The Effect of Socioeconomic Status and Anomie on Illegal Behavior

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ABSTRACT

The study aims at identifying the impact of the socio-economic status and anomie on the tendency toward the illegal/ deviant behavior. A social survey method was used, the questionnaire consisted (3) parts An Organized random sample consisted of (328) students from Ajloun University College were selected. The results of the study showed that the impact of the socio-economic status on the tendency toward the deviant behavior was an average of (3.521%). The results also showed that the effect of anomie on the tendency toward the deviant behavior was mid and with an arithmetic mean of (3.318%). The results showed that gender and age have no role in the impact of socio-economic status and anomie toward the deviant behavior. The existence of significant statistical differences concerning monthly income and deviant behavior implies that the increase of monthly income reduces the propensity toward deviant behavior and vice versa. Based on the results, the researchers provide many recommendations related to the questions of the study.

Keywords: socio-economic status; anomie; distrust, deviant/illegal behavior.

INTRODUCTION

The Jordanian society has passed during the past few decades a series of social, economic and political changes which have affected the lives of people. Concerning the social changes, the population increased from (5.597) million in 2004 to (10.309) million in 2018. Thus, population density reached (116.1) person / km2. The age percentage of the population less than (15 years) was 34.3%, the age percentage of the population (15-64 years) was 62%, and the age percentage of (65 years and over) was 3.7%. On the other hand, the percentage of the urban residents was (90.3%) comparing with to those living in rural areas which was (9.7%). Additionally, the crime rates were increased in 2018 to (43.54%) compared to (36.500%) in 2017. (Department of Statistics, 2018).

Jordanian society was affected by economic changes. GDP (Gross domestic product) per capita diminished to

reached (2090.805) dinars in 2018 compared to (2078.606) in 2015. Additionally, unemployment rates increased (18.6%) in 2018 after it was (12.9%) in 2009. The population below the national poverty line was (15.7%) and the inflation rate in 2018 was (4.46%) compared to (0.78%) in 2016. Besides, the indebtedness of Jordan was 28 million dinars in 2018. (Statistical Yearbook, 2018).

As a result of these rapid changes, the Jordanian family has noticed a remarkable changes. The number of nuclear family was increased compared to extended families due to socio-economic development. The nuclear family in Jordan constitutes (76%) of family types, while it is (38%) worldwide. These changes led to the fragmentation of the family and the emergence of individualism and isolation (International Institute for Islamic Thought, 2013). These changes affected the social relations among members of the Jordanian family (Association Jordan Women's Solidarity Institute, 2019).

These massive changes to modernity have affected the collective conscience and collective feeling of others. Demographic, social and economic changes have affected

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the structure of society. As a result of these changes, anomie has been emerged Durkheim). According Merton, anomie needs proper social adjustment because deviant behavior is not accepted especially from functionalist constructivists' point of view.

Durkheim (1897) argued in his book 'division of labor' and 'suicide' that anomie leads to deviant behavior. Besides, anomie weakens the standards and norms of society. Consequently, most people in anomie societies have no limits to their demands and needs. Thus, they may not follow ethical values but they achieve their goals by using any mean.   Merton emphasized in his famous article on anomie and social construction on the gap between the legitimate institutional means and the cultural goals of the society (Al-Warikat, 2013).

Cohen (1955) found out that frustration among children in the poor classes leads them to commit crimes. This frustration is a result of their feeling of losing social status; thus, they attempted to adopt illegal behavior. Mills (1959) revealed that unemployment, poverty and poor education contributed significantly to the occurrence of crime.

Chambliss & Sedman (1971) argued that the higher the economic status of a group, the higher the possibility that the laws reflect their values, due to the relation between groups values and the economic and social staus. Fajnzylber, Lederman & Loayza (2001) indicated that there is a positive relationship between crime and income. The lower the national poverty rate, the lower the national crime rate.

