

SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF YOUTH DEVIANT BEHAVIOR: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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A B S T R A C T

The present study focuses on the deviant behavior which is a major problem among the young generation. Deviant behavior is increasing globally each passing year. Issue is seen in all societies but its extent of issue is bit higher in developing countries. To deal with deviant behavior among masses, different theories were developed to understand root causes of issue, such as social control theory, differential association theory, labelling theory, social ecological theory and so forth. The main aim of the current research is to figure out the main determinants. The conceptual framework consists of four major factors such as delinquent attitude, delinquent peer, and community disorder on deviant behavior. Hence, current research investigates the impact of delinquent attitude, delinquent peers, and community disorder on deviant behavior among the undergraduate students at University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Sindh. Study uses quantitative research method to measure impact of independent variables and dependent variable by using cross-sectional data which were collected from university students. Hypothetical relationships were measured through multi-regression on sample of 227 by using simple random sampling technique. Results reveal that there is no significant impact of delinquent attitude on deviant behavior while delinquent peer and community disorder were found positive and significant with deviant behavior. Therefore, out of three hypotheses, two were accepted while one rejected. Results proved that multiple factors of social environment provoke to nurture deviant behavior among youth.

Keywords: Delinquent attitude, Delinquent peer, Community disorder, Deviant behavior and Youth

1 INTRODUCTION

This study is about sociological analysis of youth deviant behavior among students of university. No doubt, deviant behavior is common problem of youth. Owing to improper socialization and lack of parental supervision resulted to criminal behavior. Nowadays, individuals mostly rely and learn from their peer age groups several forms of deviancy. For instance, even conformists who obey the norms of society, learns the ways of criminality from their associates. Those, who break the codes of conduct are known as non-conformists or deviants. Thus, sociologists defined deviant behavior as any activity that violates all the rules regulations and expected norms of particular society. The literal meaning of deviance is which varies from what majority of the people consider acceptable ([Darrat Amyx & Bennett, 2010](#)).

In theoretical perspectives, issue has been interpreted in different ways. like functionalists argue that the deviant act plays a pivotal and useful role in society by eventually maintaining coherence within different populations. Conflict theory advocates that deviant behavior originates from social, political, or material exploitations in a social group. Besides, labeling theory claims that people become deviant as a result of some influential persons attach certain negative identities upon them. In this way, they adopt that unwanted identity ([Clinard & Meier, 2015](#)).

