

# Adolescent Deviant Behavior And Satisfaction With Life : A Brief Inquiry

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## Abstract

Adolescent are getting more and more dissatisfied with their life and it has been witnessed that their deviant behavior is also increasing with every passing day. The current research was conducted to find out relationship between adolescent deviant behavior and life. 150 students with an age ranged from 16-19 years participated in study. Adolescent Behavior Questionnaire (ABQ, Ma, 1988) and Satisfaction with Life (SWL, Pavot, & Diener, 1955) were administered on (N=150) students with an age ranged from 16-19 years. They were selected from different educational institutes of Karachi-Pakistan. Outcomes showed negative relationship between deviant behaviour and life satisfaction ( $r = -.273, p < .001$ ). Study also showed significant differences for gender and family structure for deviant behaviour and life satisfaction among students. Implications were discussed in the light of present outcomes.

**Keywords:** Deviant Behavior, Students, Life Satisfaction, Pakistan.

## INTRODUCTION

“Do not treat your children the way you were treated for they are meant for another era” Hazrat Ali a.s.

If you are going to teach your children the way you were taught you are actually robbing of their tomorrow” (John Dewey)

"Adolescence is the time for important changes in brain structure and function, and no other developmental phase is characterized by more dramatic changes than the first three years of life. (Steinberg, 2011). Youth are supposed to be the backbone of any society; in fact, they are the future of the society and if they are educated and

trained in properly, they will prove to be an asset. The sensitive and most energetic stage of the youth is when they are in their adolescent age; this is the age when they are most probably studying in secondary stage of their educational process. According to (Yavuzer, 1994), "The social, psychological and biological transition process that these people undergo at those specific ages is the most significant factor in distinguishing juvenile crime from adult crime". The problems that are faced by the juveniles and adolescents in this transition period will more likely affect their future lives. It can be traced from their views regarding self-esteem and life satisfaction whether these students are facing some sort of problems due to the physical and or psychological changes, which they cannot cope

up with individually, and would like to have help of someone close, with whom they can discuss their problems. These physical and psychological changes results in problems such as sudden mood shifting, shyness, not able to concentrate, difficulty in taking decisions, substance abuse, not adjusting in the environment may it be family, school and or other agencies of socialization, showing aggressive behavior and all other sorts of deviances. For years, hormones have been blamed on the adolescent "roller coaster." Recent technological and research progress has led to the ability to "see within" the adolescent brain, studies which indicate the brain is responsible for the thoughts, feelings and behavior of adolescents, not the hormones. Brain research is a new boundary and studies have shown that neuroscience has had little impact on education (Blakemore & Frith, 2005).

It has been concluded today that there is no 'evil' human being. There are only sick people. The realization of this matter is so important that it can be said without exaggeration that nodiscovery or invention in the world will ever have an equal impact on human welfare since the emergence of man until the present. Nye (1958) proposed that criminal behavior should be more frequent if we take account of the fact that criminal behavior can more easily and faster achieve objectives than normative behaviour. Although it seems more problematic to comply with regulatory behaviour, why is criminal behavior less common in society? For Nye (1958), it makes more sense to consider crime as a result of ineffective social control than to look for positive factors that cause criminal behaviour. When social control is inefficient, crime is the way to accomplish these goals more quickly and more easily. The day people realize this fact and society is organized and regulated by this truth, the greatest part of the human suffering, misery, hostility, conflict and punishment will be moderated. What is the reason for this? Because if, for example, everyone learns of the logical effects of spiritual disease which are treatable just

like common cold or fever, non-groupness, envy, fear, cunning, prejudice, impulsivity, injustice and hundreds of its vices of this kind, they will produce a clear and useful result.

The environmental impact on various brains is not, of course, the same as the different neurological composition, as the environment has no similar effect on the growth of different plants and herbs. Through skill development, learning and social growth, the adolescent brain is changing quickly and adapting to its environment (Telzer, 2016). Each individual is inherited under the law of heredity in his or her own neurological composition. No two people on Earth have the same neurological structure and make-up, and from the perspective of individual physiology and body hormones they have a tangible difference. As a particular environment is affected in a particular way by every seed and plant, its effect on each neuron of the brain is therefore also unique because life in a given environment has a special effect on each individual and creates a particular person which is unlike that of another person.

