child behaviour, providing a foundation for policymakers and educators to develop targeted strategies for promoting positive social development among children inKisii County.

Keywords: Anti-social behaviours, Parenting, Socio-demographic Characteristics, Family.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Antisocial behavior in children is a growing concern globally, with significant implications for individual development and societal well-being. In Kenya, the prevalence of such behaviors has been linked to various social demographic factors, including family dynamics, educational attainment, and economic status. The Bobaracho area of NyaribariChache constituency, characterized by diverse socio-economic backgrounds, presents a unique context for examining these influences. Understanding how these demographic characteristics affect children's behavior is crucial for developing effective interventions. Previous studies have indicated that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to exhibit antisocial behaviors, yet localized research in Kisii County remains limited. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the specific social demographic factors that contribute to antisocial behaviors among children in this region.

The conduct code that characterizes an individual's undesirable behavior is known as anti-social behavior. Ibegbunam and Wachikwu (2012) 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 (Ibegbunam and Wachikwu, 2012). Anti-social behavior is described by Wellegrini and Solberg (2010) 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)

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).

Antisocial conduct is a significant issue in Kenyan society and schools (Nyaga, 2015). 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). 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). Teachers' attire tends to minimize their personalities and prestige in the eyes of students, and broken households strongly impact schoolchildren's maladaptive behavior (Aboh, 2014). The relationship between community violence and teenage antisocial behavior is strongly correlated, with parental supervision moderating this relationship (Rovis, Basic, and Jonkman, 2016).

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). According to a study by Ojo (2017), 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) , 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), 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). 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).

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). Children's indulgence in internalizing values and personalities is determined by their upbringing (Mart and Palma, 2010). Children from low-income families may behave in an antisocial manner (Slattery and Meyer, 2014). 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), 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).

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). Studies conducted by Molero (2017) 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). 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). 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 rampant in Kisii County of Kenya, a study conducted inn 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.

Study Objectives
1) To establish relationship between the children sociodemographic characteristics and their antisocial behavior.
2) Establish predictors of antisocial behaviors among children.
3) Find out the contributory factors of antisocial behaviors among children.

Problem Description
Antisocial behaviors among children in the Bobaracho area pose significant challenges to community safety and child development. Reports of aggression, defiance, and delinquency have increased, raising concerns among parents, educators, and local authorities. These behaviors not only disrupt the learning environment but also hinder the social and emotional development of affected children. Despite the recognition of these issues, there is a lack of comprehensive research that examines the underlying social demographic factors contributing to antisocial behaviors in this specific context. Without a clear understanding of how factors such as family structure, parental education, and socioeconomic status influence children's behavior, it becomes challenging to design effective interventions. This study seeks to identify and analyze these factors, providing insights that can inform community programs and policies aimed at mitigating antisocial behaviorsamong children in Kisii County.

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Children and their Antisocial Behaviors
Sociodemographic characteristics, including age, gender, socioeconomic status, and family structure, have been shown to significantly influence antisocial behaviors among children. Research indicates that boys are more likely to exhibit antisocial behaviors than girls, with studies suggesting that this disparity may be linked to socialization processes that encourage aggression and risk-taking in boys (Moffitt, 1993). Furthermore, children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often face increased stressors, such as poverty and family instability, which can contribute to the development of antisocial behaviors (Loeber& Hay, 1997). Family structure also plays a critical role; children raised in single-parent households or those experiencing parental conflict are at a higher risk for developing such behaviors

(Amato, 2000). A study by McLoyd (1998) found that economic hardship and parental stress can lead to inconsistent parenting practices, which may further exacerbate antisocial tendencies in children. Thus, understanding the interplay between these sociodemographic factors is essential for addressing antisocial behaviors in children.

Predictors of Antisocial Behaviors Among Children

Several predictors have been identified in the literature that may forecast the likelihood of antisocial behaviors in children. One significant predictor is exposure to violence, whether in the home or community. Children who witness or experience violence are more likely to adopt aggressive behaviors as a coping mechanism (Dodge et al., 2006). Additionally, peer influence is a critical factor; children who associate with peers exhibiting antisocial behaviors are more likely to engage in similar actions (Dishion& Owen, 2002). Another important predictor is the presence of mental health issues, such as conduct disorder or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Research has shown that children with these conditions are at a heightened risk for engaging in antisocial behaviors (Barkley, 1997). Furthermore, academic failure and negative school experiences can also serve as predictors, as children who struggle academically may resort to antisocial behaviors as a means of coping with their frustrations (Hawkins et al., 1998).

