





INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL FACTORS ON CHILDREN'S DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR AMONG WIDOWS IN KIBERA SUB-COUNTY, NAIROBI COUNTY

Author

Teresia Nduta Muchiri⁽¹⁾; Catherine Kirimi⁽²⁾

Email: mtrizar32@gmail.com

(1.2) Mount Kenya University

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of social factors on children's deviant behaviour among widows in the Kibera sub-county, Nairobi County. This study utilised a descriptive research design to examine widows in Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi County. The target population comprised 8,463 registered widows, with a stratified random sample of 384 selected. Data collection was conducted using questionnaires, capturing both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS Version 27 through descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative data was analysed thematically and presented narratively. Findings were summarised in tables for clarity. The results revealed a negative and significant relationship between social factors and children's deviant behaviour among widows in the Kibera sub-county, Nairobi County. The study concluded that social support, social structures, and socioeconomic status significantly influence children's deviant behaviour among widows in Kibera Sub-County. Strong family and community support mitigate deviant behaviour, while education and mentoring programs promote positive outcomes. Weak social structures and financial instability exacerbate negative behaviours by limiting opportunities and reinforcing challenges. The study recommends that widows engage in education and skill-building programs to enhance financial stability and social networks. Community leaders should develop inclusive initiatives to reduce stigma and support widows and their children. Social support groups should focus on long-term empowerment, including financial literacy and vocational training. Policy recommendations include government programs for counselling, financial aid, and social inclusion. Further research should examine long-term support impacts, regional variations, and innovative assistance strategies.

Key terms: Children's deviant behaviour, Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi County, social factors, widows.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi County, an alarming trend has emerged concerning the deviant behaviour exhibited by children in widow-headed households (Ochieng, 2023). These households, often grappling with economic hardships and social vulnerabilities, face heightened challenges in providing stable environments for child development. With the absence of a paternal figure and limited resources, children in these households may lack adequate supervision, emotional support, and positive role models, increasing their susceptibility to engaging in deviant behaviours such as substance abuse, delinquency, and truancy (Van Rode, 2024).

Kibera, an informal settlement in Nairobi, Kenya, is characterised by poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to essential services such as education and healthcare. Families, particularly those headed by widows, face numerous socioeconomic challenges, including financial strain, social isolation, and stigma. The loss of a parent can lead to grief, trauma, and changes in family dynamics, which may contribute to deviant behaviour among children (Anleu, 2023). Deviant behaviour includes delinquency, substance abuse, school dropout, and criminal involvement, often exacerbated by the absence of adequate support systems (Eskander, 2020).

Global studies indicate that widowhood often results in economic instability and social marginalisation, which can negatively impact children's well-being. In European regions with strong family networks, extended families provide support, reducing the likelihood of deviant behaviour (Speck & Müller-Böker, 2020). However, in more individualistic societies, widowed families often rely on state or community-based support systems (Amemiya et al., 2020). Similarly, in the United States, children from low-income, single-parent households face higher risks of engaging in deviant activities due to financial constraints and exposure to crime (Oguntayo et al., 2020).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the decline of extended family support systems, particularly in urban areas, has heightened the vulnerability of children from widowed households (Young et al., 2017). Studies in Nigeria and Cameroon highlight the importance of social support in mitigating these risks, showing that access to family and community assistance reduces the likelihood of behavioural issues (Nwokoye et al., 2020; Ogbu et al., 2021). Research in Kenya further underscores the connection between poverty, lack of parental guidance, and increased deviant behaviour among children in informal settlements (Ouma & Teresia, 2024).

In Kibera, recent reports indicate that 35 per cent of children exhibit deviant behaviours, including substance abuse and crime, with 45 per cent of children from widowed households engaging in risky activities (Pozuelo et al., 2022). Despite government initiatives such as free primary education and cash transfers, many widowed families continue to struggle (Mambo & Nyamai, 2022). This study aims to explore the role of social support, social structures, and socioeconomic status in influencing deviant behaviour among children of widows in Kibera. Addressing these factors will provide insights for developing targeted interventions to support this vulnerable population.

In Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi County, an alarming trend has emerged concerning the deviant behaviour exhibited by children in widow-headed households (Ochieng, 2023). These households, often grappling with economic hardships and social vulnerabilities, face heightened challenges in providing stable environments for child development. With the absence of a paternal figure and limited resources, children in these households may lack adequate supervision, emotional support, and positive role models, increasing their susceptibility to engaging in deviant behaviours such as substance abuse, delinquency, and truancy (Van Rode, 2024).

The intersection of these social factors within the context of widow-headed households in Kibera Sub-County presents a complex and pressing issue requiring thorough investigation. It is crucial to comprehend the complexity of these interactions for the development of targeted interventions and support systems aimed at mitigating the prevalence of deviant behavior among children in this vulnerable demographic. The intent of this research endeavour is to look into the implications of social factors on children's deviant behaviour within this specific demographic.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Cognitive Theory of Anxiety

The Cognitive Theory of Anxiety explains how individuals interpret events and how these interpretations contribute to anxiety. According to Beck and Clark (1997), both automatic and strategic cognitive processes play a role in anxiety. Automatic processes, such as preconscious attention bias, cause individuals to focus more on threatening stimuli, leading to increased anxiety levels (Macleod, 2014). Studies have shown that individuals with anxiety disorders tend to have an instinctive memory bias toward negative information (Coles & Heimberg, 2002). Williams et al. (1997) further support this by demonstrating that anxious individuals unconsciously retain and recall negative experiences more frequently. Classical conditioning research suggests that fear can be learned subconsciously, bypassing rational thought and reinforcing anxious responses (Critchley et al., 2004). LeDoux (1996) explains that this occurs through the sub-cortical thalamus-amygdala pathway, which enables rapid, automatic fear responses without higher-level cognitive processing.

While automatic cognitive processes contribute to anxiety, strategic and conscious thought patterns also play a crucial role in maintaining anxious feelings. McNally (1995) argues that individuals with anxiety make threat-biased decisions, engage in excessive worry, and experience painful memories, which perpetuate their distress. Wells and Matthews (1994) note that anxious individuals often struggle with involuntary negative thought patterns, making it difficult to regulate emotions effectively. In the context of widowhood, widows may catastrophise their situation, believing they will never recover from their loss, leading to prolonged distress and hopelessness. Overgeneralization, such as assuming they will always be alone, further reinforces negative emotions and contributes to anxiety and depression. Recognising and addressing these maladaptive thought patterns is crucial in promoting emotional resilience among widows.

Empirical Review

Social Support and Children's Deviant Behavior among Widows

Njue et al. (2021) examined the role of social support in reducing deviant behaviour among widows' children in Machakos, Kenya. Using a cross-sectional survey of 200 children (aged 12–18), the study found that family support was the most effective in mitigating deviant behaviour, while peer and teacher support also played significant roles. However, it focused solely on social support, creating a conceptual gap. The current study addresses this by incorporating social structure and socioeconomic status as additional factors.

Lwasa et al. (2021) examined widowhood's impact on children's well-being in Uganda, finding emotional distress, poor academics, and deviant behaviour. Social and financial support from family, friends, and community interventions helped mitigate these effects. The study highlights a contextual gap, as Uganda's cultural setting differs from Kenya, the focus of the current study. According to Cohen and McKay (2020), social support refers to emotional and practical assistance from individuals like family, friends, and community members. It plays a significant role in mitigating deviant behaviours among children, as it provides emotional support, technical assistance, and effective support.

The study by Kumar et al. (2020) in India highlighted that social support from both family and community significantly reduced deviant behaviours and improved school attendance and academic performance among children of widows. However, the study's context limited its applicability to other regions. Similarly, Djuikom and van de Walle (2022) found that social support significantly improved children's mental health and academic performance in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, the study's reliance on secondary data poses concerns regarding generalizability. The Nigerian study by Abdulmalik et al. (2021) showed that social support from family and friends protected children of widows from mental health issues and deviant behaviours, though it was geographically limited to Nigeria.