"Deviance" can generally be understood as the concept encompassing a number of forms of human behaviour, which are defined as mistaken, miserable, immoral or illegal in society (Jensen 2003). Orcutt, 2004 says that 'most disconnection with the notion of deviance appears to have led to two alternate definitions: a normative definition versus a relativistic definition.

A general definition of deviance or a deviant behavior from a normative point of view is possible in an extremely specific context, such as violation of standards (Badham, Garrety, Morrigan, Zanko and Dawson 2003). Most observers would agree with this broad view, as 'standards' are central to society's existence. However, the rules that are violated should be clearly explained even with a definition of deviance as a violation of norms. It is a relatively easy task to define those standards for serious

crimes like suicide or murder. But the problem of the definition lies in standards which are not widely accepted as grave crimes (e.g. legislation versus customs). The essentialist approach is one of these perspectives.

How one defines the deviance is "in the eyes of the beholder?" (Simmons, 1969) reported the results of a study that asked "Who is deviant?" Deviance, like beauty, is in the eyes of the beholder ". One of the fascinating things of research in sociology of deviance is how the definition of deviance change is. Who has the authority to define differences and who or what is more reliable and valid in the rest of the definitions over the course of time (Chambliss, Doyle & Reeves, 2004)

The impact of a broader society culture is the most important aspect of this process. Certainly, some of the answer lies in strong institutions, the definition of which deviance constitutes critical role for mass media, lawmakers, courts and law enforcement agencies (Chambliss et al. 2004).

In recent decades, many researchers have studied life satisfaction. Research on life satisfaction focused on when and why people are satisfied and how their lives are affected (Liu & Larose, 2008). The question of what makes people happy with life or not is one of which economists and writers have been fascinated for a while. Psychologists were interested in the subject of satisfaction, mainly because the psychological movement is considered part of the positive. The focus of positive psychology is the study of the strengths and virtues of individuals who allow individuals and their groups to thrive. Because of the nature of positive psychology, it makes sense for psychologists to find out why people are happy or unhappy to help strengthen communities and individuals.

Although the definition of life satisfaction is slightly different from that of all researchers, they all essentially say that life satisfaction is a

cognitive assessment of the quality of life of a person as a whole or within a specific domain (Paolini, Yanez and Kelly, 2006). Apart from negative and positive effects, life satisfaction is viewed as part of the broader subjective well-being structure.

The term subjective well-being is defined as the individual's current evaluation or happiness. Because subjective well-being is an appreciation of a person's happiness at all times of his or her life, satisfaction can vary considerably over time depending on the level of his or her current happiness (Liu & Larose, 2008). Gladness, quality of life, satisfaction in life and satisfaction of life are all words when it comes to talking about subjective well-being. Life satisfaction is fundamentally based on what one thinks his life should be like (Paolini, Yanez, & Kelly, 2006).

If people believe that their lives should somehow raise their expectations. If their lives don't fulfill their expectations, their life's satisfaction drops. Past studies have shown that if a person maintains positive levels of life satisfaction, it is essential to adapt normal lives. If you are in a negative level of living satisfaction (Kitsantas, Gilligan & Kamata 2003) there is an increased risk of maladaptive life outcomes like physical or psychological disease.

Many researchers have commonly taken the view that students' overall satisfaction with academic achievement, teacher, social life, workload, finance, security and other fields of experience, determines their satisfaction. (Lounsbury, Saudargas, Gibson, & Leong, 2005).

Research showed that gender is an important factor in life satisfaction. Both men and women face different situations and as a result, different life events affect each gender differently. Previous research has shown that women are more likely than men to live happily. (Judge & Watanabe, 1993).

Research has shown that a person's self-esteem or self-esteem is important for his or her level of life's satisfaction. How a person in individualistic cultures feels about him / herself is closest to the satisfaction of life than to the satisfaction of community life (Diener & Diener 1995). Such results are important but are sometimes overlooked in the study of different cultures. Past Western studies demonstrated that self-esteem is a strong predictor of life satisfaction (Diener & Diener, 1995).

Bailey & Miller 1998 conducted this experiment primarily to determine whether the satisfaction of global living in college students is linked to active participation in life. It was assumed that people who lead more active lives and have a higher number of roles will set and pursue more goals. A narrower lifestyle was also considered as having less satisfaction for college students. The investigation believes that a human being's tendency to approach or avoid life is linked to

global satisfaction with life. It was also studied the role school performance and relationships play in life satisfaction.

