



# The Correlation between Stress and Depression, Religious Factors, School Factors and Early Victimization as the Determinants of Early Initiation among Deviants

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## Authors' contributions

*This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## ABSTRACT

**Aims:** This study was to scrutinize the correlation between stress and depression, religious factors, school factors and early victimization as the determinants of early initiation.

**Study Design:** Quantitative research using a questionnaire as an instrument to collect the data.

**Place and Duration of Study:** Department of Educational Foundations and Humanities between December 2015 and April 2016.

**Methodology:** This study affected 240 inmates from a rehabilitation center in Serendah District. A questionnaire was designed to collect data on the deviants' background and the frequency of occurrence which concerning stress and depression, religious factors, school factors and early victimization before their initiation in deviance.

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**Results:** Revealed that stress and depression perceived by deviants as well as the lack of school attachment and interest are significantly correlated with the early victimization experience before the initiation of deviance. Also, the lack of religious affiliation, knowledge, practice and belief of a deviant are significantly correlated with lack of attachment and interest towards school before the initiation of deviance.

**Conclusion:** This information is valuable to raise the awareness, knowledge and understanding of youths towards determinants that are correlated in contributing to deviant behaviors. It is exclusively vital to notify educational institutions to carry out programs that reinforce the consciousness to refrain students from initiating deviance at an early age.

*Keywords: Early initiation; initiation; deviant; deviance; determinants; correlation; religious.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The deviant behavior continues to upsurge around the world without an apparent insight of why this growth has taken place [1]. By some means, it can be explained with the rapid change in the economy [2] and modern technology. Hence, there is a constant worry by the parents, communities and the general public on the diverse social problems aroused by deviant especially the youth. Their concern goes to the destructive impacts of initiating deviance at an early age that brings to the deviant itself, their family and even the country.

The constant uncivilized deviant incidences that astonished the nation recently in Malaysia include the cases of young unwed mother cutting newly born baby and disposes body parts in septic tank, youngsters as young as aged 10 to 12 years rape young women, severe child abuse by young mother and caregiver and sexual promiscuity among youngster that attributed to a startling number of students contracted HIV. These cases not only showed how immoral are the offenders but also displayed the criticalness of deviant behavior among Malaysian.

Besides the trending uncivilized deviant incidences carried out by youngsters, the continuous rise of juvenile crime rate and a number of detained drug addicts concern us all. The recognition of determinants that contribute to deviant behavior among youth is now the focus of sociological research. Researchers have documented the magnitude of deviant, the trend, and the risk as well as protective factors over time. However, the identification of multiple risk factors to deviant behavior has proven to be a difficult task [3]. Deviant behavior is not necessarily caused by a single aspect yet a combination of aspects of risk factors. Therefore, it is vital to recognize the correlation between determinants of early initiation among deviants in

order to understand the correlated effects of determinants of early initiation that contribute to the deviant behavior.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Deviant behaviour is a chronic matter all over the world. Researchers have documented the magnitude of deviant, the trend, and the risk as well as protective factors over time. However, the identification of multiple risk factors to deviant behaviour has proven to be a difficult task [3]. Deviant behaviour is not necessarily caused by a single aspect yet a combination of aspects of risk factors. Therefore, an abundance of research has been done to find out a single or a mixture of determinants that contribute to all or a particular deviant behaviour.

Chan [2] conducted an etiological study of correlates of deviant behaviour with 63 male delinquent subjects in an approved school and 85 controls in a normal school in Malaysia. She found that most of the male delinquent's offences correlated with substance use and peer-group variables are the best predictors of deviant behaviour among adolescents. Correlates of deviant behaviour also include lack of parental support, low school enjoyment, the problem with a teacher, low self-concept, and lower stages of moral development. Similarly, Cheng [3] who examine the factors of students' delinquent behaviour among 2,715 students in 5th and 6th grade of 6 cities in Taiwan, found social control, the teacher-student relationship and the parent-child relationship are the main factors of students' deviant behaviour. Mweemba [4] also found delinquent acts by the peers, social background, home background, nature of the school environment and biological factors are factors that led to deviant behaviour among 100 pupils from selected high schools of Kabwe District, Zambia. Besides, McQueen et al. [1] in their longitudinal study on how separation and family

conflict mediated on substance use and deviant behaviour outcome in a Mexican American high school age sample found separation was a significant mediator to alcohol use, tobacco use, and deviant behaviour while family conflict mediated marijuana use and deviant behaviour. This shows that parents, peers and teachers play an important role in affecting students' deviant behaviour.