Social Structures and Children's Deviant Behaviour among Widows

Social structures, including family, education, and community networks, shape individuals' behaviour and opportunities (DiMaggio, 2019; Kim & Voisin, 2022). Agarwal (2021) in India emphasised that caste and gender inequalities lead to the social exclusion of widows and their children, negatively impacting their well-being and contributing to deviant behaviours.

Akers and Jennings (2019) found that strong family attachment and positive peer relationships act as protective factors against delinquent behavior in adolescents. The study by Rose and Javdani (2023) highlighted that neighbourhood disorganisation increases the risk of deviant behaviour among youth, particularly gang involvement.

Ugwukah and Ume-Ezeoke (2024) noted that cultural practices around widowhood, such as stigmatisation, adversely affect widows and their children's emotional well-being in Nigeria,

pointing to the need for social structural interventions. However, the studies mentioned primarily focus on different geographical contexts, such as India, the United States, and Nigeria, which limits the direct application to the Kenyan context.

Social Status and Children's Deviant Behavior among Widows

Social status, shaped by factors such as income, education, and family background, influences opportunities, behaviors, and self-perception (Von Stumm et al., 2020). Chen et al. (2020) in China found that children from families with higher social status exhibited more prosocial behaviour and less aggression, linking socioeconomic factors to children's behavioural outcomes.

Similarly, Oladipo (2024) in Nigeria showed that children from impoverished backgrounds were more likely to engage in deviant behaviour due to financial stress and lack of resources. Eteng et al. (2021) also showed that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds exhibited more deviant behaviour, primarily due to poverty, lack of educational resources, and exposure to violence. These studies show the influence of social status on children's behaviour, but the different cultural and economic contexts in which these studies were conducted limit their relevance to the current study in Kenya.

Intervention Strategies to Curb Children's Deviant Behavior among Widows

A study by Ttofi and Farrington (2016) in the United Kingdom tested a social network-based intervention to prevent adolescent problem behaviour by promoting positive friendships. The study involved 1,384 students from 12 middle schools, and the program included classroom sessions on the importance of positive friendships. Results showed the program effectively reduced problem behaviour and increased positive friendships. However, the study's focus on adolescents in the UK presents a contextual gap since social dynamics and definitions of deviant behavior differ from Kenya, the current study's setting.

Bolu-Steve and Esere (2017) in Nigeria explored how school counsellors address deviant behaviour among high school students through interviews with 10 counsellors. The findings showed that strategies like counselling, family involvement, peer group interventions, and professional referrals were used. However, challenges such as lack of resources, inadequate training, and insufficient support from school management were identified. This study has a contextual gap as it focuses on Nigerian high school students, where social structures and definitions of deviant behaviour differ from Kenya.

Jamiu et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between students' academic achievement in Islamic Studies and their home background in Oyo North, Nigeria. Data gathered from 400 students revealed that parental educational attainment, family income, and home environment significantly influenced academic performance. While the study emphasised the importance of parental support for academic success, it has a contextual gap as it focuses on academic achievement, while the

current study addresses social factors influencing deviant behaviour among children of widows in Kenya.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study was informed by the Cognitive Theory of Anxiety. This research employed a descriptive research design, because it allows for a detailed analysis of anxiety-related patterns, providing a clear understanding of how cognitive factors influence anxiety. The target population of the study consisted of 8,463 registered widows in Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi County.

The respondents were selected randomly using stratified sampling. The stratification criteria were based on the location of the respondents, that is, the wards in the Kibera sub-county. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire, which efficiently gathered quantitative data from a broad population. The pilot study was conducted in the neighbouring Dagorreti Sub-County, whose slum social set-up resembles that of Kibera. Conducting the pilot study in Dagorreti Sub-County ensured that the pilot study participants did not participate in the main data collection exercise. Raw data was sorted and cleaned by removing outliers after data gathering. The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha.