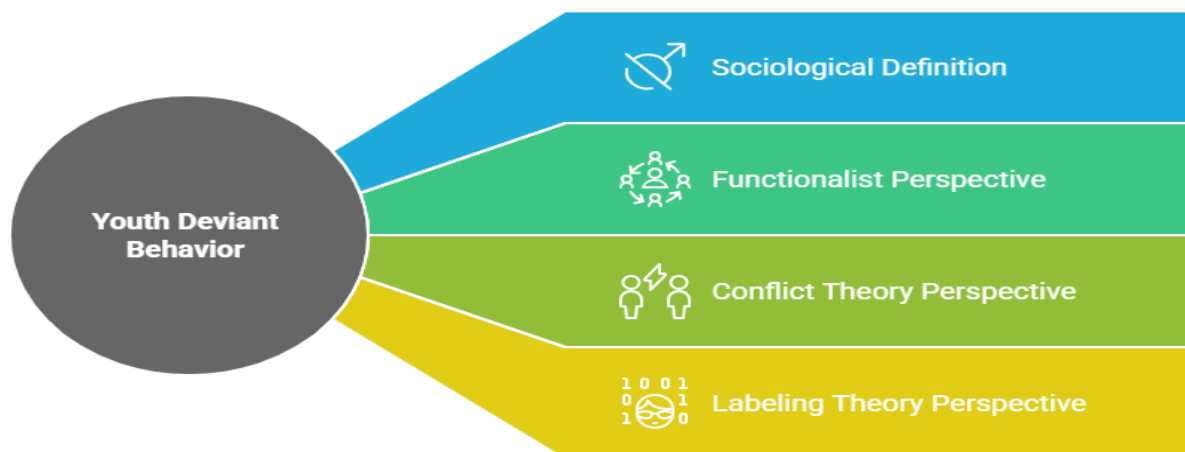


Figure 1. Exploring Dimensions of Youth Deviant Behavior

In the domain of literature, there are two types of deviance. The first is the crime, which is the breaking of codified laws of any state and is referred to as formal deviance ([Dubin, 1959](#)). Examples of formal deviance include robbery, theft, rape, murder, and assault etc. The second type of deviant behavior indicates the violation of informal/social norms (norms that have not been formally enacted into law) and is known as informal deviance ([Cloward, 1959](#)). Examples of informal deviance include picking one's nose, belching loudly, or standing unnecessarily close to another person.

[Chlinard \(1974\)](#) provides that definition of deviant behavior vary society to society, whatever is deviant at one place may be acceptable to another place. For instance, in western society, it may be considered normal behavior for women to smoke or consume alcohol in public but same this behavior for women in Pakistani society defined as deviant act. Young students are considered to be valuable asset and blooming flowers of garden of any country. State and family members must take care of their youth and guide and provide them all necessary facilities in their proper development. Yet, keeping in mind the new changes in the form of modernization, westernization and globalization students underwent change in behavior. Similarly, now-a-days the nature of deviant behavior underwent a great change

(Kohli, A. 2018). The deviant behavior is a major problem among the young generation. It has been observed that deviant behavior increases globally each passing year (Hanimoglu, E. 2018). This issue is seen in all societies but its extent of issue is bit higher in developing societies. The study was conducted on deviant behavior in schools of Nigeria. This study focused to know the impact of deviant behavior on student's learning and the sample was drawn from a population of urban and rural public secondary schools in Nigeria. The results found that the deviant behavior was prevalent in rural as well as urban public school but the level of deviancy was higher in urban public school than the rural secondary schools. Thus, deviant behavior severely impacted on student's learning (Asiyai, R.I. 2019). Besides, violent behaviors such as assault, robbery and murder by university students caused many highly skilled American teachers to leave universities and moved to other universities with less behavior problems. A single act of criminality had negatively impacted on learning (smith and smith, 2016). In contrast, deviancy in nonviolent behavior include arriving late in class, sleeping in class, skipping classes, playing video games, engaging in conversation with other fellows reduces non deviant learning environment (Hubell & Hubell, 2010). Ali, and Gracey (2013) believed that improved teacher-student relationship is mandatory for a noise-free classroom learning environment. Besides, In the context of primary social institutions, unfavorable family relations and family stress are the most significant risks factors for the development of juvenile delinquency (Stasevic et al., 2005). The relationship between family structure and delinquency has been broadly studied across a range of different fields and reported as major predictors of delinquent behavior too (Boccio and Beaver, 2017; Murray, 2010).

Moreover, many factors were applied to understand the issue and assessed major predictors of deviant behavior among youth like stress, delinquency, substance use, peer delinquency, peer effects, delinquency behavior, crime, divorce, family structure, cognition, attributions, moral emotions, family size, delinquency, substance use and so on (Stasevic 2005; Boccio and Beaver 2017). However, factors like delinquent peer, community disorder, and delinquent attitude were not assessed together as predictors of delinquent behavior. The current study would measure peer deviant behavior, community disorder and delinquent attitude as predictors of delinquent behavior.

1.1 | OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

On the basis above literature the aim of study is to investigate the factors that have association with deviant behavior. Following to the aim of the study following objectives have been proposed.

1. To investigate the degree of association between delinquent attitude and deviant behavior.
2. To examine association between delinquent peers and deviant behavior
3. To determine the association between community disorder and deviant behavior.