Brunelle et al. [5]'s study on the relationship between drugs and delinquency among 726 youths who were presenting a severe addiction shows the more the delinquent youths have a severe profile of substance use, the stronger the association between psychoactive substance use severity and delinquency. The findings of this study supported the study of Chan [2] which found most of the male delinquent's offences in her study correlated with substance use. In a similar manner, the study of Wairimu [6] which examined the perceived factors influencing deviant behaviour among 395 youths in Njathaini Community, Nairobi, Kenya found the most common forms of deviant behaviour among her participants were drug use, pre-marital sex and alcohol use and this youth deviant behaviour were highly correlated. She also found employment status and socio-economic factors to be of statistical significance to the deviant behaviour of youths in such developing country. Hence, it is clear that the outbreak of another deviant behaviour is consequences of the widespread deviant behaviour namely substance use. Studies with regard to risk factors affecting substance use broaden the insight of determinants to deviant behaviour.

However, Zimic and Jukic [7] conducted a study which aimed at family risk factors favouring drug addiction onset among 146 addicts and 134 controls subjects. They concluded family risk factors adequate of influencing their psychosocial development and favouring drug addiction onset had been statistically more regularly encountered during childhood and adolescence as compared to the controls. It is understandable that, risk factors of individual, family, peer and sociocultural are significant in substance-use onset.

Further, another longitudinal study by Holman, Bricker and Comstock [8] which aimed to test psychological factors predict male smokeless tobacco initiation and cessation found peer influence, rebelliousness, and thrill-seeking appear to predict smokeless tobacco initiation

strongly among 2,468 male youths in the United States. Similarly, a study conducted by Payne [9] investigated the impact of curiosity and trust, motives often triggered by a range of complex personal circumstances influenced initiation into heroin among women drug users in North Cumbria. A known individual, usually male, was often in attendance at initiation and this relationship appears pivotal. In Australia, ecstasy initiation in early adulthood is associated largely with social environment factors, including ecstasy-using social contacts and attendance at dance music events. This was found in a study of young adults' recreational social environment as a predictor of ecstasy use initiation among 204 ecstasy-naïve participants aged 19-23 years conducted by Smirnov, Najman, Hayatbakhsh, Wells, Legosz and Kemp [10]. This shows psychological and social environment factors both predict substance initiation.

Mohd Muzafar [11] identified four risk factors that contributed to drug abuse including antisocial behaviour at early age, having peers that involved in antisocial behaviour, having peers that involved in drug abuse and peer pressure to antisocial behaviour in a study of risk and protective factors of drug abuse among 138 adolescent in a rehabilitation centre in Malaysia. Likewise, Agrawal et al. [12] in the study which examined peer influence involvement modifies genetic influence on regular substance involvement among 2,176 women resulted in rates of regular alcohol use, consistent cigarette smoking, and repeated cannabis use increased with increasing peer substance involvement. Therefore, peer influence is one of the main factors contributed to substance abuse.

Moreover, Mirlashari et al. [13] conducted a qualitative study to explore the early childhood experience, particularly the experiences within the immediate family, of 15 current substance-using young adults in Iran. They found that the majority of the participants undergone traumatic events during childhood and brought up in dysfunctional families. Therefore, they were disconnected with their families. Also, an obedience-instilling parenting style and parents' knowledge, as well as attitude towards drug using and prevention, were also recognized as important determinants of substance use. On the contrary, predictors of cigarette, alcohol, and marijuana use and regularity were predominately individual youth risk factors and demographics rather than family risk factors, asserted by Thompson [14]. It is a study of risk or protective

factors associated with substance use among 11,841 runaway or homeless youth averaged nearly 16 years of age. Yet, another study conducted by Gomez, Thompson and Barczyk [15] to investigate factors associated with substance use among 185 homeless young adults aged 18-23 years found a social network, economic factors, and future expectancies are significant predictors of the level of substance use among homeless young adults. Family risk factors contributed to substance use among settled young adults, yet individual risk factors, social and economic factors affected homeless youth in substance use.