Izah et al. (2023) provide the following rules of thumb: >0.9 – Excellent, >0.8 – Good, >0.7 – Acceptable, >0.6 – Questionable, >0.5 – Poor and <0.5 – Unacceptable. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 was used as the threshold for reliability for this study. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS Version 27 and analysis involved correlation and linear regression analysis. The analysed data was presented in the form of frequency tables.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

This section contains the descriptive statistics of the dependent variables, which were social support, social structures, and social status and the dependent variable, which was children's deviant behaviour. The responses were provided in a 5-point Likert Scale. The analysis output was given in means and standard deviations (SD).

Social Support and Children's Deviant Behavior

The first objective of the study was to find out the influence of social support on children's deviant behaviour among widows in Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi. The widows were requested to indicate their agreement or disagreement with some statements concerning social support accorded to them. The Likert scale ranged from 1-5 where 5 denoted strong agreement, 4 denoted agreement 3 denoted moderate agreement, 2 represented disagreement and 1 represented total disagreement. The results of the analysis are tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1 Social Support and Children’s Deviant Behavior

Statement	Mean	SD
I and/ or my children have been involved in education and skill-building programs to promote coping ability.	3.67	1.25
I and/ or my children have been involved in mentoring and counselling.	3.50	1.76
We have participated in community engagement and awareness programs targeting widows and their children.	3.71	1.54
There are programs to help strengthen social support networks.	3.43	1.11
We receive parenting and family support.	3.78	1.08
I and/ or my children collaborate with local organisations targeting widows and their children.	3.60	1.05
There have been strong advocacy and policy changes affecting widows and their children.	3.33	1.01
Overall Mean	3.57	1.26

Source: Survey Results (2024)

The statement with the highest mean score was "We receive parenting and family support," with a mean of 3.78 (SD = 1.08), indicating relatively strong agreement and perhaps greater availability or effectiveness of family-centred support for widows and their children. This was closely followed by "We have participated in community engagement and awareness programs targeting widows and their children," with a mean of 3.71 (SD = 1.54), showcasing active involvement in community-driven initiatives. Involvement in education and skill-building programs scored a mean of 3.67 (SD = 1.25), suggesting moderate access to programs promoting coping skills. The statement "I and/or my children collaborate with local organisations targeting widows and their children" received a mean score of 3.60 (SD = 1.05), reflecting ongoing partnerships with local organisations. Mentoring and counselling involvement also scored above the overall mean at 3.50 (SD = 1.76), while support programs to strengthen social networks scored a mean of 3.43 (SD = 1.11). The lowest mean score was for "There have been strong advocacy and policy changes affecting widows and their children," at 3.33 (SD = 1.01), indicating a comparatively lower perceived impact in policy and advocacy. The overall mean score across statements was 3.57 (SD = 1.26), suggesting a general agreement with the availability of social support. Nevertheless, the responses were varied, as seen from the SD of 1.26.

The above findings are in agreement with Kumar et al. (2020), who found that social support from family members and community members played a substantial part in reducing the risk of deviant behaviour among children of widows. Specifically, the study found that social support from family members was related to reduced levels of emotional and behavioural problems among children of widows. Moreover, social support from community members, such as neighbours and friends, was associated with increased levels of school attendance and good academic performance among children of widows. The findings also align with Djuikom and van de Walle (2022) who found that social support from family members, friends and community members played a critical role in reducing the negative effects of widowhood on children's well-being. The study revealed that social support was associated with better mental health outcomes, improved academic performance and reduced risk-taking behaviours among children of widows. Djuikom and van de Walle (2022) also highlighted the importance of community-based interventions that provide social support to widows and their children.

Social Structures and Children's Deviant Behaviour

The objective number two aimed at examining the influence of social structures on children's deviant behavior among widows in the Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi. The widows were requested to mention the extent to which they concurred or differed with some statements concerning social structures. The Likert scale ranged from 1-5 where 5 denoted complete, 4 denoted mostly 3 denoted somewhat, 2 represented slight and 1 represented not at all. Table 2 displays the results.

