Considering Young People Tendency towards Vandalism and Social Anomie

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ABSTRACT

Societies and crimes existed together from the beginning of their appearance. Today there is no society without crimes and anomies. From the other hand due to development of civilization and economizing, society culture has been changed a lot and has increased young people problems. The goal of this research is to consider the reasons of young people tendency towards social deviance. Research method used in this study is survey research design with sample population composed of young people from 18 to 26 years old. 220 people attained with Cochran formula. With due attention to the gained results, there is a meaningful relation between social instability in individuals behavior control in society, mobility and disconnection in social structure, infirmity of individuals commitment to society and anomy. Also there is a meaningful difference between immigrant groups and nonimmigrant groups. Identification coefficient equals 0.74 that means variables of infirmity, disconnection and commitments wholly identify 0.74 percent of anomy variable variance.

KEYWORDS: Vandalism , Anomie, Individual commitment, Social mobility

INTRODUCTION

1. The statement of the problem

Investigating the problems of the youth from the biological, psychological and sociological perspectives proves to be of great significance. The multidimensional nature of their life and the significance of the roles they play have led different scientists and scholars to conduct comprehensive investigations and to reflect on their nurture. Some of the youngsters in the different eras of the human life had defied the tradition and the law and committed violations; however their delinquency was not a critical social issue. Today, the ever-rising rate of juvenile delinquencies, especially the crimes of violence, is considered a social problem which has to be taken into account (Farjad, 1996).

Today, the problem of the juvenile delinquency and anomie has turned into a critical social problem in different societies. The emergence of the societies and the commitment of crime have always been interwoven. For, since the day people have gathered together and formed a society, normlessness has been an inherent part of their society. The deviant behavior continues to permeate the youth who are the social builders of tomorrow and this issue needs to be addressed. Today, a crime-free society seems hard to find. The urbanization and the economical development have been sweeping changes in the culture of the society and have aggravated the problems of the youth (Abdollahi, 2004).

2. The significance of the study

Some of the youngsters, in individuals or groups, turn to deviant behavior and join a kind of delinquent micro-culture. These youngsters quit family and school, and turn to delinquency by defying ethical and legitimate criteria. Anomie and acting against social criteria are pervasive around the world and they are more common among boys than among girls. Some of the deviant and delinquent behaviors of the youth are quitting home, theft, aggression, vandalism, violent behavior, alcohol abuse, drug addiction, raping, smuggling and murder. When a youngster commits a deviation, his tendency to do other deviant behaviors will increase. Hence, these youngsters often have more than one deviation (Sarvestani, 2004; MiriAshtiani, 2003).

Since the youth are considered to be the treasure of every society and building every country grows out of the robust youth movements, this issue needs to be addressed and the conditions necessary for achieving a dynamic, active and happy society needs to be provided.

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3. THE REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

AbdE'tedal had conducted a research in Shiraz on a sample of 1500 subjects and had come up with the results that the majority of the delinquents were unemployed, or had a temporary and seasonal job. They were mostly under the age of forty and the majority of the subjects were men and women had the average age of twenty (AbdE'tedal, 1999).

Rafipour (1999) in a study called "Anomie or Social Turmoil: A Research into the Potential Anomie in the City of Tehran" has investigated three questions about the social anomie in the city of Tehran. For this purpose, he had made use of a collection of theories as the following to elaborate on the factors influencing anomie: Durkheim and Merton's anomie, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the theory of social comparison by Suls, relative deprivation by Gurr, the theory of motivation by Atkinson, differential association by Sutherland and also theories by Cloward and Ohlin. It was a survey involving three norms of formal, informal and semi-formal. The results of the survey revealed that the rate of defying formal norms is considerable and the rate of defying informal norms is highly significant (Rafipour, 1999).

Khoshkar (2003) reports a research done in Mashad by the Social Deputy Police called "Anomie or Social Turmoil in the Social Relations of the Youth". The study has been carried out on 7196 high school and guidance school students in order to discover the anomie rate among them. Based on this survey, the main causes of anomie are phone and street harassment, street friendships, irresponsibility, difficulty in communicating with parents and teachers, illicit affair and addiction (Khoshkar, 2003).

Researches on disruptive behavior in England reveal that criminal damage, theft, juvenile violence, alcohol abuse, drug addiction and school runaways are some of the common behaviors among the English youth. Among the high school students, for instance, every student out of 4 admitted his/her violation during the last year and in a similar research, every 3 out of 5 youngsters who did not go to school accepted their violations. About half of the violators, admitted rent withholding. Almost one third of them admitted shop lifting, writing offensive stuff on the walls, violent behavior and carrying guns (Lowenkamp, 2003).

