

# **DEVIANCE, VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND CONSEQUENCES (CASE STUDY IN THE CITY OF DURRËS, ALBANIA)**

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## **Abstract**

Statistical data from the City of Durres in Albania show an increase in domestic crimes, and that the family is becoming a "dangerous place" for crime. That's why we have undertaken this study to find the social roots of crime. The study will be done under the perspective of theoretical paradigms. Child abuse is a major problem in Albania. It is clear that many cases go unnoticed or unreported, because everything that happens within the, family is difficult to emerge. The biggest problem is not just violence against children at the moment, but deviant behavior that is shaped to them since childhood. Concerns about child abuse, is expanded further beyond physical effects. Evidence shows that people who were abused during childhood have more chances for abusing their children later in life, or to become violent (Gelles & Straus, Family Violence, 1979). Many subsequent studies also have documented domestic violence as a circular intergenerational violence (Gelles, Family Violence, 1985), (quoted in the book: (Meier & Clinard, 2011).

The purpose of this essay is the analysis of deviant behaviors of crime and violence within the family. The aim is to highlight if there is a connection between the cases when a person is abused in his childhood and later he becomes abuser himself. The methodology followed is the quantitative method. We have interviewed 600 persons in city of Durres. Through this essay we have achieved valuable recommendations regarding deviant behavior and measures to be taken to prevent deviant behavior in origin. If we make more efforts to stop violence against children, then we will have chances after several years to decrease deviant behavior and to reduce the extent of violence within the family and children.

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**Keywords:** Violence, crime, deviant behavior, children

## **Deviance Theory**

Theories of conflict are focused on the deviance, not in the deviant behavior (Beirne & Messerschmidt, 2006, p. 76).

These theories address the origin of the rules and regulations and not the base of the violence. Many articles about deviance within the perspective of conflict are related to the crime, but these theories give the last explanations with a lot of forms of deviance (Spitzer, 1975), quoted in (McCaghy, Charles, & Timothy, 1994).

One of the theories of deviant behavior can be called the theory of learning or socialization. The deviance, according to this theory is result of learned deviant norms and values.

We are talking here for behavior that is learned from family, friends, etc. (Warr, 2002, p. 99).

The most popular theory of learning theory is that of Edwin H. Sutherland.

This theory has become one of the most popular in sociology since its first appearance in the book *Principles of Criminology* in 1947.

It was discussed, without changes in other editions of that book. (Sutherland, 1947), quoted (McCaghy, Charles, & Timothy, 1994) Chapter 5.

Sutherland's theory, developed to explain criminal behavior, walks on two pillars, the deviance etiology or cause of an individual deviant act, and epidemiology, or the spread of deviant behavior as reflected in different rates.

Sutherland argues that group deviant behavior comes from normative conflicts.

The conflicts between norms affects the deviance between different social organizations, dominated by neighboring structures, relations and friends, or family organizations.

An individual normative conflict results in criminal behavior through different collaborations in which the deviant person teaches criminal definitions of behavior form personal associates.

The following list summarizes the various theories (from Sutherland, Cressey and Luckenbill, 1992: 88-90), complemented by expansion made by (McCaghy, Charles, & Timothy, 1994) (76-77).

1. Deviant acts represent learned behavior. Deviance is not inherited, and is not a result of low intelligence, brain injuries or other similar things.
2. Diverter learns this behavior through interaction with others in a communication process.

