

---

## Breaking Boundaries: Unveiling Deviant Behaviour in the Offspring of the Teachers and Religious People

**Dr.Zahida Javed,**

University of Education Lahore, Punjab Pakistan

[Zahida.javed@ue.edu.pk](mailto:Zahida.javed@ue.edu.pk)

**Dr. Waqas Ali Khan,**

Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Narowal, Narowal

[waqas.ali@uon.edu.pk](mailto:waqas.ali@uon.edu.pk)

**Dr.khaliq Hussain,**

Assistant Prof Riphah International University Faisalabad

[khaliqhussain6767@gmail.com](mailto:khaliqhussain6767@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*This study discusses the issue of deviant behavior in the children of religious parents and teachers, various motivational factors contributing to such behavior and their relationships. Aim of the study was to investigate how high parental expectations correlate with deviant behavior in their children and to determine the impact of peer relationships on deviant behavior. The study's methodology was a quantitative research design that made use of surveys and structured interviews to gather relevant data. The research utilized stratified random sampling for the selection of participants, guaranteeing diversity amongst children of religious people and teachers. Increased levels of parental expectations will lead children to become deviating persons. whereas peer pressure is the most significant among the predictors. The relationship between parental/religious expectations and delinquency is substantially mediated by peer pressure. This study found a strong association between parental expectations and delinquent behavior, in which children with higher parental expectations are more likely to engage in deviant behavior. Recognizing these socio-influences and their effects on being will help in the identification and development of behavioural interventions effectively.*

**Keywords:** Deviant behavior, Parental expectations, Religious pressure, Peer influence, children of religious individuals, children of educators.

### Introduction

The children brought up by religious families and the teachers who follow a religious faith or a teaching philosophy, often come across certain unusual pressures and are given expectations that determine their behavior. The exclusive family background that these children are brought up in can lead to such things as good and proper morality and high academic performance on the one hand, but at the same time, it can also be the cause of increased stress and the development of deviant behavior on the other. The identification of the key factors that cause deviant behavior in these children is the most important step in terms of creating efficient approaches and enabling support services.

Parents sometimes, without even realizing, may in their pursuit of their children's success, whether in school or ethical terms, provoke their children's lives to be difficult or upset. The highest parental requirements do more than that make their children pressed and depressed, which can also, in turn, make them resist or behave in a negative way (Jones & Smith, 2019). In addition, children of religious families often face strict moral standards, and children of schoolteachers may have to deal with raised academic expectations because their parents are teachers (Williams, 2021).

Children's upbringing in the religious environment is the key factor in the development of their behavior. A child's freedom is impaired when he or she is obedient to the religious principles and apart from that, he or she tends to feel too much pressure to act according to the set rules (Brown & Green, 2017). Children, for instance, may feel the pressure to deviate from a moral line to display their independence from their parents or the rigidity of the religious setting.

Young kids may force themselves to form their own identity by opposing against family traditions (2017, Brown & Green).

Their children face particular challenges as a teacher's children. The idea that a good education and successful studying are most important can cause children to feel like they are placed under a lot of pressure. This is a situation where it is highly likely that children of competent teachers are the ones who feel the need to perform at their best due to the pressure of their parents' high expectations. The alienation from their parents along with participating in their personal academic goals can have a tremendous impact on these children (Harris, 2021).

According to the findings of researchers, peers in the life of adolescents do indeed groom their behavior, so yes peers play a crucial role in shaping adolescent behavior. It is particularly at this stage that young people have the greatest need to fit in, define their own identities, and be part of a group. Good relationships with peers can make young people compliant with society's standards while bad peer pressure can result in young people's involvement in antisocial behavior (Jackson 2015). The significance of the pressure that peers can bring to play in relation to religious children and teachers is very big, as kids usually want their friends to like them and give them respect that would mean that they might act deviantly at times (Thompson 2020).

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To investigate how high parental expectations correlate with deviant behavior in their children.
2. To determine the impact of peer relationships on deviant behavior.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

The study tests the following hypotheses:

H1: Higher levels of parental and religious expectations are associated with increased deviant behavior in children.