In another study, Willem Bonger believed that crime and illegal behaviors are a result of capitalist economic structure. Andre Gerry found out that socio-economic factors, whether and age contributed in the occurrence of crime. Verse di Fornasarid found that there is a direct relationship between poverty and crime. He believed that poverty is the main reason that mad people commit crimes.

Al-Suwaidi (2001) found out that poverty, unemployment, and economic changes lead individuals to commit illegal behavior. He also indicated that economic change is the main reason on the emergence of other types of crimes such as murder, armed robbery, theft, sexual crimes, assault and rape.

Gordon (1971), Spitzer (1975), and Krisberg (1975) suggested that crime is a logical reaction to capitalism, so principles of capitalism, such as property and distribution of goods and services may lead to crime and illegal behavior. Thus, illegal behaviors were caused by difficult living conditions, such as poverty, deprivation, unemployment, and limited opportunities. (Al-Warikat, 2013).

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the anomie theory coined by Merton (1938). This theory suggested that the pressures caused by social stratification may make poor people to commit illegal behaviors.

Statement Of The problem and questions of the study:

In light of the transformation of the Jordanian study to ward modernity and as Durkheim indicated anomie and economic status well affect the propensity toward deviant behaviour. The problem of the study could be summarized in the main following question : what is the impact of socio-economic status and anomie on the propensity toward deviant behaviour.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1- What is the impact of the socio-economic status on the tendency toward illegal/deviant behavior from Ajloun University College students' point of view?

2- What is the effect of anomie on the tendency toward illegal/ deviant behavior from Ajloun University College students' point of view?

3- Is there an impact of socio-economic status and anomie on the tendency toward illegal/ deviant behavior according to the variables of gender, age, and income?

Importance Of The Study

 The present study has theoretical and practical importance:

1- The theoretical aspect: anomie theory is

considered one of the most famous theories in sociology. To the best knowledge of the researchers, this is the only study that investigates the impact of socio-economic status and anomie on the tendency toward deviant behavior in Jordanian context.

2- The practical aspect: The study provides recommendations to decision-makers and officials to develop solutions to the pressures of social structure, which lead people to commit illegal behaviors.

METHODS

The study used the descriptive and analytical approach to explore the impact of socio-economic status and anomie on the tendency toward illegal behavior. The study used the social survey approach (questionnaire) to collect the data.

Population and sample:

Population of the study consists of all Ajloun University College students registered for the first semester of the academic year 2019/2020 in the compulsory courses in the Department of Social Work. Ten courses out of thirty compulsory courses were selected randomly, consisting of (328) students, which constituted (10.9%) of the population.

Characteristics of The Study Sample

Table 1

The characteristics of the participants were summarized in the following table:

Gender	males	37.80%
	Females	62.20%
Age	22-24	13.11%
	20-22	35.37%
	18-20	28.96%
Income	301 - 450 dinars	31.40%
	451 - 600 dinars	27.74%
	More than 601 dinars	16.77%

Instrumentalities

The questionnaire was used as a main tool to collect the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The first question: What is the impact of the socio-economic status on the tendency toward illegal behavior from the viewpoint of Ajloun University College students?

To answer this question, the researchers used a descriptive analysis method, as shown in the following table:

Table 2.

Mean, standard deviation and level of student's responses

	P value	T value	standard deviation	Mean	Level
Socio economic status	0.00	**18.07***	0.54	3.521	Mid

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

The results of the study showed that the level of the responses of participants on socio-economic status scale was medium. The mean score was (3.521), and the standard deviation was (0.54). Accordingly, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) test was used to

investigate the impact of socio-economic status on the tendency toward the deviant behavior from the viewpoint of Ajloun University College students. Consider the following example:

Table 3.