3. First lessons of a deviant behavior occur between intimate personal groups. Communications from sources such as the mass media and television, magazines or newspapers mostly play a secondary role.
4. The conduct that a diverter learn includes (a) deviant techniques, ranging from very complicated to very simple techniques and (b) specific guidance motive, movement, reasoning, and attributes that characterize the particular form of deviance.
5. Diverter teaches this specific direction of motive and moves from standard definition of favorable or unfavorable norms. This definition accepts the potential for conflict between the norms, since an individual can learn the reasons for adherence as well for violence against a given rule. For example, a person can accept that the theft violates a norm – but according to him, secure theft is normal while he does not hurt anyone.
6. A person becomes deviant because definitions that favor domestic violence exceed those that favor compliance of the norms. This key definition connects a set of elements of the theory. An individual's behavior reveals contradictory effects of learning experiences, but a predominance of deviant setting leads to deviant behavior. This reflects the people and the deviant behavior, definitions, deviant norms. Moreover, the notion of learning theory implies a different paraphrase of the problem: A person becomes non deviant because of adverse determinations towards norms exceed those that are favorable toward violence.
7. Socialization can vary in frequency, duration, priorities and intensity. Frequency and duration refers to the time during which a deviant person is exposed to specific provisions and when the exposure has begun. Priority refers to the time in a deviant person's life when he or she met with the association. Intensity refers to the prestige of the source of deviant behavior.
8. A person learns a socially deviant behavior which is involved in a deviant part, including the mechanisms involved in each lesson. Not only one is learning process alone lead people to the teaching of deviant behavior.
9. While deviant behavior expresses general needs and values, those values and general needs not fully explain it, while non-deviant behavior express the same values and needs. One can cite a need to know to explain actions as a change. In fact, this principle does not explain anything, as long as he speaks as deviant behavior as well as non-deviant actions.

While these definitions do not apply for any form of deviance, Sutherland has not the intention to apply to all of them in all the forms of criminal behavior.

(Akers, 1985) tried to explain deviance behavior on the basis of the principle of learning into a deviant society - reinforcing deviance theory.

Same as Sutherland, Akers (1985: 51) explains that deviance occurs when a person learns definitions that represent the some behavior as desirable, although through devious actions. "Definitions are normative meanings given to behavior - which means, that they define an action as right or wrong". This sentence states what is taught; deviant behavior meanings motivate and create the possibility to violate the norms. Over time, individuals learn that some behaviors and attitudes lead to enforcement. These, lessons increase the likelihood of behavior.

Social scientists have applied this theory in various deviance forms, including the use of drugs and alcohol, mental disorders and suicide.

In a similar manner, (Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985) present a theory of criminality associated with other forms of deviance.

The theory advocates that crime is primarily a learned behavior within certain biological limits, some of which can make individuals predisposed to the crime. Wilson and Herrnstein, as well as Akers, argue that the benefits of a successful crime may reinforce the determination that motivated him as: money, sex, drugs, status.

Without a countervailing penalty, crime, as well as other behaviors can become a self-driven pattern behavior.

Theorists conclude that deviant behavior results when people learn behaviors, norms, or deviant values. Different theorists propose variations in the learning process, but they recognize that every person is born pure as regards of the behavior and he becomes a social being through the process of socialization in different groups. Environment is everything, where individuals learn their identity as human beings. Someone who learns deviant norms (norms that allow deviant behavior) has no chance to behave deviant.

Sutherland has expressed his version of the theory of learning, called the theory of differential association in nine different definitions that are enough to adapt to other forms of deviance.

Deviance is associated with some of the most fundamental to social life: age, sex, social class and place of residence. It is the relationship between deviance and social life that takes a particular attention here. Even these are also the cases of very serious crimes.

The crime is one of the most prevalent forms of deviance, and in this essay will write about this point. Sociologists refer to the crime as an act that

is considered to cause harmful effects on society and to those who are reprehensible by law.

However we also have social situations where deviance explained the relationship between violator and victim: the power differential. Violence usually happens when one party seeks to establish a position of power to the other party (Hepburn & Harwin, 1973). Criminologists build a clear idea when relations powers cite the importance of asymmetric in acts of violence and crime.

Acts of violence can occur between husband and wife, partners in a business, parents and children, or even sister and brother.

Each of the examples can result in various forms of violence (murder, serious assaults, child abuse, spouse abuse), but the difference in power can vary from participants in these acts.

These crimes occur most often when a person feels the threat or feels strong desire to control the other person.

In these situations, violence can help a person strongly reassert control in a relationship.

"Two individuals may realize that they are in conflict when while one increases, the other decreases" (Daly, Martin, & Wilson, 1988). Also they supported the idea that violence can result when a party attempts to fix perceived imbalance of control to another (Tittle, 1995).

Many people, certainly are not rely to violence to regulate the balance of power in interpersonal relationships. Many acts of interpersonal violence occur to grow out the definitions that identify these acts as expected. Crime or violence is more common in certain groups and in certain countries, suggesting a strong relationship between these acts and social characteristics.

