

Psychosocial Factors and Deviant Behaviors of Children in Conflict with the Law in Davao Region

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to determine the relationship between psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors among children in conflict with the law (CICL) in Davao Region. The researchers want to discover the prevalent factors that drive these children to their behaviors. Further, the study sought to determine the manifestation of psychosocial factors in terms of life satisfaction, emotional support, self-esteem, and personality traits. The study's data came from N-83 children in conflict with the law (CICL) at the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY) in Bago Oshiro, Davao City; all respondents are male. This study used a total enumeration sampling technique due to the relatively small population size. The researchers adapted the Psychosocial survey questionnaires by Zabriskie & Ward (2013) and by John and Srivastava (1999) as well as the Deviant Behavior Variety Scale (DBVS) by Sanches et al. (2016). Through the use of a validated questionnaire, the mean and standard deviation are determined. The researchers modified this questionnaire and translated it into the respondents' mother tongue (Cebuano) for them to comprehend it better. The study discovered no significant relationship between psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors of children in conflict with the law (CICL) in the Davao Region.

KEYWORDS : Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL), deviant behaviors, psychosocial factors

I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippine National Police (PNP) Women and Children Protection Center has reported that in 2020, authorities arrested 15,892 Children in Conflict with the Law (CICLs) from January to December. Among the said population, 1,806 are undergoing diversion at the police level, while 9,502 were redirected to Local Social Welfare and Development Officers (LSWDO) or DSWD representatives. 2,447 CICLs were returned to their families, while 3,111 were at large. Thirty-seven minors were incarcerated in BJMP facilities. With this, the crimes allegedly committed by CICLs in 2020 were violations of RA 9165(1,207), rape (1506), theft (765), and other crimes (10,079). As of December 2020, 37 Bahay Pag-asa facilities in the Philippines are maintained and funded by local government units. Meanwhile, in Regional Rehabilitation Centers for the Youth, overcrowding was a concern where the "client" number of 1,738 exceeds the number of available beds, which is 1,118 (Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, 2022).

Psychosocial factors generally explain why a person acts in a certain way. Most studies stated that psychosocial factors such as social or emotional support, loneliness, social disruption, social status, and social integration have a critical role in the outcome of the deviant behavior of a person. Moreover, this explains how psychosocial factors play a significant role in a child's deviant behavior to an effective management (Peter, 2021).

In a study by Dullas et al. (2021), among the Big Five Personality Traits, agreeableness personality traits are most prominent to indicate deviant behaviors among adolescents. Moreover, the same study investigated the respondents' family structures and discovered that low family satisfaction is a factor in deviant behavior among youth. Psychosocial behavior factors produce a significant view of how societal norms change over time, considering that individuals are being stereotyped by society (Blowers & Blevins, 2015).

Moreover, deviant behavior is defined as a pattern of actions that is opposite to the norms set by society and developed by a mental disturbance that affects sanctification and keeps them exercising their moral judgment and discerning themselves (Idris et al., 2017). In the Philippines, varieties of deviant behavior developed more severely, from minor infractions to severe forms observable in every region. Alarming, high crime rates have been recorded as the years passed by. Minor infractions include disruptive behaviors in public, tardiness, cheating, non-compliance, school misconduct, petty theft, etc. At the same time, severe infractions include using prohibited drugs, possessing dangerous weapons, gang-related activities, harassment, rape, inflicting physical harm upon others, killing, etc. (Sanches et al., 2016).

The importance of studying deviant behavior has a significant part of a prosperous society. Furthermore, the benefits of deviant behavior are clarifying norms and increasing conformity, strengthening social bonds that show deviant behavior, and leading to a positive social change in people's current views (Holder, 2018). Aiming for these benefits will result in motivation to do right, speed of actual change for community members, and finding the appropriate behaviors to adopt for positive change (Ard, 2019).

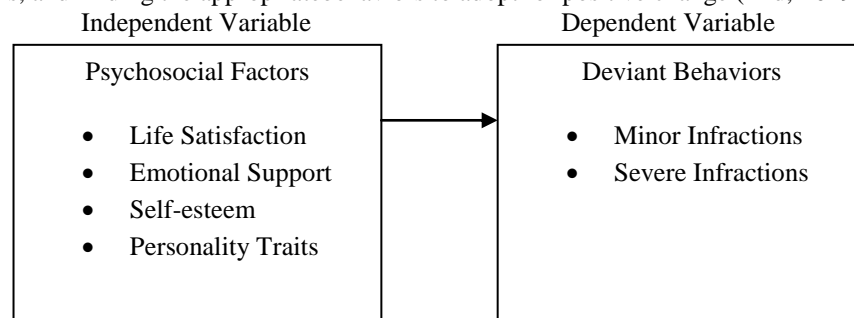


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Shown in Fig. 1 is the conceptual framework of the study consisting of independent and dependent variables. The independent variable is Psychosocial factors with the following indicators: *Family Satisfaction*, *Emotional Support*, *Self-esteem*, and *Personality Traits*. On the other hand, the dependent variable is Deviant Behaviors among the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) in Davao Region, indicated with *minor infractions* and *severe infractions*.