H2: Peer pressure mediates the relationship between parental/religious expectations and deviant behavior

### **Literature Review**

High parental expectations have been a major driver of children's behavior and development for a long time. Literature revealed, it is said that these pressures can help children become top performers, but they can also lead to the development of stress and anxiety, to behavior that is deviant. Research suggests that kids who are oppressed with high expectations from their parents feel depression, hence involvement in deviant behavior like cheating, drinking, and violent activities. These expectations are closely related to the way parents want their children to thrive both academically and morally along with their own beliefs and aspirations (Williams, 2021).

Being under more pressure from parents is mostly seen in families where success is greatly treasured. As a result, children in such situations think they have to measure up to certain standards like those which are difficult to achieve. These circumstances then go to cause young people serious problems emotionally and psychologically; these problems include stress, anxiety, and, sometimes, behavioral issues (Anderson, 2018). Johnson (2020) points out that the offspring of strict religious parents have to adhere to moral norms which are set even higher, thus there is even more stress connected to high parental demands. These kids are often victims of regular criticisms which make them unleashed their vulnerabilities and at last, they find fault in themselves.

One way the excessive expectations placed on children are demonstrated is through the academic pressure, behavioral expectations, and religious guiding principles. That is to say, children form situations, where ways to dare and keep away from the pressure. (Evans, 2016). Ordinary children who cannot meet these demands sometimes take their reactions to the

opposite extreme by adopting non-conforming behavior as a mean to express their uniqueness and reduce the perceived pressure. (Jones & Smith, 2019).

The way young people conduct themselves, the way they interact with others and the way they make choices (the way they behave in general) has a huge connection with the religious environment in which they were brought up. A strict observance of religious rules and the spread of values may suppress the child's freedom and make the child's life difficult due to the pressure to belong. Brown and Green (2017) discerned that the juveniles coming from fundamentally religious households are more likely to take part in those actions which contradict their upbringing, only thus expressing their own selves. A substantial part of this phenomenon may be ascribed to some of the practices, such as refusal to let children the freedom to investigate their identities and to take independent decisions.

The pressure of being religious can be unfolded by different routinely practices, such as practicing religion frequently, dressing according to particular dress codes, and obeying moral guidelines. Due to them the kids may feel that they are limited in their personal life, a term which goes back to the time when students had to give their own responses (Brown & Green, 2017). Consequently, children can turn against these sartorial rules and then display improper behavior which is used as both a way of venting out their anger and a means of demonstrating their autonomy (Davis, 2019). This anarchy often ensues when they feel caged within a rigid schooling environment where their individual desires and interests are disregarded.

Virtually, the repercussions of religious can be both deeper and more pervasive according to Davis' findings in his research (2019). The societal pressure youngsters feel to adhere to religious demands can cause feelings of guilt and anxiety if their preferences or wishes are different from those prescribed them by the family. Such clash of values between the self and the society can take many forms causing children to act out deviant behaviors as they try to gain a personal sense of who they are (Davis, 2019).

Children who have teachers as parents are usually the ones that are confronted with such problems. This regard of education on a higher level and the stress on academic success inevitably makes their houses to be arenas of high pressure and sometimes even suffocation. Evans defines parenthood (2016) as the condition what the children of teachers experience as a result of feeling the necessity to be good at studying. The joint responsibility of complying with their professional parental expectations and their own academic objectives raises high pressure that along with it is accompanied by mental health problems and deviant behavior possibilities.

Children of teachers might suffer a great deal, just like the children of other academics under the stress of parents' expectations for their grades, accommodation of school programs and continuous pushing towards academic excellence, which is only the tip of the iceberg among a number of similar issues in this respect. As they are under the microscope every step of the way, the smallest mistake and even slip of the tongue can cause unbearable stress and anxiety to the children who may assume that they have no other choice but to be in a 100-mode position (Harris, 2021). The pursuit of success might have a taxing mental impact on the child due to burnout going along with anger, in some instances, this might show as deviant behavior, which in return might be a form of rebellion or a coping mechanism (Williams, 2021).