Table 2. Social Structures and Children's Deviant Behavior

Statement	Mean	SD
How strongly do you identify with the cultural norms and values of your community?	3.45	1.24
To what extent do you feel that your family plays a role in shaping your social identity?	3.89	1.80
How much does your occupation or education level affect your social status?	4.06	0.11
How much does your race or ethnicity affect your social status?	3.58	1.76
To what extent do gender roles and expectations influence your behaviour?	3.93	1.01
How much does your social class affect the resources and opportunities available to you?	3.50	1.23
To what extent do you believe that social structures can influence the deviant behaviour of children of widows?	3.97	0.14
To what extent do you feel that social structures in your community support the well-being of widows and their children?	3.32	1.15
To what extent do you believe that social structures can promote the well-being of widows and their children?	3.79	1.98
To what extent do you think that interventions that focus on improving social structures can improve the mental health and well-being of widows and their	4.09	0.55

children?		
To what extent do you think that social structures can affect the economic opportunities available to widows and their children?	3.81	1.02
Overall Mean	3.76	1.09

Source: Survey Results (2024)

As shown in Table 2, the majority of respondents agreed that cultural norms and values shape their identities, as shown by a mean of 3.45 (SD = 1.24). This implies that cultural alignment holds some significance in their lives. A large number of respondents also felt that family plays a crucial role in shaping their social identity, indicated by a mean of 3.89 (SD = 1.80), suggesting a strong familial influence on identity formation. Most respondents recognised that their occupation or education significantly affects their social status, reflected in a mean of 4.06 (SD = 0.11), indicating the importance of socioeconomic factors.

Additionally, many respondents believed that race or ethnicity influences social status, as evidenced by a mean of 3.58 (SD = 1.76), highlighting awareness of racial dynamics. The majority indicated that gender roles and expectations influence their behaviour, with a mean of 3.93 (SD = 1.01), suggesting that societal expectations regarding gender are impactful. Many respondents felt that social class affects the resources and opportunities available to them, illustrated by a mean of 3.50 (SD = 1.23), which implies that economic stratification plays a role in resource accessibility. A large number of respondents concurred that social structures could influence the deviant behaviour of children of widows, as shown by a mean of 3.97 (SD = 0.14), suggesting a perceived connection between community structures and behavioural outcomes.

Most respondents felt that social structures in their community support the well-being of widows and their children, with a mean of 3.32 (SD = 1.15), although this suggests that support may be limited. Many respondents believed that social structures can promote the well-being of widows and their children, indicated by a mean of 3.79 (SD = 1.98), which implies a belief in positive structural influences. The majority also agreed that interventions focusing on improving social structures can enhance the mental health and well-being of widows and their children, with a mean of 4.09 (SD = 0.55), demonstrating optimism for structured support. The majority of them also acknowledged that social structures can affect the economic opportunities available to widows and their children, as reflected in a mean of 3.81 (SD = 1.02), indicating that community support plays a vital role in economic prospects. With an average mean of 3.76 (SD = 1.09), respondents generally perceived social structures as influential across various aspects of their lives.

The findings above resonate with Agarwal (2021), who found that social structures, such as caste and gender inequalities, contribute to this social exclusion, which in turn leads to poverty and limited access to resources and opportunities for widows and their children. It also agrees with a study by Akers and Jennings (2019), which found that a strong attachment to family, as measured by the quality of parent-child relationships and the level of parental monitoring, was a protective

factor against delinquent behaviour. There was a lower likelihood of delinquent behaviour among adolescents who claimed a high degree of parental supervision and positive parent-child connections. Similarly, the study found that positive relationships with peers, as measured by the level of peer attachment and involvement in prosocial activities with peers, were also protective against delinquent behaviour. Adolescents who reported high levels of peer attachment and involvement in prosocial activities with peers were less likely to engage in delinquent behaviour. Adolescents who reported high levels of academic achievement and positive teacher-student relationships were less likely to engage in delinquent behaviour.

Social Status and Children’s Deviant Behavior among Widows

The study further sought to determine the influence of socio- status on children’s deviant behavior among widows in Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi. The widows were to provide their level of concurrence with statements provided. This was to be achieved in a 5-point Likert scale with 1 representing total disagreement, 2 representing some disagreement, 3 underscoring moderate disagreement, 4 showing agreement while 5 indicated strong concurrence. In means and SD, the results were as Table 3 displays.