Family violence is one of the most prevalent problems in Albanian society.

The problem is that the family structure tends to hide the traces of violent behavior by the official data, but growing sensitivity in recent years to these phenomena has led to the denunciation of family violence more and more.

Each family member can become a victim of domestic violence, although there are women and children who suffer more e often violence and abuse compared with other family members.

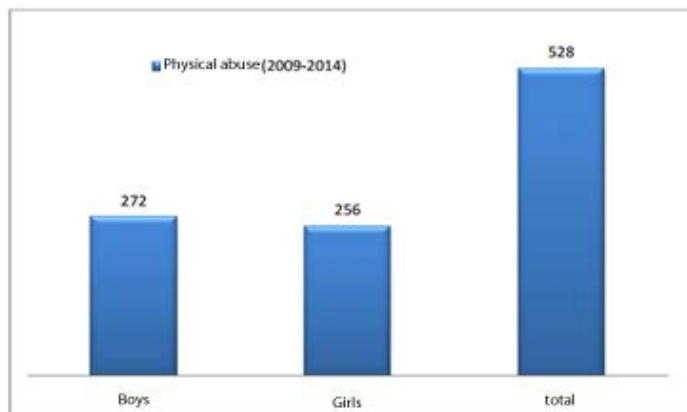
The World Health Organization defines violence as: The intentional use of physical force or power, the threat or actual use, against one person self, other persons or against a group or community that either results in or is likely to cause injuries, death, psychological harm, bad development or deprivation (WHO, 1999 & 2002).

ALO 116, since 2009 is the national telephone service for the protection of Albanian children that assist them in the most difficult

moments of their life. Since the establishment, ALO 116 has received more than 530.585 calls, of which, 13,112 cases are treated by them in whole Albania.

ALO 116 - Line of the National Children's Aid phone communicates with the children through numbers: ALO 116 111- National Counseling Line for Children; ALO 116 000 telephone lines for Missing Children. ALO 116 is supported by UNICEF Albania and CRCA office and mobile phone companies: AMC, Vodafone and Eagle Mobile, Plus and Albtelecom.

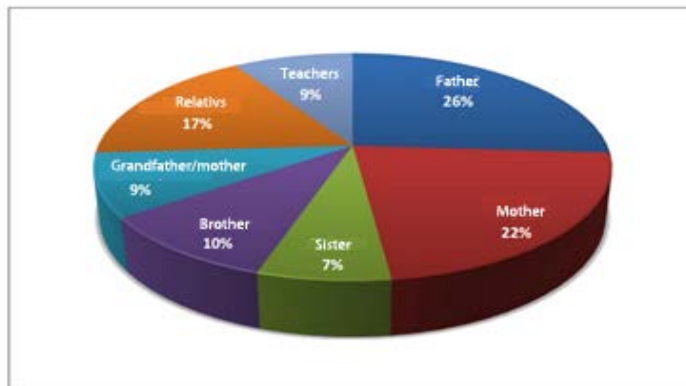
In a report issued for the years 2009-2014 from ALO 116 we see that in a period of 6 years, are treated 3643 issue of violence that children have encountered in environments such as the family, school and community (ALO 116, 2014, p. 6). From the received reports, there are 528 cases that referred to physical abuse. Referring to the dates, the boys constitute the largest number reported with 52% of cases, while girls make up of 48% of cases treated by ALO 116 service. View the *Graph 1* below.



Graphic 1, Physical abuse against children from 2009 to 2014, (ALO 116 report)

In the *Graph 2*, we see that the father is ne the most cases the perpetrator with 26% of the cases, then comes the mother with 22% of the cases, continuing with brother, grandfather or grand mother, sister and relatives.