The primary objective of this study is to describe the psychosocial factors associated with deviant behavior among the CICL in Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY) in Bago Oshiro, Davao City. It intends to specifically address the following objectives: (1) to determine the psychosocial factors of the CICL in Davao Region in terms of their family satisfaction, emotional support, self-esteem, and personality traits; (2) to determine the deviant behaviors of the CICL in Davao Region; and (3) to determine the significant relationship between psychosocial factors and deviant behavior.

The contents of this study are beneficial for The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) since the results would help them monitor the dominant factors of deviant behaviors of CICLs and children handled by the government. Through this study, Local Government Unit-City Social Services and Development Office (LGU-CSSDO) could utilize this study to help raise awareness about the prevalence of psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors. Further, law enforcers in Philippine National Police-Women and Children's Protection Desk (PNP-WCPD) and Barangay tanods could gain some idea of how to understand the CICLs they are taking into custody. It would also help these agencies mentioned above to create a strategy or innovate their policies to deter those CICLs adequately.

Moreover, this study provides baseline data wherein the RRCY's psychologists and social workers can help CICLs attain more individualized or specified treatments and interventions. Through this, the psychosocial state of the CICLs is assessed so that the caretakers can plan out a more suitable treatment approach for them. In turn, society will benefit from this since the rehabilitation of CICLs will be more susceptible because they underwent treatment approaches that suit them best, thus also reducing the chance of recidivism to occur. The society, including parents of CICLs, would also gain insights and understanding from this study.

II. METHODS

2.1 Research Respondents

The study's respondents are the residents of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY); all are male CICL. RRCY houses CICLs serving their suspended sentences which is preferable for this research study since they are already found guilty by the court of their respective offenses.

This study made use of total enumeration sampling, a type of purposive sampling wherein the whole population is examined. During the survey, RRCY has 83 CICL residents, which is a relatively small population size. Total enumeration sampling can be employed if the population shares a distinctive characteristic which explains why the population that can be studied is very limited or small (Glen, 2012).

2.2 Research Instruments

The questionnaire utilized in this study consists of two variables adapted from their respective sources, one source for each variable. The independent variable was adapted from Zabriskie & Ward (2013) and John and Srivastava (1999), while the dependent variable was accustomed from the Deviant Behavior Variety Scale (DBVS) of Sanches et al. (2016). The draft was sent to the research adviser for checking and suggestions

for improvements, then forwarded to the validating panel to determine its validity and reliability. As suggested by the Policy Development and Planning Section (PDPS), in coordination with other offices/units, the questions were translated to Visayan or the respondents' vernacular to understand better and answer the questions.

The questionnaires consist of two sections: Part I is the independent variable psychosocial factors, including the Life Satisfaction Scale, Emotional Support, Self-esteem, and the BFI (personality traits). Part II consists of the dependent variable Deviant Behavior using the Deviant Behavior Variety Scale, containing two levels of deviant behavior, minor infractions (MI) and severe infractions (SI), per the seriousness of the act.

The variables of the study are rated using a 5-level Likert Scaling system as follows:

Rating	Range of Mean	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	Always	Psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors are always manifested.
4	3.40-4.19	Often	Psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors are often manifested.
3	2.60-3.39	Sometimes	Psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors are sometimes manifested.
2	2.60-3.39	Rarely	Psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors are rarely manifested.
1	1.00-1.79	Never	Psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors are never manifested.

2.3 Research Design and Procedure

This research utilized quantitative non-experimental research using the descriptive-correlational technique. Descriptive research aims to give a snapshot of the current situation. Correlational research is designed to discover relationships between variables and allow prediction of events that may occur in the future from the acquired knowledge in the present (Strangor, 2011). This research design is appropriate for determining the psychosocial factors and deviant behavior of children in conflict with the law.