Crime addiction is considered to be a critical issue. A few number of the youth (10 percent) have accepted half of their violations. Children gradually develop disruptive behavior since the early adolescence. In the research named "A Survey of Youth Lifestyle in 1999", first crime of the teenagers was reported at the age of 14.

4. Research theories
4.1. Robert Merton

Scholars of social disorganization believe that factors such as deficiency of social institutions like family and weakness of social bonds as the informal forces of social control increase the rate of crimes such as murder, theft, sexual deviation and drug abuse. They suggest that social factors control people and when these factors turn to be instable, people do not have enough ability to control their behavior. Scholars of social disorganization, in fact, believe that society brings about a discrepancy between youths' accepted goals and aspirations on the hand and the institutionalized means available to achieve them on the other.

In Merton's model, anomie is a strain which rises when the accepted norms and goals of the society are disconnected from the social facts. This discrepancy prevents the members of the society from having common values and goals and consequently prevents them from finding clear ethical and behavioral guidelines. Merton focuses on the social status of an individual and emphasizes that not only, from the cultural perspective, does every society have certain legitimate goals, but also, from the social perspective, it is equipped with reliable means to achieve them. From Merton's viewpoint, the gap between goals and institutional means to achieve them may have been caused by the ever-extension of goals and the restriction of the legitimate means to achieve them. He believes that the discrepancy caused by the social conditions, consequently weakens the individual's commitment (either to the goals or to the institutional means) and causes him/her to do deviant behavior and makes him/her deny one of them and hence go in the wrong direction (Merton,1968; Akers,2000).

4.2. Émile Durkheim

When the social adjustments break down, the society's control over the individual's tendencies will prove to be inefficient and members of the society will be left on their own. Durkheim calls this state "anomie". This concept refers to a condition of relative normlessness of a society or a social group. In this state, individual aspirations are not adjusted with common norms and as a consequence people will be left without a moral guidance and everyone will pursue his/her personal advantage. Absolute anomie or normlessness is not practical; however, we can distinguish between different societies based on the degree of their anomie adjustments. In the framework of every society, some degree of anomie can be observed. Social transformation may be the cause of anomie in a society. Economic crises, for instance, might affect the upper class of the society more than the lower class. When a major economic depression occurs, people are not able to adjust their lives and therefore they cannot achieve the goals that they have learned to pursue. In a similar way, when the economy experiences a boom, people don't know how to limit their goals and be satisfied with their achievements and as a result it will deprive them from the dependable sources of support which they need in their new lifestyle. Any kind of rapid transformation in the social structure which breaks down social networks, will increase the probability of anomie (Coser, 1994; Ritzer, 1995).

4.3.   Travis Hirschi:

Travis Hirschi (1969) is one of the leading scholars in the field theories of control. He considers misbehavior to be an effect of breakdown in social bonds, institutions and beliefs. According to Hirschi, a society or a group whose members enjoy a mutual social bond is more capable of controlling its members than a society whose members lack such social bonds. He emphasizes that anomie as a social problem should be studied in the family, neighborhood, among peers in school, and other social organizations or institutes which a person is a member of. Anomie happens when the individual's social bond to the society breaks down. These bonds come in four interrelated form: a) attachment, b) commitment, c) involvement and d) belief.

Hirschi views that each of these social bonds in a certain condition may lead to misbehavior. If an individual possesses a weak social bond with those in favor of continuity and legitimate and acceptable behaviors, s/he is likely to misbehave. This theory has largely neglected the role of the environment in the emergence of delinquency. Therefore, these four factors of social bonding are not sufficient to explain the causes of delinquency. Delinquent friends and an inappropriate social environment can play a significant role in the individual's misbehavior as well (MohseniTabrizi and Shali, 2004 in Meshkani, 2002).

4.4.   Albert Cohen:

Based on Merton's work, Cohen proposed a theory on juvenile delinquency in 1955. Other sociologists as Richard Cloward and Lloyd Edgar Ohlin (1960) have also made an attempt to improve upon Merton's theory. Today, their theory is referred as "strain theory". All of these scholars state that experiencing pressure exerted by the society leads citizens to commit crimes. In Merton's view, violent treatments and harsh judgments increase the crime rate (MohseniTabrizi, 2004).