Perpetrators of violence



Graphic 2, Who are the perpetrators of Violence Against Children (2009-2014), (Alo 116 report)

### Data analysis

As we presented above, studies have shown that deviant behavior are taught within social groups and the first social group for each individual is the family. So many behaviors are created and taught within the family. Evidences have shown that abused children have more chances to become violent later in their life. However there is no precise evidence that "abuse leads (directly) to abuse" later in the life (Widom, The Intergenerational Transmission of Violence, 1989). Experiences of abuse increase the likelihood of future crimes and delinquent by approximately 40% (Widom, The cycle of Violence. A Research in Brief, 1992). These relationships represent a key point of the research of the new century, and more studies should be undertaken to explore the possibility of transmission between generations of the values of violence. There are also many other dangerous factors or family characteristics that contribute to child abuse (Gosselin, 2000, pp. 109-110).

As we wrote above, studies have shown that deviant behavior is learned within social groups and the most important social group for the individual is the family. So, many behavior are created and taught within the family. Evidences have shown that abused children have more chances to become violent later.

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There are also many other risk factors or family characteristics that contribute to child abuse (Gosselin, 2000, pp. 109-110).

1. *The size of the family.* The larger the family, the greater is the chance of abuse against children. Families with four or five children have greater opportunities for abuse against children than families with three or fewer children.
2. *Revenues.* Children living in families with low incomes are 25 times more likely to be abused or neglected.
3. *Children who grow up in single-parent homes.* These children are 60% more likely to be physically abused than children raised in homes with both parents.
4. *Drug abuse and alcohol.* Child abuse is higher in families where members abuse with alcohol or drugs.

Research has identified a number of features of family life that lead to child abuse. Stress, low income, low education level of the, parents and family problems (such as divorce or emotional conflicts) show a strong connection with child abuse (Gelles, Family Violence, 1985). The effects of abuse may contribute to subsequent violence from the victim through some processes, such as violent teaching values, links to authoritative figure, or the weakening of relations child - parent. The violence that some children take, can affect to establish a pattern for their behavior later in life.

These theories we wanted to prove in our case in Durres city. For this case, we interviewed 600 people of different ages. We used the triangular method for the data collection as a good way to gain a valid and reliable information.

### **The aim, objectives and hypotheses**

The purpose of this study is to find a link between childhood abuse and deviant behavior later in life.

Hypothesis1: Abuse in childhood increases the potential for deviant behavior and violence is inherited over generations.

Hypothesis 2: Increased education leads to restriction of domestic violence.

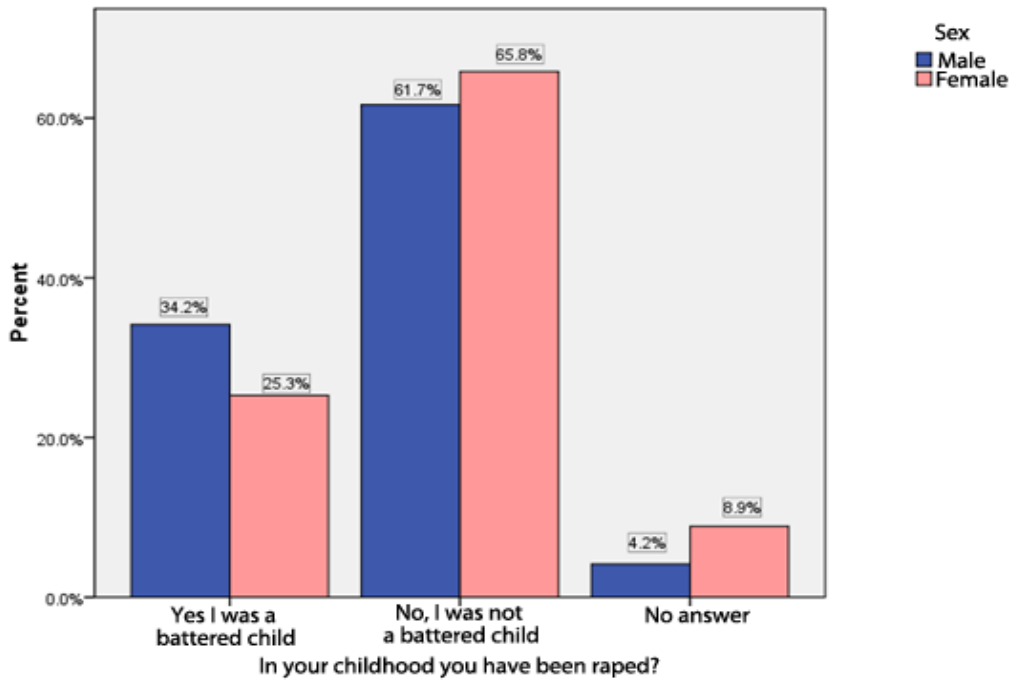
### **General data of the social demographic of the study participants**

In this study participated 600 individuals with social and demographic characteristics as following:

- Age interval ranging from 15-65 years, in order to get different opinions from different age groups.