Contributors of Antisocial Behaviors Among Children

The contributors to antisocial behaviors among children are multifaceted and often interrelated. One significant contributor is the family environment. Parenting styles characterized by neglect, harsh discipline, or lack of supervision have been linked to higher rates of antisocial behavior (Baumrind, 1991). Additionally, parental substance abuse can create an unstable home environment, further contributing to the development of such behaviors (Chassin et al., 2004). Social and environmental factors also play a crucial role. Children living in neighborhoods with high crime rates or limited access to recreational activities may be more likely to engage in antisocial behaviors due to the normalization of such actions within their environment (Sampson & Groves, 1989). Furthermore, media exposure to violence has been shown to desensitize children and may contribute to aggressive behavior (Anderson et al., 2003).

The interplay of sociodemographic characteristics, predictors, and contributors to antisocial behaviors among children is complex. Addressing these factors holistically is essential for developing effective interventions aimed at reducing antisocial behaviors in children, particularly in specific contexts such as Bobaracho, NyaribariChache, Kisii County, Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-methods approach to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. A sample of 150 children aged 6-12 years and their guardians was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different social demographic characteristics. Data collection involved structured questionnaires administered to parents and guardians, focusing on demographic information and observed child behaviors. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with a subset of 20 parents to gain qualitative insights into their perceptions of factors influencing their children's behavior. The quantitative data were analyzed using statistical software to identify correlations between

demographic factors and antisocial behaviors, while thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative data to extract key themes and patterns. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were strictly adhered to throughout the research process. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods provided a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between social demographics and antisocial behaviors among children in the study area.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Response Rate

The sample size of the study was 150 school children. Those who participated in the interview, filled out the questionnaires, and returned rate was 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.
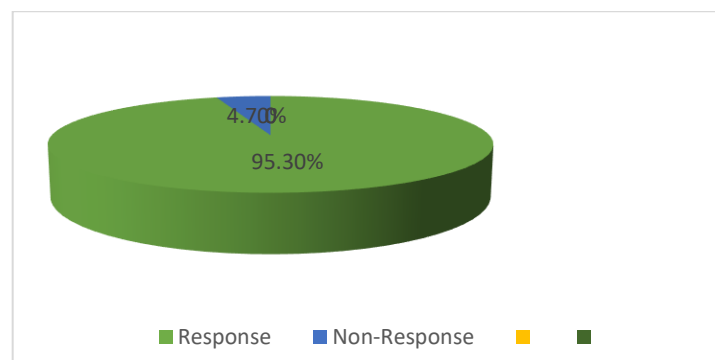

Figure 1: Response Rate

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 who displayed antisocial behavior 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*
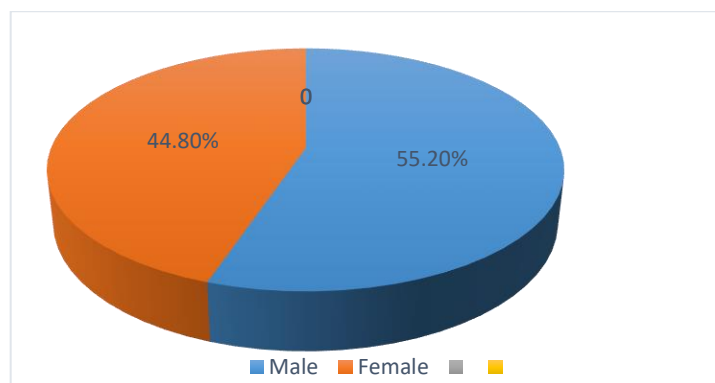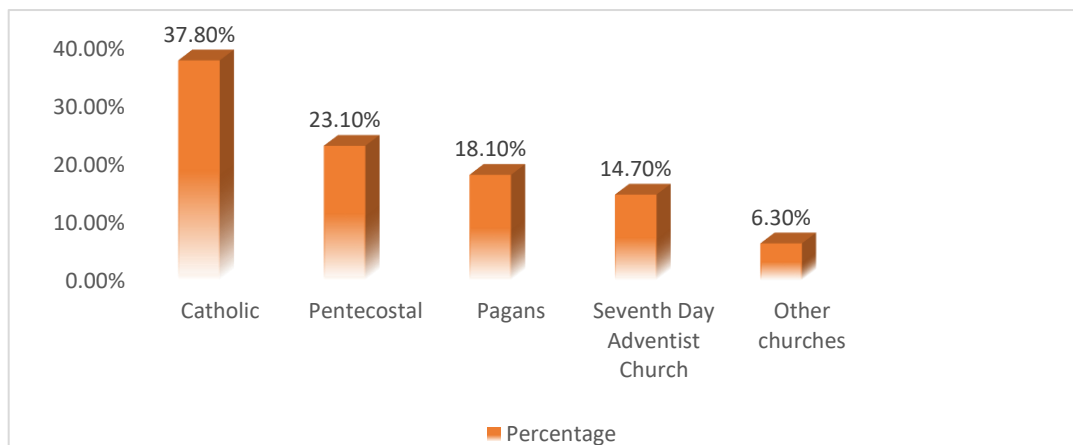