Table 3 Social Status and Children’s Deviant Behavior

Statement	Mean	SD
My family’s social status negatively affects my well-being and that of my children	3.47	1.45
My current income or financial situation affects my social status negatively	3.69	1.24
My social status has negative effects on the economic opportunities available to me and my children	3.45	1.05
My education level hinders my opportunities for advancement	3.60	1.19
My occupation or job title reflects my social status negatively	3.76	1.08
My social status determines the availability of social support to me and my children	3.59	1.11
My race or ethnicity impacts my social status	3.20	1.99
Gender roles and expectations shape my social status	3.89	0.12
Overall Mean	3.58	1.15

Source: Survey Results (2024)

It was found that the majority of respondents indicated that their family's social status negatively affects their well-being and that of their children, as shown by a mean of 3.47 (SD = 1.45). This suggests a recognition of the adverse impacts associated with family social standing. A large number of respondents felt that their current income or financial situation negatively influences their social status, indicated by a mean of 3.69 (SD = 1.24), highlighting the importance of financial stability in shaping social perceptions. Most respondents acknowledged that their social status has detrimental effects on the economic opportunities available to them and their children, reflected in a mean of 3.45 (SD = 1.05), suggesting a connection between social standing and economic access.

Most of the respondents expressed that their education level hinders their opportunities for advancement, as evidenced by a mean of 3.60 (SD = 1.19), indicating barriers related to educational attainment. The majority noted that their occupation or job title negatively reflects their social status, with a mean of 3.76 (SD = 1.08), implying that professional identity is tied to social perception. Many respondents believed that their social status determines the availability of social support for themselves and their children, illustrated by a mean of 3.59 (SD = 1.11), which underscores the link between social standing and community resources.

A smaller number of respondents acknowledged that their race or ethnicity impacts their social status, with a mean of 3.20 (SD = 1.99), indicating varying levels of awareness regarding racial dynamics. Moreover, a majority felt that gender roles and expectations shape their social status, as shown by a mean of 3.89 (SD = 0.12), suggesting that societal norms significantly influence their perceptions. With an average mean of 3.58 (SD = 1.15), respondents generally perceived social status as a significant factor affecting various aspects of their lives and the well-being of their children.

The results are in tandem with Chen et al. (2020), whose findings suggested that kids from families with higher income and parental education were more likely to exhibit prosocial behaviour and less likely to exhibit aggressive behaviour. This implies that children's behaviour may be significantly influenced by their socioeconomic standing. The study also discovered that parenting styles acted as a partly mediating factor in the association between children's behaviour and social standing. It was also in concurrence with Oladipo (2024), who established that poverty-related stressors such as financial strain and lack of access to resources were significant predictors of deviant behaviour among children. The study suggested that children from impoverished backgrounds may turn to deviant behaviour as a coping mechanism in response to the stressors associated with poverty. The study also highlighted the role of family factors, including family structure and parenting practices, in the development of deviant behaviour.

Deviant Behavior among the Children

The participants were further asked to rate the deviant behaviour among their children. They were to do this on a scale of 1-5. The scale was as follows: 1 representing never, 2 standing for rarely (1-2

times), 3 representing occasionally (3-5 times), 4 denoting sometimes (6-10 times) and 5 denoting frequently (more than 10 times). Table 4 summarises the results:

Table 4 Deviant Behavior among the Children

Deviant Behavior	Mean	SD
How frequently have you observed or received reports on your children's involvement in any form of physical aggression or violence towards others in the past year?	3.33	1.56
How frequently have you observed or received reports on your children's involvement in any acts of theft, vandalism or destruction of property in the past year?	3.58	1.87
How frequently have your children intentionally skipped school or engaged in chronic truancy in the past year?	3.65	1.02
How frequently have you observed or received reports on your children's use of drugs, alcohol or other substances in the past year?	3.71	1.01
How frequently have you observed or received reports on your children's involvement in any form of bullying, harassment or intimidation towards peers or other individuals in the past year?	2.99	1.47
Overall Mean	3.45	1.37

Source: Survey Results (2024)