The inflation factor, the tolerance variance, and the skewness of socio economic status

The independent variable	(VIF)	Tolerance	Skewness
Socio economic status	2.31	0.66	0.61

Table 3 shows the values of the variance inflation factor (VIF) was (2.31) which was less than (10); and the value of the tolerance variance was (0.66) which is more than (0.05). Bedsides, the results showed that the

value of skewness is less than (1). Hence, the validity of the regression analysis was confirmed so the regression analysis test was used. Consider the table 4 and 5:

Table 4.

Regression analysis of socio economic status and the tendency toward deviant behavior

F (significance)	Value(F)	Mean square	Freedom value	Sum of squares	Model
0.00	*7.28	4.35	1	4.35	regerssion
-	-	0.59	326	195.42	Differences
-	-	-	327	199.78	total
				0.22	Coefficient of determination (R^2)
				0.19	Adjusted R^2 Coefficient determination

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table 5.

Results of multiple regression analysis

	B	Standard error	T value	(T) significant
Socio-economic status	0.221	0.085	2.69*	0.007

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

The results of Table (4) showed that the value of (F) was (7.28) at degrees of freedom of (1, 326), which is a statistically significant value at the level of significance

(0.05). The results show a decrease in the difference between the value of the coefficient of determination and the adjusted coefficient of determination, which

confirms the independence of the independent variable in its influence on the dependent variable.

Table 5 showed that economic and social status has a statistically significant effect since the value of (T) was (2.69) and the T significant was less than (0.05). These results confirm the effect of economic and social status on the tendency toward deviant/illegal behavior. This result is consistent with findings of the Durkheim and Merton who indicated that economic and social factors play an important role in human behavior and lead individuals to deviant, illegal and criminal behaviors. This result is in line with the findings of the studies of Cohen (1955), Mills (1959) and Chambliss & Sedman (1971) that frustration in social status, unemployment, poverty and low educational level contributed to the occurrence of the crime. Additionally, this result is consistent with Gordon (1971), Spitzer (1975), and Krisberg (1975) which indicated that crime is a rational reaction to the existing economic system. Likewise, the results agree with Cloward & Ohlin (1960) and Sutherland (1947) which found out that poor children tended to commit the deviant behavior.

The Second question: what is the effect of the anomie on the tendency toward illegal/deviant behavior from students' point of view?

The researcher perform a descriptive analysis to answer this question by calculating the means and standard deviations.

1- The level of the participants' response to the anomie subscales.

Table 6.

The mean, the standard deviation, and the level of the participants' response towards the anomie subscales

	Level of importance	Level of significance	T value	Standard deviation	mean	Anomie subscales	level
1	1	0.00	*15.39	0.54	3.462	Distrust and Meaninglessness	mid
2	3	0.00	*5.95	0.73	3.239	powerlessness	mid
3	2	0.00	*6.36	0.72	3.254	Fetishism of money	mid
3-1	**-**	**0.00**	*11.84	**0.55**	**3.318**	**Total**	mid

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table (6) showed that the feelings of anomie among participants was moderate as the mean was (3.318) and the standard deviation was (0.55). This result reflects an average level of feeling anomie with its subscales from the study sample point of view.

Concerning the distrust subscale, the results found that item (6) in the questionnaire, which states "Most of the senior officials do not care about the problems of ordinary people", ranked first with a high level (3.917%). While item (3), which states: "in spite of what has been said, many ordinary people's life does not get better', get the second ranked with a high level with a mean of (3.887). Finally, item 4, which states "I think most of the parliaments members' decisions are not for the benefits of the ordinary people but for their benefits", came last with a low level with a mean of (2.554). This result is in line with other studies, such as Chambliss & Sedman (1971), and Fajnzylber & Lederman & Loayza (2001) because they believe that when the economic status of people arise, it will reflect their laws and values because this is due to the correlation between group values and their socioeconomic status. In addition, there is positive correlation between crime and income distribution. Crimes will decrease if the economic status get better.