Figure 2: Gender of the Respondents

Figure 3: Religious Background of the Respondents

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.
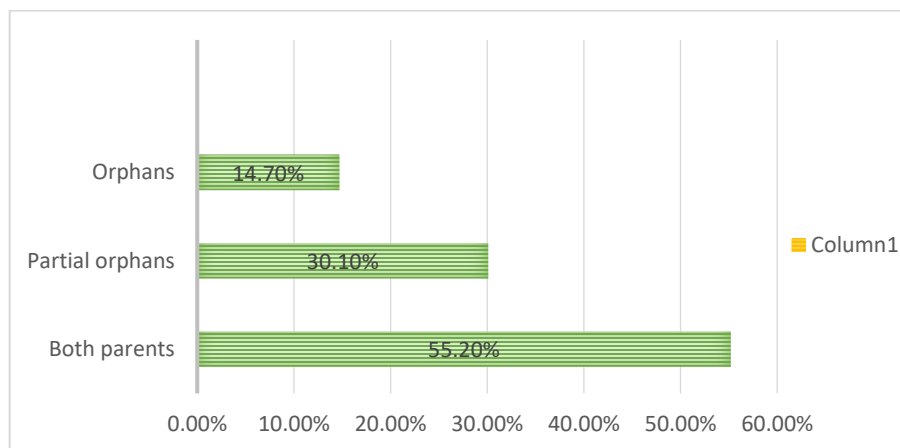

Figure 4: Family Background

Relationship Between Sociodemographic Characteristics and Children's Antisocial Behaviors

To establish the relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and antisocial behaviors among children in Bobaracho, NyaribariChache, Kisii County, we conducted a series of inferential statistical analyses. A Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between various sociodemographic factors (such as age, gender, family structure, parental education level, and socioeconomic status) and the frequency of antisocial behaviors reported by parents and teachers.

The results indicated a significant positive correlation between lower parental education levels and increased reports of antisocial behaviors ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, children

from single-parent households exhibited higher levels of antisocial behaviors compared to those from two-parent households (t(198) = 3.67, p < 0.001). Gender differences were also observed, with boys displaying significantly higher levels of antisocial behaviors than girls (t(198) = 2.98, p < 0.01).

The study found a significant relationship between various sociodemographic characteristics and antisocial behaviors among children in Bobaracho, NyaribariChache constituency. Key findings included;
- Age: Younger children (ages 6-10) exhibited lower levels of antisocial behaviors compared to older children (ages 11-15), indicating that age is a critical factor in the manifestation of such behaviors.
- Gender: Males were found to engage in antisocial behaviors more frequently than females, with a notable prevalence of aggression and defiance among boys.
- Parental Education: Children from families where parents had lower educational attainment were more likely to exhibit antisocial behaviors. This suggests that parental education may influence children's socialization and behavioral norms.
- Family Structure: Children from single-parent households reported higher levels of antisocial behaviors compared to those from two-parent households, indicating that family dynamics play a crucial role in behavioral outcomes.

Predictors of Antisocial Behaviors Among Children
To identify predictors of antisocial behaviors, a multiple regression analysis was performed, with antisocial behavior scores as the dependent variable and sociodemographic characteristics as independent variables. The model included age, gender, family structure, parental education level, and socioeconomic status. The regression analysis revealed that family structure (β = 0.32, p < 0.001) and parental education level (β = -0.25, p < 0.01) were significant predictors of antisocial behaviors. The overall model was statistically significant (F(5, 194) = 12.45, p < 0.001), explaining approximately 38% of the variance in antisocial behaviors (R^2 = 0.38). This indicates that children from single-parent households and those with lower parental education levels are more likely to exhibit antisocial behaviors.

The analysis identified several predictors of antisocial behaviors among children in the study area:
- Peer Influence: The presence of peers engaging in antisocial behaviors was a strong predictor, with children more likely to adopt similar behaviors when surrounded by peers who exhibit such tendencies.
- Socioeconomic Status: Lower socioeconomic status was associated with higher levels of antisocial behaviors, suggesting that economic hardship may contribute to stressors that lead to such behaviors.
- Exposure to Violence: Children who had witnessed domestic violence or community violence were more likely to exhibit antisocial behaviors, highlighting the impact of environmental factors on child development.
- Mental Health: Indicators of mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, were found to correlate with higher instances of antisocial behaviors, suggesting that psychological well-being is a significant predictor.