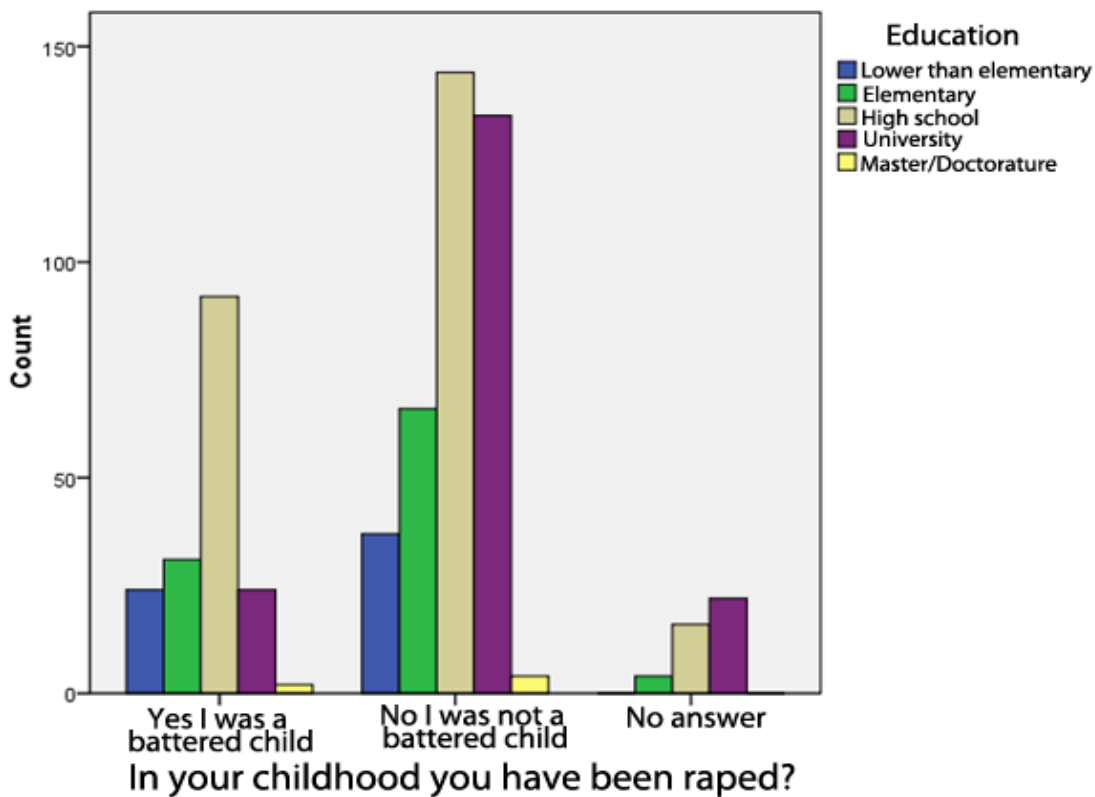
In the *Graphic 3* we see that the majority of respondents answered that they were abused children. Also in the other category we see that boys were more abused than girls.





Graphic 3, The people that are being abused during childhood?

Regarding the level of education we see that individuals who responded that they were not abused during childhood have mainly secondary education and higher education. This shows clearly that the higher the education the lower the violence. See *Graph 4* below.



Graphic 4, Cross data of violence and education

In the table below (*Table 1*) we make a correlation between violence in childhood and people opinion about physical violence against children. We see a significant correlation 0.454 level between these two factors. This shows that people who were abused when they were young also expressed agree of the violence against children. This indicates that deviant behavior is learned in childhood in terms of violence. So there is risk that violence can be transmitted from generation to generation. The correlation is presented even graphically in *Graphic 5*.