### 3. FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Problem can be seen from previous studies which mostly examined to what extent a particular factor or some factors affect the occurrence of a deviant behavior among particular population [12,2,16,15,1,13,4,14,6]. Yet, most of these studies did not explore the correlation between the factors itself that are affecting the deviant behavior being examined. Hence, these research gaps allow the author to examine the correlation between determinants that affect early initiation of deviant behavior.

Even some previous researchers studied the correlation between factors led to deviant behavior, yet these studies concentrated on common risk factors such as individual factors, peer influences, and family factors led to deviance [12,13,10,7]. Limited research has study the correlation between less-studied risk determinants affecting early initiation namely stress and depression, religious factors, school factors, early victimization. Therefore, it provided space for the author to investigate them.

Also, most of the previous researches have studied the extent of degree the demographic factors affected a particular factor led to deviant behavior. Nonetheless, only a minimal number of studies have examined how demographic factors affect a few factors or determinants that lead to deviance in a study itself. Thus, this limitation permits the author to analyse how demographic factors affect the determinants of early initiation which will be studied in this research. The objectives of this research are to:

1. Identify the extent to which do the demographic factors namely age, race educational attainment, marital status and employment status affect stress and

depression, religious factors, school factors and early victimization as the determinants of early initiation among deviants.

2. Identify the extent to which the relationship between stress and depression, religious factors, school factors and early victimization as the determinants of early initiation in deviance.

A number of terms are used to explain the relevant meaning towards the study. Following are the operational definition of important concepts and terms used in the study.

#### 3.1 Early Initiation

Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2015) defined initiation as the condition of being initiated into some experience or sphere of activity. Becker [17] asserted initiation as an attempt to cross the invitational boundary and draw in an involvement that required intention or willingness and a conscious decision, but an individual's attitudes and receptiveness could be determined by the social circumstances. However, in this study, early initiation is defined as an initial action in the beginning of a criminal proceeding that occurred in the early stage of one's life. It is also the preliminary stage of a criminal undertaking which includes the assertion of belief, knowledge or communication concerning the offense against law and makes a decision to initiate a criminal action at an early age. Therefore, early initiation is measured by the age at first arrest and age at first take of prohibited substance in this study. The initiation age of 18 years and below is considered as early initiation while the initiation age of 19 years and above is considered late initiation. Also, the determinants that contribute to early initiation in a particular deviant behaviour include stress and depression, religious factors, school factors and early victimization.

#### 3.2 Stress and Depression

The term "stress" applies to processes committing perception, appraisal, and response to harmful, threatening or challenging events or stimuli [18]. Signs of stress include:

- In a bad mood and unable to deal with even small problems.
- Feel frustrated, lose your temper more frequent, and yell at others for no reason.
- Feel nervous or tired all the time.
- Find it difficult to focus on tasks.

- Worry too much about small things.
- Cannot respond quickly and feel that you are missing out on things.
- Conceived that bad things are happening or about to happen.

In this study, stress refers to the repetitive occurrence of emotional symptoms of stress that include feel tense in matters of life, lost temper when something happened out of control, unable to focus on the task, pressured by the behaviour of others towards themselves, and difficult to calm down after something upset. A person is considered to be stressful in this study when it is reported that all these symptoms often being encountered.

Definition of depression from Meriam Webster Dictionary refers to a state of feeling sad and a psychoneurotic or psychotic disorder marked particularly by sadness, inactivity, difficulty in thinking and concentration, a consequential increase or decrease in appetite and time spent sleeping, feeling of dejection and hopelessness, and constant suicidal thoughts or an attempt to commit suicide. Daley [19] also added some common features of depressive disorder which include: feeling empty, irritable mood, feeling worthless, excessive guilt, low energy, agitation, retardation, and indecisive. In this study, depression refers to the repetitive occurrence of psychological and social symptoms such as had no interest in everything, loss of hope in life, disappointed in life, did not experience something positive in life, thought of ending his/her life, feel worthless, and feel life was not worthwhile. A person is considered to be depressed in this study when it is reported that all these symptoms happen to be often being encountered.