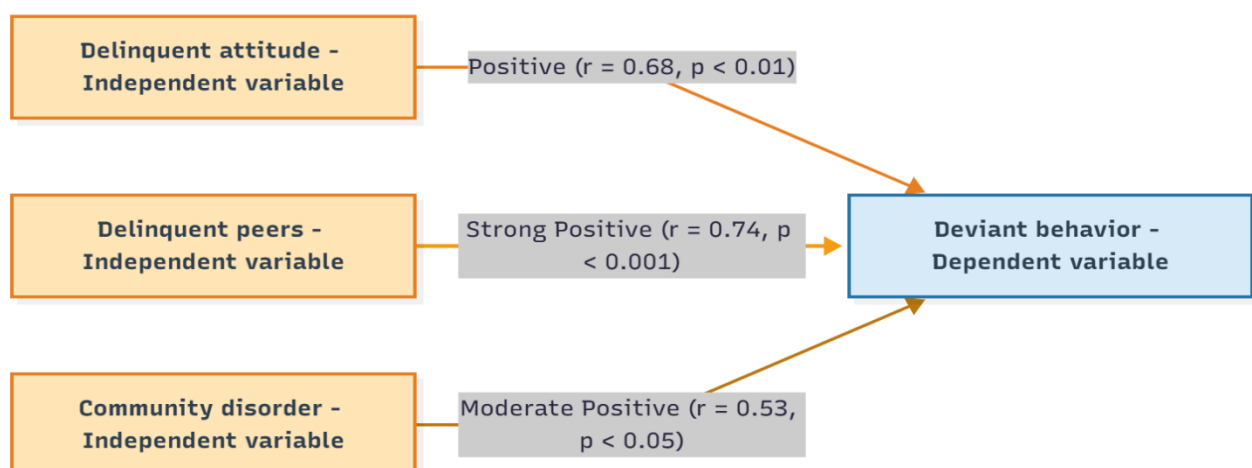


Figure 2. Model of Study

1.2 | SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The major importance of current study is that current study conducted over undergraduate students, they never had been part of the jail nor under psychological treatment and even their parents not part of jail. This research examines sociological factors include neighborhood connections, family and friend's connections and trust and safety to find out relationship and impacts on civic engagement. The study may support to development professionals to make youth development projects for youth to make them active and responsible citizens in society. The study may be contributed to policy makers who interested to workout in civic and social related domain. This study may help as a guide to experimental and domain researchers to develop a strong conceptualization for further research. The results of the present study might be helpful to the literature in general and particular for Asian countries. Similarly, the conceptual model of study may provide a new platform to make ease empirical research on civic engagement domain research in developed and developing societies.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the literature on meaning of deviant behavior, multiple definitions of deviant behavior, delinquent peers and deviant behavior, deviant behavior and delinquent attitude, deviant behavior and community disorder and its effects are mentioned

2.1 | Meaning of the deviant behavior:

Understanding the meaning of the deviance, it requires deep insight to generally accept the term deviance. Laughing out loud may not be considered deviant for group of people enjoying party at any place but it would be deviant at funeral. Hence, what is deviant for an individual or group may not be deviancy for another. Similarly, what is deviant in one situation may not be in another situation. Therefore, deviance takes many forms and agreement on specific behaviors and conditions as deviants is difficult task ([Murphy, E. 1999](#)). According to J. L. [Simmons \(1965\)](#) there are number of difference of views among scholars as to what they consider deviant. He found this difference by studying different kinds of people as deviants. Like, Prostitutes, alcoholics, drug users, mentally ill, murderers, atheists, communists, liars, reckless drivers, divorcees, priests, liberals, movies stars.

2.2 | Multiple definitions of deviant

According to [Ronald Akers \(1977\)](#) such behavior which deviates in a disapproved direction. Precisely, consideration is given to those disapproved behaviors known as more serious which directly require major societal efforts to control them by using negative sanctions or needed some corrective-techniques to treat.

[Howard S. Becker \(1963\)](#) argued in a book named "Outsider", pointed out that the deviant is one to whom the label has successfully been applied, generally, people attach label to those individuals who deviates from structured social norms.

According to [Robert K. Merton \(1968\)](#), deviancy refers to behavior that departs significantly from the societal norms set for people in their social statuses. Merton did not use the word deviate behaviour directly. He argued that any culture articulates goals for members of the society, while social structure gives culturally approved set of institutionalized means for achieving those goals. People who accept both culturally approved goals and approved means are known as conformists. While, those who do not accept both culturally approved goals and culturally approved institutionalized means are deviants or anomic adaptations.

in views of [John A. Humphrey \(2006\)](#) behaviour as deviant or not, and the public response to the act and the actor established a boundary between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in a given society. Norms and values have been established; social organization and culture have been defined.