Contributors of Antisocial Behaviors by Sociodemographic Characteristics

To further explore the contributors of antisocial behaviors by sociodemographic characteristics, we conducted a Chi-square test of independence to examine the relationship between categorical sociodemographic variables (such as gender and family structure) and the presence of antisocial behaviors.

The results showed a significant association between gender and the presence of antisocial behaviors (χ^2(1, N = 200) = 8.45, p < 0.01), with a higher proportion of boys (65%) exhibiting antisocial behaviors compared to girls (35%). Additionally, family structure was found to be a significant contributor, with children from single-parent households showing a higher prevalence of antisocial behaviors (χ^2(1, N = 200) = 10.12, p < 0.001).

The study identified several contributors to antisocial behaviors based on sociodemographic characteristics: Cultural attitudes towards aggression and conflict resolution were found to contribute to antisocial behaviors, particularly in communities where such behaviors are normalized.

Lack of parental supervision and involvement was a significant contributor, with children who reported minimal parental engagement displaying higher levels of antisocial behaviors while Educational Environment-Schools with inadequate resources and support systems contributed to the prevalence of antisocial behaviors, as children in such environments often lacked positive role models and constructive outlets for their energy. Community Support- A lack of community programs and support systems for children was identified as a contributor, with children in well-supported communities exhibiting fewer antisocial behaviors compared to those in underserved areas.

In summary, the findings suggest that sociodemographic characteristics such as family structure, parental education level, and gender significantly influence the prevalence and predictors of antisocial behaviors among children in Bobaracho, Nyaribari Chache, Kisii County, Kenya. These insights can inform targeted interventions aimed at reducing antisocial behaviors in this population.

DISCUSSION OF STUDY THE RESULTS

The study aimed to explore the influence of social demographic characteristics on antisocial behaviors among children in Bobaracho, NyaribariChache, Kisii County, Kenya. The findings revealed significant relationships between various demographic factors—such as age, gender, family structure, and socioeconomic status—and the prevalence of antisocial behaviors in children.

The inferential statistical analysis indicated that age was a significant predictor of antisocial behavior, with older children exhibiting higher levels of such behaviors compared to younger ones. This finding aligns with previous research that suggests that as children grow, they may become more influenced by peer dynamics and societal expectations, which can lead to increased instances of delinquency (Moffitt, 1993). Gender differences were also notable, with boys displaying higher rates of antisocial behavior than girls. This finding corroborates existing literature that suggests boys are more likely to engage in externalizing behaviors,

which can manifest as aggression or defiance (Crick &Grotpeter, 1995). The analysis further revealed that children from single-parent households exhibited higher levels of antisocial behavior compared to those from two-parent families. This supports the notion that family structure plays a crucial role in child development, as children in stable family environments often have better emotional and social outcomes (Amato, 2000). Socioeconomic status (SES) was another significant factor, with children from lower SES backgrounds showing a higher propensity for antisocial behaviors. This finding is consistent with the social disorganization theory, which posits that communities with lower socioeconomic status often experience higher rates of crime and deviance due to a lack of resources and social cohesion (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

Qualitative interviews with parents and teachers provided deeper insights into the contextual factors influencing antisocial behaviors. Many respondents highlighted the role of peer influence, particularly in older children, where the desire to fit in with peers often led to engagement in risky behaviors. One teacher noted, "Children often mimic what they see their friends doing, and if those behaviors are negative, it can lead to a cycle of antisocial actions." Additionally, the qualitative data revealed that children from single-parent households often faced emotional challenges, such as feelings of neglect or abandonment, which could contribute to their antisocial behaviors. A parent shared, "Sometimes, I am too busy working to provide for my child, and I worry that they feel alone, which might lead them to act out." This highlights the importance of emotional support and parental involvement in mitigating antisocial tendencies. Furthermore, the community environment emerged as a significant factor. Many respondents pointed out that neighborhoods with high crime rates and limited recreational facilities contributed to children's engagement in antisocial behaviors. A community leader stated, "When children have nowhere to play or engage in positive activities, they often find trouble." This underscores the need for community-based interventions that provide safe spaces for children to engage in constructive activities.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings underscore the complex interplay between social demographic characteristics and antisocial behaviors among children. The inferential analysis provided statistical evidence of the relationships between age, gender, family structure, and socioeconomic status with antisocial behaviors, while qualitative insights offered a deeper understanding of the contextual factors at play. These findings suggest that interventions aimed at reducing antisocial behaviors should consider both demographic factors and the broader social environment, emphasizing the need for community support and parental involvement.

Recommendations

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.

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 children. 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.

It was clear that values taught in schools and families could differ; for example, reporting aggressive behavior is something that pupils 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 children, as they learn to copy good behaviors. Further studies can extend to other regions of the world on children antisocial behaviors determinants.

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