### 3.3 Religious Factors

Religion prescribes what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in the secular world are. It is highly improbable that religion would be so viable in our society if it did not have consequences for the individual in the secular world. Thus, the more likely one will conform to those attitudes and behaviours that are consistent with his religion, the more religious he is [20]. In this study, religious factors including, a religious affiliation which is the self-identified association with a religion, religious participation in weekly religious services or individual forms of daily worship and religious attitudes that are informed by the careful observation of, and respect for, hidden forces and personal

experience to religion. Particularly, a person is considered to be religious in this study when it is reported that the following practice and beliefs are often undertaken; practice religious worship alone or together with family, had a thorough knowledge of religion, knew what is allowed and not allowed by religion, learned about religion, live according to religious beliefs, believed that God sees all things we did, executed what is considered permissible and impermissible in religion, remember the religious teaching learned during detention, and believe the settlement of the religion.

### 3.4 School Factors

The school is defined as an organization that provides instruction. School factors refer to the presence of particular school characteristics and a profile of relations among teachers and students that influence the school environments and students' learning outcome. In this study, school factors include, school discipline which is the structure of rules, punishment, and behavioural strategies applicable to regulation of students and the perpetuation of order in school; teacher-student relationship which is the way teacher and student is connected by communication, interaction, and rapport; school bonding which consists of attachments, characterized by close effective relationships with those at school and commitment, characterized by an investment in school and doing well in school as well as other factors in school. Particularly, school factors are not the determinants of one's initiation in deviance in this study when one often had close relationship with teachers in school, did not often followed the behaviour of peers in school, often feel happy to go to school, often understand the lesson in class, often willing to go to school and did not often being punished with severe disciplinary action.

### 3.5 Early Victimization

Victimization is defined as an act that exploits or victimizes a person by treating them unfairly namely violence, crime, and abuse. Victimization can take place in the form of direct (physical and emotional) or indirect (eyewitness or through other knowledge) and result in the short term (physical injury, fear, anxiety, financial losses) and long term (physical and mental health) outcome [21]. One of the notable results of victimization that leads to other risk factors of deviant behaviour includes runaway or homeless. In this study, one is considered has encountered

early victimization if he/she often bullied by friends, isolated by friends, experienced sexual abuse, experienced physical abuse and felt threatened to be with family.

### 3.6 Deviance

Deviance is a behaviour, beliefs, or characteristics that some people in a society find it offensive or disgraceful and which generate or would generate if being discovered in these people disapproval, punishment, condemnation of, or hostility towards the possessor. Thus, deviance is behaviour, beliefs, or conditions that are likely to get one into trouble. The quality of deviance is based on a judgement made by somebody. It is not merely behaviour, beliefs, or characteristics, or even differences between people. Some of us are different but not condemned; others are much like everyone else but we are condemned. Indeed, deviance is an undesirable difference, a discreditable difference, a difference that results or is likely result in negative evaluations and reactions from the rest of the people [22]. In this study, deviance refers to behaviour that violates the legal codes or offences that apply to detention. This includes drug abuse, murder, forcible rape, robbery, shoplifting, white-collar crime, family violence, sex work, and sexual harassment.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

The type of research design most congruent with the research purpose and research questions is inferential in nature, encompassing quantitative methods of data collecting and analysis. The study was conducted through survey method using questionnaires to gather data.

### 4.1 Research Instrument

In this study, a questionnaire was constructed by deriving items of relevant previous research, it contains two main sections. The first section was designed to identify deviant's background including demographics and age at first take of prohibited substance. Items that are built in this section are single item selections. The subsequent section contains items that illustrate occurrences and circumstances based on the determinants of early initiation namely stress and depression, religious factors, school factors and early victimization which possibly affected them before the prohibited substance onset. Each component was built with six items. All items were constructed based on a Likert-type item

which being put in an order to the agreement from "Never", "Rarely", "Not Sure", "Often" and "Very Often".

In this study, the researcher has engaged experts to determine the construct validity and the content validity of the instrument. A total of four experts has been approached. They are among the academicians and practitioners who have expertise in the psychology, statistics, anti-drugs policies and linguistics. The rationale of approaching experts of these fields is by cause of its close connection with the purpose of this study. These experts fulfilled the criteria of possessing the definite capability to check and confirm the suitability of the instrument as they have significant knowledge, skills and experiences in their respective area. Researcher approaches the experts repeatedly to ensure the language, connection, arrangement, suitability, and the strength of items are of high validity. Once the instrument is validated, researcher applied the instrument to the sample through a pilot study.