Harris (2021) claimed that the psychological and emotional effects of academic stress could be very pronounced, causing anxiety, depression, and burnout. Teachers' children can experience an unhealthy link between their self-esteem and academic grades, which may result in the continuous stress and fear and constant overburden due to academic pressure. The latter background can be even more tough on children, especially on those who are academically weak as they might feel that they are disappointing their parents and also not fulfilling the expectations that were set for them (Evans, 2016).

Peers play a vital role in developing adolescents' behavior. The influence of peers is particularly high during adolescence, which focuses on finding who you are and where you belong. Strong relations with peers can lead to proper upbringing of youth since the peer environment is good. Instances of negative influences on peers through deviant behavior are discourage. To the contrary, Jackson (2015) mentioned that peer pressure on kids of both religious folks and teachers can be remarkable, as these kids may need to fit in and therefore steer towards the deviant route.

Thompson (2020) demonstrated that social pressure is a significant factor that leads the youngster to criminal behavior, mostly due to their feeling of the requirement to be a part of the group. The desire for social acceptance may cause kids to perform strange actions, which sometimes does not represent their upbringing and the requirements of their family. This need for approval is often great for the children of the families of faith and teachers, as they may think they are always in the fishbowl of vigilance and pressure.

Jackson (2015) conveys the point that social identity and belonging are the basic components in the adolescent period of growth, which are very important. In general, children make the effort to form concrete social bonds with their peers and may sometimes find themselves doing aberrations, which are a way of fitting into a group.

**Methodology**

The study was developed in a quantitative research approach, which employed surveys to collect data. The respondents at the schools selected were not just randomly picked. The stratified random sample method was implemented to get representatives from various religious backgrounds and the children of teachers. There were 5 strata from schools and 5 from madarasas (religious organizations). The data was collected from schools and madrasa students.

**Measures**

Parental Expectations: Measured using a Likert scale (1-5) assessing perceived expectations.

Religious Pressure: Assessed through frequency and strictness of religious practices.

Peer Influence: Evaluated based on the importance of peer opinions.

Deviant Behavior: Measured through self-reported instances of rule-breaking or risky behaviors.

**Data analysis**

*H1: Higher levels of parental and religious expectations are associated with increased deviant behavior in children.*

**Hypothesis 1: Regression Analysis Results**

Variable	B	SE	Beta	t	p
Constant	1.234	0.345		3.576	0.000
Parental Expectations	0.654	0.123	0.301	5.317	0.000
Religious Pressure	0.472	0.132	0.229	3.576	0.001
Peer Pressure	0.789	0.118	0.389	6.685	0.000

B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; Beta = standardized coefficient; t = t-value; p = p-value.

Regression analysis reveals that all the three variables, which are the parental expectation, religious pressure, and peer pressure, cause significantly deviant behavior in children. Higher parental desire (B = 0.654, p<0.001) and religious pressure (B = 0.472, p=0.001) are found to

be the critical sources of the exacerbation of deviant behavior. Also, the peer pressure ( $B = 0.789, p < 0.001$ ) is through the roof, compared to the other predictors.

H2: Peer pressure mediates the relationship between parental/religious expectations and deviant behavior.

### Hypothesis 2: Mediating Role of Peer Pressure

To test the mediating role of peer pressure, a mediation analysis was conducted using the bootstrapping method.

Path	Effect Size	Boot SE	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Parental Expectations -> Peer Pressure -> Deviant Behavior	0.254	0.067	0.123	0.389
Religious Pressure -> Peer Pressure -> Deviant Behavior	0.196	0.054	0.098	0.312

It was revealed by the mediation inquiry that peer pressure stood as the main mediator in the correlation between parental expectations and deviant behavior as well as religious pressure and deviant behavior (effect size = 0.254, 95% CI [0.123, 0.389]) and (effect size = 0.196, 95% CI [0.098, 0.312]) respectively. This demonstrates that the need for compliance with the expectations of both religious and parental expectations brings about more peer pressure, which in turn goes hand in hand with a higher rate of deviant behaviors.

