

# **Parental Attachment, Gender and Deviant Behaviour Among Secondary School Students in Homabay County- Kenya.**

## **Abstract.**

Adolescence is the black spot stage in life where young people find a lot of difficulty in striking a balance between the ecstasy that comes as a result of the body changes experienced and a sense of responsibility that enables an individual to navigate successfully through this stage. The society has its laid down expectations of the adolescents which differ depending on whether one is male or female. However, most young people often act outside the expectations of the society. Deviance in adolescence is a social problem which cuts across all the social strata in the society and has indelible consequences to the individual and the society as a whole. The current study sought to understand deviance by examining the points where deviance and gender converge. The objectives of this study were; to evaluate the relationship between parental attachment and deviant behavior and to assess gender differences in deviant behaviour among secondary school students in Homabay County- Kenya. The study was guided by Parental Attachment theory by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. The study adopted a correlational survey design and the target population included form two students from all the secondary schools in Homabay County, heads of guidance and counseling department, Deputy Principals, Principals and selected members of parents association. Out of the population of 20,160 students a representative sample of 512 students was randomly sampled. Principals, Deputies, PA representatives and HODs were purposively sampled. Instruments for data collection included questionnaires administered to measure parental attachment and deviant behaviour, structured and unstructured interview schedules, focus group discussions and analysis of documents from the sampled schools. Instruments were then piloted. The validity of these instruments was ascertained through expert judgment and piloting while the reliability of the instruments was tested using the Split half method and the level of confidence was  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings revealed a significant association between parental attachment and deviant behaviour ( $r = -0.244$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and a significant difference in the scores for males ( $M = 1.93$ ,  $SD = 0.685$ ) and females ( $M = 1.30$ ,  $SD = 0.524$ );  $t(512) = 9.194$ ,  $p < 0.05$ .

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