Age, gender, socio-economic status, student status, employment status, family and more depend on life-satisfaction. The satisfaction of a teenager has a major impact on every domain. Domains create roles in which a person takes part and life satisfaction may decrease when one takes part in several roles. Although there have been a lot of research on the relationship between different values and life satisfaction, rare research has been carried out with respect to the subject of deviant adolescents and their satisfaction with life.

### **Hypotheses of the study**

1. There is a significant relation between adolescent deviant behavior and life satisfaction

2. There is a significant gender difference for deviant behavior and life satisfaction.
3. There is a significant difference for family structure for deviant behavior and life satisfaction

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to look at the levels of life satisfaction for adolescent students of class tenth to examine whether they had a satisfied life irrespective of their deviant behavior or not. It was hypothesized that adolescent's deviant behavior have an impact on they life satisfaction.

The participants of the study were matric grade students that were selected from various coaching centers belonging to different communities falling in nearly the same age bracket of sixteen to seventeen years of age i.e. the age when a student is supposed to be in matric grade if proper progression during the academics is maintained. With respect to gender there were 86 male participants and 64 female participants out of 150 total participants.

This study is focused on the relation between deviant behavior on life satisfaction, gender difference and life satisfaction and family structure and life satisfaction with deviant behavior as the possible reason.

The dependent variable in this study was the students' satisfaction with life and the independent variables of this study included student gender, deviant behavior, and family structure.

### **Materials**

Adolescent Behavior Questionnaire (ABQ). Ma's (1988) ABQ measures the prosocial and antisocial /delinquent behavior of adolescents. Participants were asked to report the frequency of 65 acts performed in the past year on a 7-point scale: None, 1-2 times, 3-4 times, 5-

6times,7–8times,9–10timesandmorethan10 times.

The reliability and validity of ABQ scores were demonstrated to be good in studies by Ma and Leung (1991) and Ma, Shek, Cheung, and Lee

(1996). The Cronbach alpha of the ABQ scores is usually in the .80s to .90s

Satisfaction with life SWL scale developed by Pavot, W., & Diener, E. was administered on the students.

The participants were approached in coaching centers where they were first briefed about the purpose of the study and then the items were explained to them to avoid any ambiguity. They were also informed that their participation is voluntary and there is no compulsion in participating in the process, on the other hand they were also requested to fill whole of the form other than the optional items i.e. name so that better and authentic results can be driven from the study. No students were compensated in any form other than thanks in the study. The questionnaire was then handed to the students and twenty minute time was given to fill it which was amicably done and the researcher got the forms filled in nearly the

The scoring of the gathered data was done manually and then the data was entered into the SPSS data analysis system and correlation and independent sample t tests were conducted on each variable of the study.

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was applied to know the relation between the variables, as the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient is a measure of a linear association strength between two variables and is denoted by  $r$ . Basically, a Pearson product-moment correlation attempts to draw a line of best fit through two variables data, and the Pearson correlation coefficient,  $r$ , shows how far all these data points are from this line of best fit (i.e., how well the data points fit this new model / line of best fit).

Independent-samples t-test was applied to know the difference between the grouped variables and the variable of the study. The independent t-test, also called the two sample t-test, independent-samples t-test or student's t-test, is an inferential statistical test that determines whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means in two unrelated groups.

## Results

Table 1 Relationship between Deviant Behaviour and Life Satisfaction

Correlation Coefficient (r)	SWL
ABQ	-.237**

$p < .001$

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

The total scores of adolescent deviant behavior and satisfaction with life are negatively correlated; Pearson's  $r$  (150) =  $-.273$ ,  $p < .001$ ,

Table 2 Gender Difference and Deviant Behavior

	Male			Female			t	df	p
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Deviant behavior	31.34	3.683	86	24.78	4.888	64	9.371	148	.000

\*  $p < .01$ .

The table shows that deviant behavior of male was higher ( $M=31.34$ ,  $SD= 3.683$ ) than females ( $M=24.78$ ,  $SD= 4.888$ ),  $t(148) = -9.371$ ,  $p < .001$

Table 3 Gender Differences and Life Satisfaction

	Male			Female			t	df	p
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Life satisfaction	20.79	5.296	86	23.05	5.647	64	-2.508	148	.001

\*  $p < .01$ .