A pilot study was conducted by the researcher on selected samples. The findings of the pilot study indicate that the reliability of the items that have been built was partially moderate and partially high for the construct of Early Initiation in Deviance. Cronbach's Alpha scattered on the alpha .561 to .821. Cronbach's Alpha value for items of Stress and Depression, Religious Factors, School Factors and Early Victimization were of alpha .591, .766, .561 and .821 respectively. However, after deleting items with low reliability, the reliability of both construct appeared to be in between alpha value .65 to .95. The construct of Early Initiation in Deviance scattered on the alpha .661 to .821. Cronbach's Alpha value for items of Stress and Depression, Religious Factors, School Factor and Early Victimization were of alpha .661, .766, .680 and .821 respectively.

### 4.2 Sample and Sampling

Simple random sampling was adopted as sampling method of this study. The population selected was inmates of Cure and Care Rehabilitation Center (CCRC) in Serendah district, while samples involve 240 inmates. All inmates of Serendah CCRC are male inmates.

### 4.3 Data Analysis Method

The data collected was computed into the Predictive Analytics Software (PASW) version 21

for quantitative analysis. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson correlation test are the data analysis method used in this study.

**5. RESULTS**

In order to examine the correlation between determinants of early initiation in deviance, 240 respondents from the Serendah CCRC have been administered with a questionnaire. Thereafter, it is found that the prevalence of stress and depression, deficiency in religion, lack of attachment and interest in school as well as early victimization experience before the deviance onset are significantly different among certain demographic factors respectively. Most importantly, the significant correlations between determinants of early initiation in deviance are found among stress and depression and early victimization; religious factors and school factors; as well as school factors and early victimization.

ANOVA test of demographics on determinants of early initiation are shown in Table 1. Results shows that as a whole, the differences on stress and depression among race [F(3, 233) = 4.10, *p* < .05], educational attainment [F(3, 230) = 4.30, *p* < .05], and marital status [F(3, 234) = 5.92, *p* < .05] are significant. On the other hand, the results also significant differences on religious factor among age [F(4, 231) = 6.00, *p* < .05], educational attainment [F(3, 230) = 2.88, *p* < .05], marital status [F(3, 234) = 3.60, *p* < .05] and employment status [F(3, 230) = 7.00, *p* < .05].

Based on the results, the results also show that there are significant differences on school factor among age [F(4, 231) = 2.748, *p* < .05], race [F(3, 233) = 2.658, *p* < .05], educational attainment [F(3, 230) = 9.347, *p* < .05], and marital status [F(3, 234) = 4.021, *p* < .05]. While the differences on early victimization are significant among age [F(4, 231) = 3.259, *p* < .05], and race [F(3, 233) = 5.649, *p* < .05].

The Pearson’s correlations between determinants of early initiation are shown in Table 2. Overall, the relationships among the determinants of early initiation that have been tested show a positive correlation. This indicates that relatively high scores on a determinant are paired with relatively high scores on the other determinant and low scores are paired with relatively low scores. Stress and Depression and Religious Factors show correlation value of .118. Davis Index [23] shows, this is a weak correlation between the two determinants. The two determinants were not correlated, *r* (238) = .118, *p* = .069. Similarly, the Pearson correlation between Stress and Depression and School Factors is .107. Davis Index [23] also shows this is a weak correlation between the two determinants. The two determinants were not correlated, *r* (238) = .107, *p* = .099. However, the Pearson correlation between Stress and Depression and Early Victimization show correlation value of .182. Davis Index (1971) shows, this is still a weak correlation between the two determinants. Yet, the two determinants were weakly correlated, *r* (238) = .182, *p* < .01.

Furthermore, the Pearson correlation between Religious Factors and School Factors is .294. Davis Index (1971) shows, this is a weak correlation between the two determinants. The two determinants were weakly correlated, *r* (238) = .294, *p* < .01. Nonetheless, the Pearson correlation between Stress and Depression and School Factors is .087. Davis Index (1971) shows, there is no relation between the two determinants. The two determinants were not correlated, *r* (238) = .087, *p* = .179. Last but not least, the Pearson correlation between School Factors and Early Victimization is .336. Davis Index [3] however shows, this is an average strong correlation between the two determinants. The two determinants were average strongly correlated, *r* (238) = .336, *p* < .01.