4.5.   Richard Cloward and Lloyd Edgar Ohlin

Differential opportunity is the second fundamental concept in the field of functional theories. This notion was first suggested by Richard Cloward and Lloyd Edgar Ohlin. The prevailing assumption is that working-class or lower-class juveniles tend to achieve their goals through legitimate channels. However, the society deprives them from achieving their goals through legitimate channels, which results in the individuals' disrespect for legitimate means the elevation of the crime rate. The theory of differential opportunity presupposes that the youth in the lower-class and poverty-stricken neighborhoods, accept the established norms. Based on this theory, delinquency results from discrepancy. In fact, it is a reaction to the disjunction between what the individual wants and what s/he is able to achieve. Their delinquency is thus the result of using illegitimate means to achieve accepted goals (Kaldi, 2000).

Cloward and Ohlin state that the acceptance of established cultural goals and values is much more prevalent in the early youth. They believe that these delinquents have often been treated unfairly. Since, the more the delinquent juvenile believe in their capabilities in achieving established and institutionalized criteria, the more they are concerned with attracting the attention of others in the society. Thus, if this opportunity does not arise, they will blame it on the government and consider the community leaders indifferent to their needs. Individuals may feel that society is basically unpredictable and lacking order. According to this theory, delinquent gang members do not generally reject the societal goal of success, but, lacking proper means to achieve it, seek other opportunities. Delinquency is considered as an anomic reaction to the injustice they are exposed to (Sotudeh, 1994; Farjad, 1996).

At the end, it is worth mentioning that the theory of differential opportunity elaborates on two main variables leading to delinquency, namely social stratification and lack of acceptable social foundations which leads to these stratifications. It also stresses the role of "learning", "sociability" and the micro-cultural reasons of delinquency.

4.6.   Alfred Marshall:

Marshall pointed out in his "Principles of Economics" that in the poverty-stricken environments, especially in the crowded areas, economic poverty causes human motives to disappear. In European countries the poor depressed families end up in drug and alcohol abuse which results in their inadequate parenting and consequently leads to their children's deviation and delinquency. Some of the main reasons of deviation and delinquency are unemployment and vagrancy out of poverty.

4.7.   Vandalism

Vandalism means the ruthless destruction or spoiling of the valuable architecture and public property. In modern societies, vandalism is categorized under social deviations and delinquencies. It is considered to be a hostile and envious reaction to some pressures, inequalities and failures. One of the delinquencies is the tendency of the youth to wreck public property, parks, streets, walls, etc. in sociology, such a person is called a "vandal" and the tendency towards such destructions is referred to as "vandalism". The destruction of public property by the youth leads to physical and moral consequences. A closer look into this issue reveals the different dimensions of human behavior. Destroying public properties such as phone booths and bus stops, defacing streets and walls, and breaking windows are some instances of juvenile vandalism (Mohseni Tabrizi, 2004).

5. Hypotheses:
1. There seems to be a meaningful relationship between individual's lack of commitment and anomie.
2. There seems to be a meaningful relationship between social structure breakdown and anomie.
3. There seems to be a meaningful relationship between the instability of the society in controlling individuals' behavior and anomie.
4. There seems to be a meaningful relationship between individual's degree of poverty and anomie.
5. There seems to be a meaningful relationship between the rate of immigration and anomie.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is a survey. The research population includes all the youth of the city of Qazvin (2014) in the age of 18 to 26 years old. The sample size, extracted using Cochran's formula, is equal to 220 people. The method used for data collection was questionnaire. In the present research, the technique of cluster random sampling has been applied. In this technique, the sampling unit is a group or cluster of individuals and instead of studying the whole subjects of the selected clusters, a random sample of them have been selected for the final analysis. The collected data has been analyzed through using SPSS software. In this study, descriptive statistics as central tendency, dispersion, frequency, distribution of scores as well as different tests as the chi-square test, student's t-test, regression, analysis of variance, etc. are used.

Given the research sample and the design of the study, questionnaire has been used in data collection. The questionnaire consists of 45 open-ended and closed-ended questions about the dependent and independent variables. The research validity is calculated by Cronbach's alpha and is equal to the following: anomie 0/718; personal commitment 0/698; social structure breakdown 0/702; social instability 0/687; social class 0/897.

7. RESULTS

7.1. Descriptive statistics

In this phase, descriptive statistics as central tendency, dispersion, frequency and distribution of subjects' scores have been analyzed and discussed.