2.3 | DELINQUENT PEERS AND DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

Student's interaction with his peer age relationship plays a pivotal role in his whole life. Indeed, it has been widely studied in different disciplines such as Sociology, psychology and criminology. Similarly, it was researched that when a child starts entering from childhood to adolescence, he largely becomes reliant on his peers ([Akers & Lee, 1996](#); [Brown, 1990](#); [Erickson, Crosnoe, & Dornbush, 2000](#)). In terms of amount of time he spends and level of attachment with his peer age group ([Haynie, 2002](#); [Haynie & Osgood, 2005](#)). Other studies show that as much as the number of deviant peers increase the level of deviant behaviors increase among the youth ([Haynie & Osgood, 2005](#); [Jussim & Osgood, 1989](#); [Weerman & Smeenk, 2005](#)) as well as their deviant attitudes ([Warr, 2002](#)).

Moreover, the crime which is learned by the association with others may not develop deviant's favourable attitude towards crime but individuals merely want their peers to like them ([Warr, M, 2002](#)). Furthermore, people who engage into criminality with their delinquent peers become nonviolent in the beginning. These first-time offenders with their peer association are more likely to commit acts of violence in their upcoming criminal behaviors ([McCord and Conway, 2002](#)).

2.3.1 | DEVIANCE AND PEER RELATIONSHIP

Most of the university undergraduates are adolescents, who experience physical and psychological development. They are therefore, mostly susceptible to the influence of peers ([Falaye, 2004](#); [Enang, 2007](#)). As a result, some of them start to consume alcohol, start smoking and then finally use of drugs like heroin and cocaine (Olusegun, 2016). Furthermore, students in their deviant friend circle consume such substances. ([Brook et al., 2013](#)). Likewise, [Barnow et al. \(2004\)](#) found some interesting results and stated that peer group delinquency is more effective to involve a person into alcoholic behaviour than any other individual's age, sex and family history of alcohol use.

2.4 | DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR AND DELINQUENT ATTITUDE

it is also examined in various studies that delinquent attitude as mediator in the relationship between youth behavior and adolescent deviancy ([Warr & Stafford, 1991](#); [Thornberry et al., 1994](#); [Megens & Weerman, 2012](#)). According to [Heimer and Matsueda \(1994\)](#), attitudes are "predispositions or plans to act" and stable attitudes regarding delinquency increases the likelihood of antisocial resolutions. Likewise, General strain theory (GST) of Agnew (2001) states that strains in various forms generate unconventional behaviours result negative emotions in persons that lead to form deviancy. Lin and Yi (2016) found in his study that this strain related to family and school created deviancy among students.

2.5 | DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR AND COMMUNITY DISORDER

Community disorder refers to neighborhood environment that explains population is living with certain visible signs that shows weak social control. In this situation, people are less concerned about healthy physical environment. This neighborhood is often having rundown buildings, vandalism and where crime is commonly observed ([Geis and Ross 1998](#); [Kim and Conley 2011](#)). Indeed, the neighborhood context has also certain effects on delinquent attitudes ([Anderson, 2000](#)). It has been noted that disorders exist particularly when social and physical disorders in neighborhood if unchecked that can lead to criminal activities. For instance, drinking or smoking habits in the street, spray-painting graffiti and breaking window of houses or shops can escalate crimes. These kinds of deviant acts develop a perspective in the minds of offenders related to such disorders in that area is not problematic. Thus, residents are indifferent to what happens in their neighborhood ([Sampson & Raudenbush, 2001](#)).