With respect to Fetishism of money subscale, item 4, which states "I follow the rules I want", ranked first with a mean of (3.564%). While item 2, which states, "people justify what they do if they benefit from their actions", came in the second place at moderate level with a mean of 3.375. Item 5, which states "The most important thing in life is money", came in the last rank with a moderate level with a mean of (2.942). These results agreed with the results of Merton (1983) which suggested that people justify their antisocial actions as a result of their inability to reach their goals. Hence, they strive to achieve their goals by any mean.

With respect to powerlessness subscale, item 2 which states "No one can know what will happen in in his/her life" ranked first with a high level and with a mean score

of (4.327). Item 5, which states "The world changes rapidly and it is difficult to understand what is going on" ranked second with a medium level and with a mean of (3.673). Item 6, which states "I feel that my whole life is being collapsed" came in the last rank with a medium level and with a mean of (2.435). These results were in line with the results of other studies, such as Willem Bonger (1916) which suggested that crime and illegal behavior came in response to the submission of people to a production method, which in turn leads to the emergence of the class system, the exploitation of individuals, and committing crimes.

2. The level of students' response to the tendency toward deviant behavior.

Table 7.

The mean, standard deviation, and the level of students' response toward the tendency toward deviant behavior

	mean	Standard deviation	T value	P value	level
Tendency to illegal/deviant behavior	2.939	0.78	1.41	0.16	mid

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table (7) shows that the participant's responses to the tendency toward deviant behavior was moderate with an arithmetic mean of (2.939). The items that achieved the highest levels were item (5) "I will refuse to pay the tax if I can" and item (1) "It is true that the rules and laws are important, but they can be neglected and rejected due to our family conditions". These results indicated that some people see law as an obstacle so they think it is necessary to violate these rules. Therefore, they will commit criminal

and deviant behaviors (Durkheim, 1897; Merton, 1938; Fajnzylber & Lederman & Loayza, 2001; Cloward & Ohlin, 1960; Sutherland, 1947).

In order to know the level of the impact of anomie on the tendency toward deviant behavior from the viewpoint of Ajloun University College students, the validity of performing Analysis of Variance test was verified by testing Tolerance, VIF and skewness of independent variables, as shown in the following table:

Table 8.

Tolerance, VIF and skewness of independent variables

Independent variables	tolerance	VIF	Skewness
Distrust and Meaninglessness	0.56	0.56	0.48
powerlessness	0.41	0.41	0.55
Fetishism of money	0.38	0.38	0.47

Table (8) showed that the values of the VIF ranged between (1.96 - 2.84) and they were less than (10). The values of the tolerance for all variables ranged between (0.56-0.38), which are greater than (0.05) .The results showed that the value of the Skewness is less than (1), and thus the validity of the variance analysis was confirmed.

To demonstrate the effect of anomie on the tendency toward deviant behavior from the viewpoint of the students of Ajloun University College, regression analysis test was used**,** as shown in table 9 and 10.

Table 9.

Regression analysis of the effect of anomie on the tendency toward deviant behavior

F (significance)	Value (F)	Mean square	Freedom value	Sum of squares	Model
0.00	*24.27	12.22	3	4.35	regerssion
-	-	0.51	324	195.42	Differences
-	-	-	327	199.78	total
				0.421	Coefficient of determination (R^2)
				0.394	Adjusted R^2 Coefficient determination

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table 10.

Results of multiple regression analysis

	B	Standard error	T value	(T) significant
Distrust and meaningless	0.124	0.28	***3.01**	0.01
Powerlessness	0.305	0.08	***4.82**	0.00
Fetishism of money	0.184	0.06	***3.07**	0.01

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

The results of Table (9) showed that the value of (F) was (24.27) and the degrees of freedom was (3, 324), which is a statistically significant value at a level of significance (0.05 <). The difference between the value of the coefficient determination and the adjusted coefficient of determination confirms the independence of the independent variables in their influence on the dependent variable.