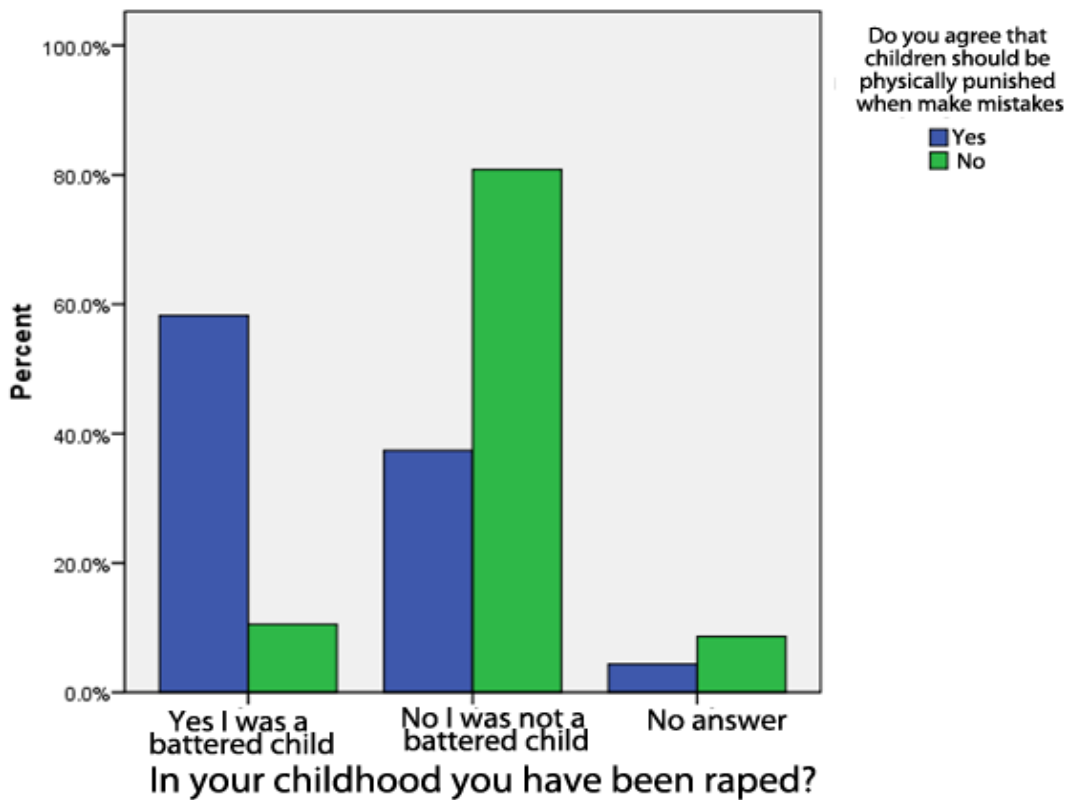
**Correlations**

	In your childhood you have been / raped (if you are not violating never go to question no. 16)	Do you agree that children should be physically punished when make mistakes?
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In your childhood you have been / raped (if you are not violating never go to question no. 16)	Pearson	1	.454**
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	600	600
Do you agree that children should be physically punished when make mistakes?	Pearson	.454**	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	600	600

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

Table 1, Correlation between violence in childhood and people opinion about physical violence against children?



Graphic 5, Correlation between violence in childhood and people opinion about physical violence against children?

### Conclusion

From data analysis I saw a deviant behavior of people who had been abused in their childhood. Thus, it was observed that those people who had

been abused in childhood also expressed agree about the theory that children can be physically punished if they make mistakes.

Another result that was observed from my study was that when family members had secondary education or higher, the violence against children was lower. Also, men were more than women abused in childhood. This is probably related to the nature of men and their relationship they usually have with their parents.

From this survey we conclude in some recommendations: the government, associations and all other instance levels should take measures to reduce violence against children. Only in this way we can reduce violence in the future. Deviant behavior toward violence falls if individuals does not experience violence in their families when they are young. Alo 116 is a UNICEF initiative to report and to give solution to cases of violence against children. I recommend other similar initiatives and also the law should be more powerful and more strictly applied in cases of violence against children.

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