Furthermore, this study observed and followed the necessary procedures for the conduct of the study. First, letters addressed to the Regional Director of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) are prepared, noted by the Dean of the College of Criminal Justice Education, asking permission to conduct a survey among the CICL in the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY), Bago Oshiro, Davao City. Further, the researchers also prepared the Research Brief and Research Request Form as required by the PDPS. After securing such approval, the survey was done face-to-face in RRCY on January 18, 2023. The answered questionnaires are then collected by the researchers, forwarding the results to the school statistician. The results of the gathered data are then analyzed and interpreted.

This study made use of Mean and Standard Deviation to explore predictors of deviant behavior using the level of family satisfaction, emotional support, self-esteem, and personality traits, as well as Pearson-R Correlation to measure the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Level of Manifestation of Psychosocial Factors

TABLE 1 shows the mean levels of psychosocial factors of Children in conflict with the law in the Davao Region. Personality traits attained the highest mean score of 3.79 (SD=.70), which suggests that it is often manifested. Emotional support has the lowest mean of 3.50 (SD=1.09), showing that it is also often manifested. Overall, the result shows a mean score of 3.63 (SD=.81), indicating that the statements provided under psychosocial factors were often manifested by the majority of the respondents.

Table 1. Level of Manifestation of Psychosocial Factors

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Life Satisfaction	3.50	1.22	Often
Emotional Support	3.40	1.09	Often
Self-Esteem	3.70	.93	Often
Personality Traits	3.79	.70	Often
Overall	3.63	.81	Often

As shown in TABLE 1, the overall mean of the level of manifestation of psychosocial factors implies that the respondents often manifested these different psychosocial factors. Such a result is supported by the study of Dullaset al. (2021), who reported that low psychosocial levels affect or influence deviant behavior among adolescents. It is also corroborated by the previous studies of Hanimoglu (2018), which states that some

psychosocial changes during adolescence often make them more prone to norm-breaking conduct, significantly influencing their conduct of deviant behaviors.

3.2 Level of Manifestation of Deviant Behaviors

TABLE 2 shows the mean levels of deviant behaviors among the CICLS in the Davao Region. Minor infractions had a higher mean of 2.53 (SD=.90), meaning the respondents rarely manifest these behaviors. In comparison, severe infractions reflected the mean of 2.36 (SD=.92), implying that the respondents also rarely manifest these severe infractions.

Table 2. Level of Manifestation of Deviant Behaviors

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Minor Infractions	2.53	.90	Rarely
Severe Infractions	2.36	.92	Rarely
Overall	2.45	.84	Rarely

Moreover, the overall mean of the level of manifestation of deviant behaviors indicates that the respondents rarely manifested these different forms of deviant behaviors. This result is consistent with the findings of Wairimu (2013), which reported that the most common forms of deviant behavior among youth in Kenya's Njathaini Community are drug usage, pre-marital sex, and alcohol consumption, with armed robbery and rape as the least prevalent ones. Such forms of deviant behavior described by the respondents of Wairimu were very comparable to the deviant behaviors depicted in this study.

Further, the frequency of engagement in such deviant behavior was also assessed. Respondents claimed they engage in drug usage and pre-marital sex more often, shortly followed by alcohol consumption. Theft and prostitution were reported to occur often or more often.

3.3 Correlation between Psychosocial Factors and Deviant Behaviors

TABLE 3 shows the Pearson-r value and the significant value of psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors. The overall result of the independent variables indicators of the study showcases that there is no significant relationship between life satisfaction ($t = -.146$, $p = .189$), emotional support ($t = -.109$, $p = .328$), self-esteem ($t = .062$, $p = .581$), and personality traits ($t = -.070$, $p = .530$). Since the overall r-value is less than 0.05, there is enough statistical evidence to accept the null hypothesis.

Table 3. Correlation between Psychosocial Factors and Deviant Behaviors

Psychosocial Factors	Deviant Behaviors				Overall	
	Minor Infractions		Severe Infractions		r-value	p-value
	r-value	p-value	r-value	p-value		
Life Satisfaction	-.098	.377	-.175	.114	-.146	.189
Emotional Support	-.046	.678	-.160	.148	-.109	.328
Self Esteem	-.065	.556	-.049	.662	-.062	.581
Personality Traits	-.063	.574	-.068	.542	-.070	.530
Overall	-.078	.483	-.133	.229	-.113	.311

The findings of the study indicate that there is a significant negative relationship observed for the independent variables in terms of life satisfaction, emotional support, self-esteem, and personality traits. Consequently, the p-values of all the mentioned indicators are higher than the computed significance level of 0.05, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. Such findings align with the study of Faiza, Farooqui, and Raza (2022), with outcomes that showed a negative relationship between deviant behavior and life satisfaction. It was also discovered that life satisfaction perception is indeterminate and has no limitations and that life satisfaction may be detrimental to future life behavior. It is also supported by the findings of Zhu and Shek's (2021) study, which found that engaging in problematic behavior indicates a negative life experience that predicts a decline in teenagers' overall quality of life. On the other hand, Wang's (2022) study found that children who received neglect during childhood but received high levels of friend support exhibited fewer deviant behaviors than those who experienced low levels of friend support or other assistance.