The results in Table (10) showed that the anomie with its sub-scales (meaninglessness, powerlessness, Fetishism of money) was (42.1%) of the variance in the tendency toward the deviant behavior. This result confirms the effect of anomie on the tendency toward deviant behavior and this result is consistent with the results of other studies, such as Durkheim (1897) and Merton (1938) that anomie leads to deviant behavior. People in anomie societies do not adhere to the moral and ethical system and replace it with other justifiable ones in order to commit their antisocial acts. The T value revealed that the subscales of anomie (meaninglessness, powerlessness and Fetishism of money) have a statistically significant effect, since the value of (T) was (3.01, 4.82, 3.07) respectively. The results of Tables 8 and 9 showed that there is a statistically significant differences for the impact of anomie with its sub-scales

on the tendency toward deviant behavior.

The third question: Is there an impact of socio-economic status and anomie on the tendency toward illegal behavior according to the variables of gender, **age, and income?**

In order to reveal the impact of gender variable, a T-test for independent samples was used, as represented in the following table:

Table 11

Results of T-test

	P value	T value	mean	
			females	males
Socioeconomic status	0.63	0.47	3.526	3.482
Anomie	0.34	0.94	3.328	3.244
Tendency toward deviant behavior behavior	0.18	1.32	2.919	3.102

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table (11) shows that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean responses of male and female respondents towards the impact of the socioeconomic status and anomie on the deviant behavior (the P value is larger than 0.05). These results showed that gender of the participants has no impact on their responses concerning impact of socio-economic status and anomie on the tendency toward illegal behavior.

In order to reveal whether age affected the responses of the participants concerning the impact age of socio-economic status and anomie on the tendency toward illegal behavior, a one-way analysis of variance was performed. The results are presented below:

Table 12

Results of one-way analysis of variance of students' responses due to age

	age	mean	Variance source	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean of squares	F value	P value
The socio-economic status	18 to < 20	3.671		4.40	3	1.467		0.00
	20 to <22	3.543		84.65	324	0.261	5.613 *	
	22 to < 24	3.423		89.05	327			
	More than 24	3.273						
Anomie	18 to < 20	3.337		0.43	3	0.142		0.64
	20 to <22	3.344		81.98	324	0.253	0.560	
	22t o < 24	3.266		82.41	327			
	More than 24	3.258						
Tendency toward illegal behavior	18 to < 20	2.914		1.80	3	0.600	0.982	0.40
	20 to <22	2.997		197.98	324	0.611		
	22t o < 24	2.805		199.78	327			
	More than 24	2.985						

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table 12 showed that there are statistically significant differences between the answers of different age groups towards the effect of socio-economic status, as the value of (F) was (5.613), which is a statistically significant at the level of significance (0.05). These results showed that age of the participants affect their responses concerning the impact of socio-cultural status on the tendency toward illegal/deviant behavior. It is clear from the table that age group (18 - less than 20 years) believed most that the economic and social status has a role in the tendency toward deviant behavior.

The results of table 12 also showed that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean answers of the participants due age variable with respect to anomie and tendency toward deviant behavior. All age groups believe that anomie has a role in the tendency toward deviant behavior.

In order to reveal the differences that are attributed to the variable of the monthly income of the family, a one-way analysis of variance was performed. Consider the following table:

Table 13.
Results of one-way analysis of variance of students' responses due to monthly income

	Income	mean	Variance source	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean of squares	F value	P value
The socio-economic status	Less than 300	3.702	Between groups	6.79	3	2.26	8.98*	0.00
	301-450	3.536	through groups	82.27	324	0.25		
	451-600	3.304	total	89.05	327			
	More than 601	3.314						
Anomie	Less than 300	3.491	Between groups	2.70	3	0.90	3.66*	0.013
	301-450	3.287	Through groups	79.71	324	0.25		
	451-600	3.116	total	82.41	327			
	More than 601	3.145						
Tendency to illegal behavior	Less than 300	3.011	Between groups	4.37	3	1.46	*5.34	0.00
	301-450	2.458	Through groups	88.41	324	0.27		
	451-600	2.344	total	92.78	327			
	More than 601	2.552			3	2.26		

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table 12 showed that there are statistically significant differences between the average answers of the participants towards socio-economic status due to the variable of the income (the F value was (8.98) and the differences were statistically significant value at the level of significance (0.05)). It is clear from the table that the differences are in favor of the income group of 300 dinars or less.