As shown in Table 4, The majority of respondents reported that they observed their children involved in physical aggression or violence towards others, with a mean score of 3.33 (SD = 1.56), suggesting occasional occurrences of such behaviour. A large number of respondents indicated that their children were involved in acts of theft, vandalism or destruction of property, reflected by a mean of 3.58 (SD = 1.87), indicating a somewhat higher frequency of these behaviours. Most participants noted that their children intentionally skipped school or engaged in chronic truancy, as shown by a mean of 3.65 (SD = 1.02), suggesting that truancy is a prevalent issue among the respondents' children. Additionally, many respondents reported observing their children's use of drugs, alcohol or other substances, with a mean of 3.71 (SD = 1.01), indicating frequent concerns about substance use. In contrast, the mean score for children's involvement in bullying, harassment, or intimidation towards peers was 2.99 (SD = 1.47), suggesting that these behaviours were less commonly reported. With an overall mean score of 3.45 (SD = 1.37), respondents generally perceived a moderate level of deviant behaviour among their children across various categories.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to show the relationship between social support, social structures, social status and children's deviant behaviour among widows in Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi. Table 5 displays the outcome:

Table 5 Correlation Analysis

		Deviant	Social Support	Social Structures	Social Status
Deviant	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	-.547**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000			
Social Structures	Pearson Correlation	-.630**	-.602	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.034		
Social Status	Pearson Correlation	-.698**	.456	.008	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.038	0.399	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey Results (2024)

Table 5 exhibits that there is an inverse relationship between social support and children's deviant behaviour, with a correlation coefficient of $-.547$. The p -value of 0.000 is an indicator that this inverse correlation is significant. This is an implication that social support and children's deviant behaviour among the widows move in the opposite direction. It means that with more social support, children's deviant behaviour declines and when social support is little, the deviant behaviour increases. This is in line with the findings by Kumar et al. (2020), who found that social support from family members and community members played a substantial part in reducing the risk of deviant behaviour among children of widows.

Similarly, it was revealed that social structures and children's deviant behaviour were negatively or inversely correlated. The R coefficient was $-.630$, with a corresponding p -value less than 0.05 , insinuating the significance of this relationship. This is an implication that social structures and children's deviant behaviour among the widows move in the opposite direction. It means that with more enhanced social structures, children's deviant behaviour declines and when the social structures deteriorate, the deviant behaviour increases. This is in line with the findings by Akers and Jennings (2019), who found a negative relationship between social structures and student deviant behaviours.

Further, social status and deviant behaviour among children were found to have an inverse relationship. The correlation coefficient and p -value were $-.698$ and 0.000 , respectively. This indicates that when one variable improves, the other one declines. In this case, when social status

improves, deviant behaviour decreases. It is also held true that when the social status is low, deviant behaviour among children goes up. This resonates with Chen et al. (2020), whose findings suggested that kids from families with higher income and parental education were more likely to exhibit prosocial behaviour and less likely to exhibit aggressive behaviour.

Regression Analysis

Regression Analysis was further done to determine the extent of the influence of social factors on children's deviant behavior among widows in Kibera Sub-County, Nairobi County. Table 6 shows the summary of the model; Table 6 shows the ANOVA results and Table 6 presents the regression coefficients.

Table 6 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.891a	0.794	0.779	0.0187

Source: Survey Results (2024)

Findings in table 6 indicates that the R square was 0.794. This illustrates that 79.4 per cent of the variations in children's deviant behavior were explained by the independent variables in the model which were social support, social structures and social status. Agreeably, 20.6 per cent of the variations in the children's deviant behavior is determined by factors that were not part of this research.

Table 7 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.3598	3	9.7866	110.048	.000b
	Residual	24.5364	276	0.0889		
	Total	53.8962	279			
a. Dependent Variable: Deviant behavior						
b. Predictors: (Constant), social support, social structures, social status						

Source: Survey Results (2024)

The outcomes presented in Table 7 confirm the significance and suitability of the model that was used to explain the influence of social support, social structures and social status on children's deviant behaviour. This is supported by the F statistic of 110.048, whose corresponding p-value is $0.000 < 0.005$. This justifies that social support, social structures and social status of the widows are suitable predictors of deviant behaviour among children.