3 | METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

3.1| design of the study

Table 1. *Design for Study*

Research Philosophy	Positivism Paradigms
Research Approach	Deductive Approach
Research Strategy	Quantitative technique
Time Horizon	Cross-Sectional
Data Collection Method	Survey questionnaire
Respondents	Students
Sampling technique	Random
Data analysis	SPSS

3.2 | POPULATION OF THE STUDY

This study used under graduate students of university of Sindh Jamshoro, as a unit of analysis. According to official website Sindh University, total enrolled students are (32723). The researcher used [Krejice and Morgan \(1978\)](#) sampling formula for determination of sample size from mentioned population. Adapted questionnaire were modified on cultural bases.

3.3 | sampling

This study used random sampling technique for data collection. For random selection Krejice and [Morgan \(1978\)](#) sampling formula were employed. According to formula total required sample size are $n = 379$. The researcher collected the data by visiting the university. Total 400 questionnaires were distributed among respondents. From 400 questionnaires only 238 questionnaires were collected by researcher.

3.4 | RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

This study adapted research instrument from existing literature. Some minor modifications and changes were made on the bases of expert opinion. The researcher used adapted items which were used in previous domain studies ([Huizinga et al., 1991](#), [Esbensen et al., 2009, 2001](#), [Sanches et al, 2016](#)). All items of research instrument, like deviant behavior, delinquent peers, community disorder and delinquent attitude was ranges on five points Likert scale.

3.5 | DATA ANALYSIS

The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) 24 version for windows was used for data analysis. Data were collected through different sources. The collected primary data was entered in SPSS data sheet

4 | DATA FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 | Demographic information of the respondents

The following table shows the overall frequency of demographic information about the students of university of Sindh. Total 227 questionnaires were collected back by researcher. In this way, the rate of responses was 59.5. The researched has asked the characteristics of respondents such as gender, Age, Marital status and educational background asked in the survey questionnaire. For more read demographic details of the respondents discussed in the following table.

Table 2. Demographic Information

Demographic	Category	Frequency
Gender	Male	169
	Female	58
Age	15 to 20	76
	21 to 25	149
	26 to 30	2
Marital Status	Single	213
	Married	14

Educational background	Bachelor	168
	Master	59

4.2 | PEARSON CORRELATION

Correlation analysis shows the strength and direction in terms of linear relationship between variables.

In the current study correlation was examined so that to check linear relationships existence between all of the measures. The following table represents to relationship between variables. In this study Pearson Correlation was applied and it was found that all the independent variables of this research were significantly correlated with the dependent variable. The following table clearly shows the linearity with each other.

Table 3. *Correlation*

Factors	DEBE	DEPE	CODI	DEAT
DEBE	1			
DEPE	.508**	1		
CODI	.279**	.451**	1	
DEAT	.053	.193**	.151*	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

4.3. | Hypotheses Testing

Researcher tried to know the relationship between variables, then he used multi regression test in current study. Likewise, All of the coefficients are statistically significant in The value for DEPE (B = .431, $p < 0.05$); CODI (B = .127, $p < 0.05$), however, the relationship between delinquent attitude and deviant behavior is negative with (B = -.035, $p > 0.05$). Result indicated that H1 rejected while H2, H3 accepted. It can be easily interpreted that DEPE and CODI have strong relationship with DB.

Table 4. *ANOVA*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10356.336	3	3452.112	26.020	.000b
	Residual	31310.487	236	132.672		
	Total	41666.823	239			

a. Dependent Variable: DEBE

b. Predictors: (Constant), CODI, BEAT, DEPE

All of the coefficients are statistically significant in the following table. The value for DEPE (B = .431, $p < 0.05$); CODI (B = .127, $p < 0.05$), however, the relationship between delinquent attitude and deviant behavior is negative with (B = -.035, $p > 0.05$). result indicated that H1 rejected while H2, H3 accepted. It can be easily interpreted that DEPE and CODI have strong relationship with DB.

