

## Abstract

Aggressive behavior is common in adolescents and poses a health risk to perpetrators as well as victims. A high prevalence of aggression has been reported in secondary school students in Nairobi County. Previous research has shown that aggressive behavior may be related to insecure attachment but no studies have investigated this relationship in secondary school students in Nairobi County. This study therefore investigated whether students' attachment styles predicted aggressive behavior in secondary school students in Nairobi County. The study was anchored in the attachment theory and adopted a correlational design. The study targeted 10,451 Form Three students in public secondary schools. Nine schools were selected from three sub counties and then random sampling was used to select 367 respondents. Students' attachment styles were measured using the Attachment Styles Questionnaire and aggressive behavior was measured by combining the physical aggression and verbal aggression subscales of the Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire. Linear multiple regression analysis was used to test whether attachment styles predicted aggressive behavior. the main finding of the study was that attachment styles significantly predicted students' aggressive behavior ( $F = 7.405, P < .001$ ) and explained 8.2% of the variance in aggressive behavior ( $R^2 = 0.082$ ). Specifically, aggressive behavior was predicted by preoccupied attachment style ( $\beta = .117, P = .048$ ) and dismissing attachment style ( $\beta = .157, P = .008$ ). The study recommended that students' attachment styles be taken into account in efforts to curb aggressive behavior in secondary school students.