The table shows that life satisfaction level of females was higher ( $M=23.05$ ,  $SD= 5.647$ ) than males ( $M=20.79$ ,  $SD= 5.296$ ),  $t(148) = -2.508$ ,  $p < .001$

Table 4 Family Structures and Deviant Behavior

	Joint			Nuclear			t	df	p
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Deviant behavior	28.32	5.343	79	28.91	5.277	70	.686	147	.05

\*  $p < .05$ .

The table shows that deviant behavior of individuals in nuclear family was higher ( $M=28.91$ ,  $SD= 5.2777$ ) than joint family ( $M=28.32$ ,  $SD= 5.343$ ),  $t(147) = -.686$ ,  $p < .05$ .

Table 5 Family Structure Difference and Life Satisfaction

	Joint			Nuclear			t	df	p
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Life satisfaction	21.32	5.513	79	22.13	5.538	70	-.896	147	.05

\*  $p < .05$ .

The table shows that life satisfaction level of joint family was higher ( $M=22.13$ ,  $SD= 5.538$ ) than nuclear families ( $M=21.32$ ,  $SD= 5.513$ ),  $t(148) = -.896$ ,  $p < .05$

### Discussion:

The purpose of the research was to investigate relation between adolescent behavior and life satisfaction. For the research several hypothesis were developed rotating around the topic with respect to different variables such as gender, family structure and opinionated responses.

It was found in the first hypothesis that says that there is a relation between adolescent behavior and life satisfaction that there is a negative correlation between them, i.e. if the behavior of an adolescent is deviant the satisfaction with life will decrease and will affect the future life as Suldo and Huebner (2004) found that adolescents with high satisfaction were less likely to exhibit future externalizing behaviors after experiencing significant life stressors. Accordingly, life satisfaction can be viewed as an important psychological strength that helps to facilitate adaptive development.

Concept of deviance is not bound to certain explanation's but is dependent on the norms and culture of the society as how one defines the deviance is "in the eyes of the beholder?" Simmons (1969) reported the results of a study

that asked "Who is deviant?" Deviance, like beauty, is in the eyes of the beholder".

"Life satisfaction has been defined as a subjective appraisal of the quality of one's life overall or with specific domains" (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999), and is proved through data analysis that though the respondents believed that life satisfaction is a relative terminology but yet they had certain general attributes to define their satisfaction with life.

The gender variable with respect to life satisfaction proved that girls are more satisfied with life as compared to boys as can be observed in the report by PISA 2015 results that says "On average across OECD countries, about 9% of boys but 14% of girls reported a level of life satisfaction".

Students living in joint family are comparatively more satisfied with their life as compared to students living in nuclear families. The researcher was not able to find any study related to this variable hence cannot relate it to any previous research.

Phofl (1994) argues that deviance exists because individuals have power. Those with power organize social life and those without power are normal if they resemble those with power, but are stigmatized and controlled if they do not. Deviance, therefore, is a label or social process used to maintain the power of a dominant group.

This has been proved by the data analysis of the hypothesis that come up with the result that females are less deviant in behavior as compared to male counterparts because they are not in an authoritative position to exercise their behavior in our culture.

It is also proved that students living in nuclear families were more deviant than in joint families though this cannot be proved or related to any previous research as the researcher was not able to find any other research with this variable.

### **Conclusion:**

The research was aimed at identifying relation between adolescent deviant behavior and satisfaction with life. Various variables were studied with respect to the topic including gender, family structure and opinions of the students about the two variables alongside their responses taken through the items of ABQ and SWL scales. The research proved that adolescent deviant behavior is akin to subjectivity and that adolescents do not take their behavior as deviant on the other hand they think they are behaving normally and it is the society that is not realizing their behavioral patterns. It was also found that the perception about life satisfaction is relative and has no boundaries and that life satisfaction is detrimental to future life behavior.

Gender plays a very imperative role in defining the boundaries of deviance and satisfaction with life as in both variables. Females were found to be less deviant and more satisfied with life as compared to male students.

Family structure was detrimental in identifying the deviant behavior and life satisfaction as student in joint family were less deviant and more satisfied with life as compared to those living in nuclear families.

Hence we conclude that deviant behavior has a relation with life satisfaction whether it is with

respect to gender or family structure and that due importance must be given to the way we describe deviance as we are dealing with the future generation and the norms shall be fixed accordingly.

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