Psychologists have long thought that self-esteem is an essential factor and consequence of deviant conduct (Wan, 2012). This statement affirms the findings of Bibi et al. (2021), who found a significant and negative relationship involving self-esteem and deviant behavior among young people. Kaplan (2000) also discovered that deviant behavior is caused by low self-esteem. If positive self-assessment and self-esteem cannot be gained in a socially acceptable manner, the driving factors for such (positive) behavior fall. Furthermore, using statistical analysis, Abdullah and Marican's (2016) study revealed that the personality traits of prudence and openness do not have a noteworthy association with either dimension of deviant behavior.

Agnew (2015) argued that apart from psychological and social factors, strain from economic status also contributes to the likelihood of criminal behavior. Individuals who struggle financially are more likely to experience stressors or strains, leading them to commit crimes.

The calculated overall r-value is less than the tabular value of the p-level at a significance level of 0.05. The significant negative correlation confirms that psychosocial factors play an opposing role in influencing the deviant behaviors of children in conflict with the law (CICLs) in the Davao Region. Thus, the relationship between psychosocial factors and deviant behavior is inverse, with an increase corresponding to a decrease in the other. Therefore, psychosocial factors do not directly influence the deviant behaviors of CICLs in the mentioned region.

The said findings, therefore, accepted the null hypothesis of the study. Statistically, it has been proven that psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors are negatively related.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After gathering and analyzing data, the researchers came up with the following conclusions, wherein the problem statement was answered. This stated that psychosocial factors, namely life satisfaction, emotional support, self-esteem, and personality traits of the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICLs), were determined to be above average. The data indicate that the personality traits and self-esteem of the CICLs have more impact on their deviant behaviors than life satisfaction and emotional support. Overall, psychosocial factors have a high level of manifestation. On the other hand, deviant behaviors (minor and severe infractions) of the CICLs were determined to be below average. The gathered data specify that minor infractions have a higher mean, which tells that it is more prominent than severe infractions. Hence, deviant behaviors are rarely manifested. Moreover, an overall result indicates a strong negative correlation between psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between psychosocial factors and deviant behaviors of the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICLs) in the Davao Region.

As presented in the conclusions above, the researchers recommended: That DSWD continue to implement projects to improve living conditions and give CICLs greater access to opportunities. That the LGU-CSSDO takes steps toward being more proactive in protecting, examining, and reporting instances of atrocities committed by and against children. Together with the PNP-WCPD and local barangay tanods, to have a more thorough understanding of how they should handle CICLs taken into custody with sensitivity.

Additionally, it is recommended for the DSWD-RRCY to employ an assertive communication approach to heighten emotional support in the community since emotional support attained the lowest mean among the psychosocial factors. Also, as it is a highly manifested deviant act within the rehabilitation center, prevention symposiums for drug cases ought to be held on a periodic basis. The intention of these symposiums for CICLs is to promote collaboration, health, and well-being and decrease the negative repercussions of drug misuse. In order to augment youth rehabilitation, a psychiatric assessment will be administered upon admission. It is done to examine the child separately and provide an individualized treatment plan.

For society to accept these CICLs after their rehabilitation and help them to continue to grow and adapt socially and psychologically given the knowledge that this study discovered. To uphold sensitivity at home and increase emotional support. For the University of Mindanao to conduct seminars which would help students to cope with their psychosocial dilemmas.

For future researchers to be more diverse and inclusive in selecting respondents and to conduct the same study without limiting respondents to only one gender, if warranted, involve both male and female CICLs. In addition, to carry out a similar study that would look into another set of factors, such as financial and economic aspects, that may or may not have a significant link with deviant behavior. Considering that CICLs are prone to misinterpreting and providing inaccurate responses to survey questionnaires, the researchers suggest doing a one-on-one interview in addition to the survey. Also, the authors recommend improving the survey questionnaire by including questions reflecting the current prevailing cases at the rehabilitation facility.

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