Table 1: Central tendency statistics and distribution of the variables

Min score	Max score	average	Variance	standard deviation	Variables
15	71	41.7810	41.78	6.81588	delinquency
5	43	13.6869	13.69	3.86942	commitment
4	19	11.3700	11.37	2.92207	Breakdown
4	21	11.6500	11.65	3.07934	instability

The findings in Table 1 reveal that the mean of delinquency, commitment, breakdown and instability variables equals 41.78, 13.69, 11.37 and 11.65 respectively. The standard deviation of these variables equals 6.82, 3.89, 2.92 and 3.07 respectively and their variance equals 41.78, 13.69, 11.37 and 11.65 respectively.

7.2. Inferential statistics

1- There seems to be a meaningful relationship between individual's lack of commitment and anomie.

Table 2 -correlation between individual's lack of commitment to the society and anomie.

commitment	Anomie		
.588(**)	1	Pearson correlation coefficient	Commitment
.000		significance level	
219	219	Frequency	
1	.588(**)	Pearson correlation coefficient	Anomie
	.000	significance level	
220	219	Frequency	

This hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation coefficient and the correlation coefficient is reported *r*=0/588 with the significance level of *sig*=0/000. The calculated significance level is smaller than Alpha 0/01; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, with 99% confidence level, it can be concluded that there is a meaningful correlation between individual's lack of commitment to the society and anomie.

2- There seems to be a meaningful relationship between social structure breakdown and anomie.

Table 3 : correlation between the social structure breakdown and anomie.

structure breakdown	anomie		
.500(**)	1	Pearson correlation coefficient	structure breakdown
.000		significance level	
220	220	Frequency	
1	.500(**)	Pearson correlation coefficient	Anomie
	.000	significance level	
220	220	Frequency	

This hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation coefficient and the correlation coefficient is reported $r=0/50$ with the significance level of $sig=0/000$. The calculated significance level is smaller than Alpha 0/01; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, with 99% confidence level, it can be declared that there is a meaningful correlation between the social structure breakdown and anomie.

3- There seems to be a meaningful relationship between the instability of the society in controlling individuals' behavior and anomie.

Table 4 : correlation between instability of the society in controlling individuals' behavior and anomie.

Instability	anomie		
.658(**)	1	Pearson correlation coefficient	Anomie
.000		significance level	
220	220	Frequency	
1	.658(**)	Pearson correlation coefficient	Instability
	.000	significance level	
220	220	Frequency	

This hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation coefficient and the correlation coefficient is reported $r=0/658$ with the significance level of $sig=0/000$. The calculated significance level is smaller than Alpha 0/01; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, with 99% confidence level, it can be concluded that there is a meaningful correlation between instability of the society in controlling individuals' behavior and anomie.

4- There seems to be a meaningful relationship between individual's degree of poverty and anomie.

Table 5 – One-way analysis of variance

significance	F value	MS	DF	SS	Variances
.947	.183	8.792	4	35.166	Inter group variance
		48.042	95	4563.994	Group variance
			99	4599.160	Total variance

This hypothesis was tested using one-way analysis of variance and the amount of *f* is equal to $r=0/183$ with the significance level of $sig=0/947$. The calculated significance level is larger than Alpha 0/05; therefore the null hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, with 95% confidence level, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between poverty and anomie. Thus, our hypothesis is rejected.

5- There seems to be a meaningful relationship between the rate of immigration and anomie.

Table 6: Relation between immigrant and sedentary groups anomie

Anomie			Mean	Standard deviation	Mean standard error
Immigration	yes	18	43.4444	6.23295	1.46912
	no	82	41.4146	6.91920	.76410

Table 7 : *t*-test for independent samples

variances	t-test for equality of variances		t- test for equality of means					
	F value	significance	T value	DF	Sig (two tailed)	Mean difference	Standard error difference	99% Confidence interval lower
Equality of variances	.046	.830	1.146	98	.019	.255	2.02981	-1.48528
inequality of variances			1.226	27.026	.022	.231	2.02981	-1.36776

This hypothesis was tested using *t*-test for independent samples and the mean scores of the groups' social pathologies are equal to 43.33 and 41.41 and the amount of *t* is reported *t*=1.146 with the significance level of *sig*=0/019 and the degree of freedom is equal to *df*=98. The calculated significance level is smaller than Alpha 0/05; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, with 95% confidence level, it can be declared that there is a meaningful association between immigration and anomie.