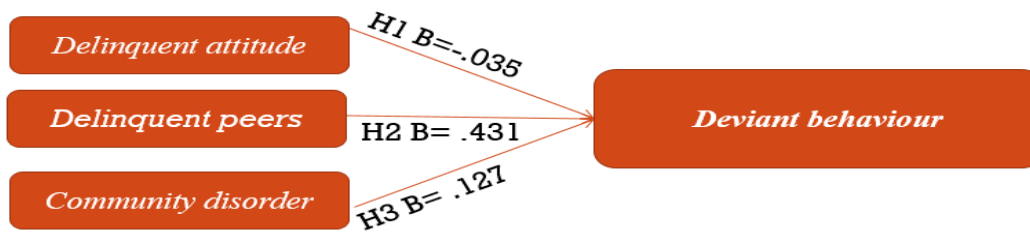


Figure 3: *Tested model*

5 | METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Methodological implications of current research work are based on the fact that it is one of the few studies in Asian countries particularly in Pakistan to examine the deviant behavior of students by using delinquent attitude, delinquent peers and community disorder as an independent variable. Indeed, this study filled the gap in education institutions by investigating deviant behaviors and to create its logical relationships with delinquent attitude, delinquent behavior and community disorder. This methodology is also useful to generalize in other educational institutions. Moreover, this study uses statistical procedures to check the reliability and validity of the measurement items before applying them into this research work. According to findings, all the items were removed mostly from the deviant behavior. However, it was noted that this variable was also applicable in this social setup.

6 | PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

It was also interpreted that this research contributes to the literature by examining constructs of well-established models in the context of educational organization in Pakistan and other countries of the world.

No doubt, deviant behavior is commonly existing in this age of competition. where all individuals want their needs and wishes to meet. Whenever, they fail to achieve these basic things, especially youth try to involve themselves into acts of deviancy. As this study aims to identify deviant acts among young students. It was found in the literature that students use drugs and using illegal ways to achieve their grades in educational institutions. Sometimes they escape from attending the classes. Students when they are not supervised properly from their parents they create association with peers and thus may create certain ways to do crimes which create less harmonized neighborhood etc.

Similarly, this study might be helpful for researchers in this domain to formulate strong conceptualization in upcoming studies in fields of sociology and criminology. The results of study might be contributed to create new avenues of empirical research on even civic engagement.

Furthermore, the practical implications of current research project may guide to policy makers to reduce the growing number of criminal activities and may contribute to create employment opportunities for youth in different industrial sectors of the state.

Indeed, this study can contribute to know the loopholes in societal and cultural structures about which common citizen is unaware. By changing, flawed structures with sincere efforts may lessen the severity of crime and maintain the just society

7 | LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Current study was on the student's deviant behavior. However, there is huge scope of deviance in many fields like sociology, psychology and criminology. Researcher was limited only to the domain of deviance which existed only among students. This kind of research takes lot of energy and time to execute properly to get the all the responses from

students. Many of the students shown low level of willingness due to the nature of study. It means students did not want to give responses related to their deviant behaviors. Similarly, due to societal structure female girls were also shown reluctant behavior but researcher hardly motivated them to give their responses.

Moreover, another limitation of the study pointed out that adapted questionnaire was most suitable to the western societies not fully applicable into Pakistani culture that's why few items of adopted questionnaire were removed from research instrument.

Likewise, other limitations were identified that all the literature was available only into western societies and very little research work had been carried out in Asian societies. However, the values and customs of societies vary. In this situation researcher felt difficulty to get the responses from Pakistani youth.

8 | CONCLUSION

The study finding contributes to the literature on analyses of predictable variables such delinquent attitude (DEAT), delinquent peers (DEPE), community disorder (CODI) to deviant behavior (DEBE). There are several avenues for research in future. This is quantitative nature of study in which relationship between independent and dependent variables is examined. One of the key issue for future researcher is to develop a research instrument that could directly match cultural needs with reference to Pakistani context. In this regard, researcher need to develop survey questionnaire that should sufficiently fit into Pakistani setup. There are several theories on deviancy, crime and delinquency, therefore, researcher has to apply theories carefully in his/her future studies. Similarly, it open avenues for future researchers to conduct studies on adolescent behavior toward crime out of the any educational institutions. This study also gives general idea that future researches should have large sample involving other professional persons who watch out crime related activities that may provide more strength and support for future findings. Likewise, parents can be included into the study to know their perception regarding the socialization of their children. Similarly, there should be a collaboration of educational institutions management team and students' parent so that both can effectively combat deviant behaviors.

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