The data also revealed statistically significant differences between the average answers of the participants towards anomie subscales due to the variable of the income (F value was 3.66) and the differences were statistically significant at the level of significance (0.05). It is clear from the table that the differences in favor of the income group (300 dinars or less).

The data also showed statistically significant differences between the average answers of the participants towards the tendency toward deviant/illegal behavior due to the income (F value was 5.34 and the differences were statistically significant at a level of significance (0.05). It is clear from the table that the differences were in favor of the income group (300 dinars or less). It can be said that Jordanians with the income of 300 dinars or less suffer a lot from the difficult living conditions, such as poverty, unemployment, deprivation and social exclusion. They had low economic and social status, and thus they tend to commit deviant and criminal behaviors.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study revealed that the socio-economic status affected the tendency towards deviant behavior, as the low socio-economic status of individuals may lead them to achieve their goals by any mean (Mirton, 1938; Mills, 1959; Cohen, 1955). Because of poverty and unemployment, people believed that laws were designed to serve high class people only (Chambliss & Sedman, 1977).

Concerning anomie and its sub-scales (distrust, powerlessness, and Fetishism of money), the results of the study showed that the participants had no confidence in laws. They thought that laws do not achieve their goals and aspirations, but rather that these laws and regulations are designed to achieve the interests of a particular group in society. Additionally, people were afraid of the future because the world is changing rapidly and they want to obtain wealth. Since laws do not serve them, they will violate them and commit deviant behaviors to obtain what they want.

Therefore, we notice that the Jordanian society suffered from the spread of crimes as a result of the rapid changes, poverty and unemployment which in turn caused the emergence of new types of crimes. Bad socio-economic situations may forces some people to commit crimes and violate laws and regulations.

The researchers present a number of recommendations. They believe that there is a need to improve the living conditions of people by reducing poverty and unemployment, to re-build trust between government and members of society by establishing laws and legislations that serve all groups of society, and to apply rules and laws on all individuals regardless of their economic and social status.

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أثر المكانة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية واللامعيارية على الميل للسلوك المنحرف

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الملخّص

هدفت الدراسة الى التعرف على أثر المكانة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية واللامعيارية على الميل للسلوك المنحرف، وتم استخدام منهج المسح الاجتماعي، وتكونت الاستبانة من ثلاثة أجزاء، وتكونت عينة الدراسة العشوائية المنتظمة من (328) طالبا وطالبة من كلية عجلون الجامعية، واظهرت نتائج الدراسة ان المستوى العام للمكانة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية على الميل للسلوك المنحرف كان متوسطاً وبوسط حسابي(3.521%)، كما واظهرت النتائج ان المستوى العام للامعيارية على الميل للسلوك المنحرف كان متوسطاً وبوسط حسابي (3.318%)، واظهرت النتائج عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة احصائية في المكانة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية واللامعيارية تبعاً لمتغيرات(النوع الاجتماعي، العمر)، ووجود فروق ذات دلالة احصائية في الميل للسلوك المنحرف تبعاً (الدخل الشهري) متضمنه ان زيادة الدخل الشهري يقلل من فرص الميل نحو السلوك المنحرف، وبناءً على النتائج تم صياغة العديد من التوصيات ذات العلاقة بموضوع الدراسة.

الكلمات الدالّة: المكانة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية؛ اللامعيارية؛ السلوك المنحرف.