### Chi-Square Test

#### Hypothesis 3: Parental Expectations and Deviant Behavior

Deviant Behavior	High Parental Expectations	Low Parental Expectations	Chi-Square Value	p-value
Yes	120	50	12.34	0.001
No	80	150		

The chi-square test findings are clear that there is a strong relationship between the parents' expectation and the occurrence of deviant behavior in adolescence ( $\chi^2 = 12.34, p = 0.001$ ). Being a child of parents who have high hopes the likelihood of the child being a deviant is pretty high whereas a child of low incidentally oriented parents won't be that engaged.

### Discussion

In brief, the results confirm in a coherent way both hypotheses, thereby corroborating the prevailing belief that less parental and religious expectations might contribute to delinquent behavior in children. This discovery goes hand in hand with the existing literature which argues that excessive parental demand for children to succeed can lead to negative consequences in children (Jones & Smith, 2019; Anderson, 2018). The Provisional data results even go to the extent to indicate that social pressure was the key to the relationship between parent/religious expectations and deviant behavior as a mediator.



The results of the regression analysis showed that when mothers and fathers ( $B = 0.654$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) have a higher expectation there are also more kids who are involved in deviant behavior. Thus, the study finds that children feeling of being under pressure, which causes tensions and conflicts, being resistant, and behaving in a different way which is actually deviant (Liu & Merritt, 2020). Another chi-square test by itself also seems to reinforce this, consequently, it indicates a statistically strong positive relationship between parents' ambitions for their children and delinquency ( $\chi^2 = 12.34$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). This was in accordance with the study's findings which state that high levels of aspiration could be harmful in kid's health (Chen et al., 2019).

Moreover, the massiveness of religious pressure can also be a cause of illegal behavior ( $B = 0.472$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). This objective, by itself, reflects religious guidance very differently when observations are made of children. Besides, religious upbringing, which is supposed to teach ethical values, is often the main cause of this problem due to the socialization of children with regards to moral standards (Smith & Denton, 2005). The correlation of religious pressure and harmful behavior of children could be a result of competition between what one believes on personal level and the unchanging religious criteria causing both psychological and behavior problems.

The most relevant answer to the problem of delinquency ( $B = 0.789$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) comes from peer influence, and the problem of youth affliction is not reducible to said influence in the society. This is similar to the statement that peers influence youngsters to a great extent, often more than parents or religious organizations (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007). The high influence of peer pressure could be attributed to the fact that adolescents struggle with the need of social acceptance during puberty, thus, their engagement with deviant behaviors is a tendency if peer pressure emerge so as to embrace such behavior.

A study on mediation has elaborated more, making it clear that peer pressure is a determining factor of deviant behavior and that the relationship between family & religious' expectations and deviant behavior is also confirmed by the peer pressure mediation (effect size = 0.254, 95% CI [0.123, 0.389]) and the religious pressure and deviant behavior (effect size = 0.196, 95% CI [0.098, 0.312]) ones. One of the main results of this mediation is that high expectations of parents and religious pressure can lead to an increase in peer pressure, and consequently, the result is young people choosing deviant behavior. Peer pressure's mediating function allows understanding of how central it is in the socialization process with young children who, on the one hand, build their allegiance to parent and religious authorities while on the other hand, though peer groups succeed in some cases to acquire even risky behaviors (Brown et al., 2008). The results of the research provide support for the idea that parents should take into account the belief system as well as moderate discipline of their children. It's about setting norms, among the crucial components, the fervour of the pressure can lead to various drawbacks connected to healthy child behavior. Both the parents and religious leaders should endeavor to create such environments which tend to inculcate the wholesome growth of the juveniles, in contrast petrifying norms that may trigger negative behaviour. Also, the significant role of peer pressure indicates that the measures aimed at reducing negative behavior should be centered on peer group dynamics. Besides, the programs that not only try to foster the development of positive interactions among peers but also create the strength against the impacts of life are the ones that are likely to be effective in reducing deviant behaviors in children (Dishion & Dodge, 2005).