Table 8 : variance analysis

sig	F value	MS	DF	SS		Model
.000(a)	93.464	964.724	3	2894.171	Regression	1
		10.322	95	980.576	residual	
			98	3874.747	Total	

Table 9: Coefficient

sig	T value	Standard coefficients	Not standard coefficients			model
		Beta	Standard error	B value		
.000	5.931		1.912	11.339	stable value	1
.000	10.808	.559	.084	.909	commitments	
.000	4.319	.246	.126	.545	Breakdown	
.000	8.550	.489	.120	1.026	Instability	

For testing this hypothesis, the multivariate regression test has been used. The multivariate regression test attempts to determine the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. In this method, all variables simultaneously enter the regression analysis. The coefficient of determination is equal to 0/74 and this means that the variables of commitment, breakdown and instability explain 74% of the delinquency dependent variable. In other words, 74% of the reasons causing social anomie are related to these factors. The values in the one-way analysis of variance table illustrate that the significance level is statistically significant, thus the difference in variances is statistically significant. The values in the coefficient table show that the significant level of *t*-test is statistically significant and the three variables anticipate the social anomie variable. The amount of Beta associated with the commitment variable is equal to 55.9% which means that if a unit is added to the commitment variable, the social anomie will increase by 56%. If a unit is added to the instability variable, the social anomie will increase by 49% and if a unit is added to the breakdown variable, the social anomie will increase by 49%.

Table 10: Correlation between all of variables

anomie	instability	breakdown	commitment		
.588(**)	.063	-.008	1	Pearson correlation coefficient	Commitment
.000	.536	.940		significance level	
219	219	219	219	frequency	
.500(**)	.461(**)	1	-.008	Pearson correlation coefficient	Breakdown
.000	.000		.940	significance level	
220	220	220	219	frequency	
.658(**)	1	.461(**)	.063	Pearson correlation coefficient	Instability
.000		.000	.536	significance level	
220	220	220	219	frequency	
1	.658(**)	.500(**)	.588(**)	Pearson correlation coefficient	Anomie
	.000	.000	.000	significance level	
220	220	220	219	frequency	

As it is illustrated there is a positive correlation between all these variables and the variable of social anomie.

8. Conclusion:

The present study is an investigation of the reasons of juvenile tendency towards vandalism and social anomies. This research makes use of Merton's disorganization theory, Durkheim's anomie, Hirschi's control theory, Cohen's strain theory, Cloward and Ohlin's differential opportunity and Marshall's economic poverty and the act of vandalism. The research method is survey. The population includes all the youth of the city of Qazvin, both male and female, ranging from 18 to 26 years old. Using Cochran's formula the size of the sample is equal to 220 youngsters.

There is a significant relationship between the individual's lack commitment to the society and anomie. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation coefficient and the correlation coefficient is reported r=0/588 with the significance level of *sig*=0/000. The calculated significance level is smaller than Alpha 0/01; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is a significant relationship between the social structure breakdown and anomie. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation coefficient and the correlation coefficient is reported r=0/50 with the significance level of *sig*=0/000. The calculated significance level is smaller than Alpha 0/01; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is a significant relationship between the instability of the society in controlling individuals' behavior and anomie. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation coefficient and the correlation coefficient is reported r=0/658 with the significance level of *sig*=0/000. The calculated significance level is smaller than Alpha 0/01; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is a significant difference in the rate of anomie among different groups with different levels of income. This hypothesis was tested using one-way analysis of variance and the amount of *f* is reported r=0/183 with the significance level of *sig*=0/947. The calculated significance level is larger than Alpha 0/05; therefore the null hypothesis is confirmed and our hypothesis is rejected.

There is a significant difference between the immigrant and non-immigrant groups regarding their anomie rate. This hypothesis was tested using *t*-test for independent samples and the mean scores of the groups' social pathologies are equal to 43.33 and 41.41 and the amount of *t* is reported *t*=1.146 with the significance level of *sig*=0/019 and the degree of freedom is equal to *df*=98. The calculated significance level is smaller than Alpha 0/05; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

The coefficient of determination is equal to 0/74 and it means that the variables of commitment, breakdown and instability explain 74% of the delinquency dependent variable. The values in the one-way analysis of variance table illustrate that the calculated significance level is statistically significant, thus the difference in variances is statistically significant. The values in the coefficient table show that the significant level of *t*-test is statistically significant and the three variables anticipate the social anomie variable. The amount of Beta associated with the commitment variable is equal to 55.9% which means that if a unit is added to the commitment variable, the social anomie will increase by 56%. If a unit is added to the instability variable, the social anomie will increase by 49% and if a unit is added to the breakdown variable, the social anomie will increase by 49%.

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