Regression Coefficients

Table 8 Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.512	0.032		7.45	0.000
	Social support	-0.098	0.03	-0.078	-3.207	0.027
	Social structures	-0.325	0.040	-0.414	-11.64	0.003
	Social status	-0.218	0.019	-0.402	-9.388	0.001
a. Dependent Variable: Deviant behavior						

Source: Survey Results (2024)

The regression coefficients revealed that the effect of social support on children's deviant behaviour was negative and significant ($\beta = -0.098$, $p = 0.027 < 0.05$). This confirms that an improvement in social support leads to a decline in deviant behaviour. This is in line with Abdulmalik et al. (2021), whose study depicted that social support from friends and family can help lower the incidence of mental health issues in this susceptible group. The study highlights the importance of social support as a protective factor against deviant behaviour in children of widows.

Social structures were found to have a negative and significant effect on children's deviant behaviour, as shown by a beta coefficient of -0.325 and a significance value of 0.03 . It is an indicator that as social structures improve, deviant behaviours decline. It is in concurrence with Akers and Jennings (2019), who found a negative relationship between social structures and student deviant behaviours. Moreover, social status was found to have a negative and significant effect on children's deviant behaviour, as shown by a beta coefficient of -0.218 and a significance value of 0.01 . It is an indicator that as social status improves, deviant behaviours decline, and vice versa. It resonates with Oladipo (2024), who established that poverty-related stressors such as financial strain and lack of access to resources were significant predictors of deviant behaviour among children.

Summary of Findings

Social Support and Children's Deviant Behavior

The study found that strong social support significantly reduces deviant behaviour among children of widows in Kibera Sub-County. Most widows reported receiving effective family and community-based support and actively engaging in education, skill-building, and mentoring programs. Collaborations with local organisations further enhanced resilience and empowerment. However, fewer participants perceived a strong impact from advocacy and policy changes. Correlation and

regression analysis confirmed an inverse relationship between social support and deviant behaviour, indicating that increased social support leads to reduced behavioural issues among children.

Social Structures and Children's Deviant Behavior

The study established that social structures play a vital role in shaping children's deviant behaviour among widows in Kibera Sub-County. Cultural norms, family influence, and socioeconomic factors were identified as key determinants of social identity and behaviour. Respondents highlighted the role of occupation, education, and social class in determining access to resources and opportunities. Many agreed that improved social structures could enhance well-being and economic prospects. Regression analysis showed an inverse relationship between social structures and deviant behaviour, meaning that stronger social structures contribute to lower behavioural issues among children.

Social Status and Children's Deviant Behavior

The study found that socioeconomic status significantly influences children's deviant behaviour among widows in Kibera Sub-County. Many participants reported that financial instability, limited economic opportunities, and low educational attainment negatively impacted their social standing. Professional identity and gender roles also played a role in shaping social perceptions and access to community resources. The regression analysis revealed a negative relationship between social status and deviant behaviour, indicating that as social status improves, deviant behaviour declines, while lower social status is associated with increased behavioural issues among children.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: It was concluded that social support, social structures and socioeconomic status significantly influence children's deviant behaviour among widows in Kibera Sub-County. Strong family and community support reduce deviant behaviour, while participation in education and mentoring programs fosters positive outcomes. Social structures, including cultural norms and socioeconomic factors, shape behavioural tendencies, with inadequate structures exacerbating negative behaviours. Socioeconomic status also plays a crucial role, as financial instability and low social standing limit opportunities, reinforcing behavioural challenges.

Recommendations: The study recommends that widows engage in education and skill-building programs to improve their financial stability and social status while strengthening their social networks through community participation. Community leaders should develop inclusive programs to reduce stigmatisation and enhance support for widows and their children. Social support groups should expand their focus to long-term empowerment initiatives, including financial literacy and vocational training. Policy recommendations include government programs providing counselling, financial assistance, and social inclusion policies to integrate widows into support systems. Further research should explore long-term social support impacts, regional variations, gender roles, and innovative support mechanisms for widows and their children.

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