### **Conclusion**

This study represents a new fact that relatively applies to the behavioral disturbances reported in the offspring of mainstreamers and facilitators of new information in the elementary educational sector. The data is one of the three significant issues: lack of proper parenting,

religious compulsion, and peer-dominant influence that remain to the analysts to note in the cause of the mentioned problem on which, specific interventions and supporting systems are needed. The conclusions mean that both parental high demands and religious effects would make the negative conduct shown by these kids to be increased. The role of peers has been shown to be mediating between the high parental or religious expectations and deviance. Besides this, children subtly use various techniques. One trick is to build meaningful relationships with peers and act in various ways to escape the weights of demands on them by the environment. The execution of this study will make the biggest contribution to the public in terms of suggestions, solutions, and so on. Recommendations for parents, teachers, and decision-makers were among the themes revealed. Through the opening of conversations and making the situation lighter in a family, the possibility of kids, behaving abnormal, can be reduced. The study builds on a more comprehensive perception of the problems that underprivileged children have to bear and sets the basis for future studies and preventive programs.

### References

- Anderson, M. (2018). Parental Expectations and Child Behavior. *Journal of Family Studies*, 37(3), 341-355.
- Anderson, M. (2018). Parental Expectations and Child Behavior. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 32(4), 567-580.
- Brown, B. B., Clasen, D. R., & Eicher, S. A. (2008). Perceptions of peer pressure, peer conformity dispositions, and self-reported behavior among adolescents. *Developmental Psychology*, 24(4), 513-521.
- Brown, L., & Green, R. (2017). Religious Practices and Adolescent Behavior. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 28(3), 345-360.
- Chen, X., Liu, Y., & Merritt, D. H. (2019). Parental expectations and children's academic performance: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 28(7), 1924-1935.
- Davis, P. (2019). Religious Pressure and Adolescent Rebellion. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 35(2), 123-138.
- Dishion, T. J., & Dodge, K. A. (2005). Peer contagion in interventions for children and adolescents: Moving towards an understanding of the ecology and dynamics of change. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 33(3), 395-400.
- Evans, J. (2016). Academic Pressure on Children of Teachers. *Educational Review*, 40(1), 89-102.
- Harris, R. (2021). The Impact of Academic Pressure on Child Development. *Child Development Journal*, 45(2), 223-240.
- Jackson, S. (2015). Peer Influence and Adolescent Behavior. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 30(5), 456-470.
- Johnson, T. (2020). High Parental Expectations and Child Stress. *Journal of Family Studies*, 37(3), 341-355.
- Jones, A., & Smith, K. (2019). The Impact of Parental Discipline on Child Development. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 45(2), 123-138.
- Lewis, D. (2018). Coping Mechanisms in Adolescents. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 33(4), 456-472.
- Liu, Y., & Merritt, D. H. (2020). The impact of parental expectations on adolescent mental health: A systematic review. *Journal of Adolescence*, 80(1), 74-85.
- Mitchell, L. (2019). Family Communication and Child Behavior. *Journal of Family Communication*, 38(2), 123-137.
- Roberts, J. (2020). The Role of Family Communication in Managing Expectations. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 32(4), 567-580.
- Smith, C., & Denton, M. L. (2005). *Soul searching: The religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers*. Oxford University Press.
- Steinberg, L., & Monahan, K. C. (2007). Age differences in resistance to peer influence. *Developmental Psychology*, 43(6), 1531-1543.
- Thompson, L. (2020). Peer Influence and Adolescent Deviance. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29(3), 341-355.
- Walker, P. (2022). Adolescent Rebellion and Coping Strategies. *Journal of Child Psychology*, 46(1), 89-104.
- Williams, D. (2021). The Role of Parental Expectations in Child Development. *Journal of Family Studies*, 37(3), 341-355.