**Table 1. Analysis of variance of demographics on determinants of early initiation**

| Source     | df | Stress and depression |      | Religious factors |      | School factors |      | Early victimization |      |
|------------|----|-----------------------|------|-------------------|------|----------------|------|---------------------|------|
|            |    | f                     | Sig. | f                 | Sig. | f              | Sig. | f                   | Sig. |
| Age        | 4  | 1.432                 | .224 | 6.002             | .000 | 2.748          | .029 | 3.259               | .013 |
| Race       | 3  | 4.098                 | .007 | .684              | .563 | 2.658          | .049 | 5.649               | .001 |
| Education  | 3  | 4.299                 | .006 | 2.882             | .037 | 9.347          | .000 | 1.502               | .215 |
| Marital    | 3  | 5.920                 | .001 | 3.595             | .014 | 4.021          | .008 | .898                | .443 |
| Employment | 3  | 2.015                 | .113 | 6.996             | .000 | 1.638          | .181 | 1.741               | .159 |

**Table 2. Pearson’s correlation between determinants of early initiation**

| Source                | Mean  | Standard deviation | Stress and depression |   | Religious factors |      | School factors |      | Early victimization |      |
|-----------------------|-------|--------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------|------|----------------|------|---------------------|------|
|                       |       |                    | r                     | p | r                 | p    | r              | p    | r                   | p    |
| Stress and depression | 11.02 | 3.61               |                       |   | .118              | .069 | .107           | .099 | .182**              | .005 |
| Religious factors     | 12.14 | 4.86               |                       |   |                   |      | .294**         | .000 | .087                | .179 |
| School factors        | 12.77 | 3.93               |                       |   |                   |      |                |      | .336**              | .000 |
| Early victimization   | 7.31  | 4.14               |                       |   |                   |      |                |      |                     |      |

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

**6. DISCUSSION**

The finding shows that stress and depression perceived before the initiation of deviance has a significant difference among race groups, educational attainment groups, and marital status groups. In other words, the amount of stress and depression perceived before a deviant initiates any deviance is significantly different from different races, educational attainment, and marital status. This is most probably because different races have their own perceptions towards stress and depression perceived, different level of educational attainment affects the amount of stress and depression perceived during the education process and different marital status has a different responsibility that affects the amount of stress and depression perceived. Meanwhile, religious factors before the initiation of deviance also show significant difference among age groups, educational attainment groups, marital status and employment status group. This can be explained that the religious affiliation, knowledge, practice and beliefs can be affected by the maturity based on age, educational attainment, marital status and employment status.

Additionally, the finding also revealed that schools factors before the initiation of deviance are significantly different among age groups, race groups, educational attainment groups and marital status. That is to say that different age, race, educational attainment and marital status are significantly different in school attachment and interest. This is probably caused by different perceptions towards the importance of schooling in different age groups, race groups, educational attainment groups and marital status. Moreover, early victimization before the initiation of deviance also demonstrates significant difference among age groups and race groups. This might be in view of the fact that younger or older age and certain race group experienced higher rates

of various victimizations ascribed to discrimination.

On the other hand, this study also found that stress and depression are significantly correlated with early victimization before the initiation of deviance. According to Agnew [24], both stress and depression, as well as early victimization, are among the types of strain that might lead to negative emotions which likely cause deviance. Therefore, these two determinants are correlated in contributing to early initiation. This is accordance with the finding of the study of Weiss et al. [25] who found that the risk of smoking initiation was significantly higher among students who were bully-victims, scored higher on hostility and depressive symptoms. Besides, a finding also shows that religious factors are significantly correlated with school factors before the initiation of deviance. The religious affiliation, knowledge, practice and belief are correlated with school attachment and interest in determining the initiation of deviance. This is because these two determinants are interrelated in governing one’s vulnerability in initiating deviant act. This is in line with the results of the study by Milot and Ludden [26] who found adolescents who reported that religious was important in their lives showed lower school misbehavior and higher motivation in school. Lastly, this study also found that school attachment and interest are significantly correlated with early victimization before the initiation of deviance. Truancy led by low school attachment and interest might expose students to the problematic environment outside the school and subsequently early victimization. However, early victimization also could influence a student’s school attachment and interest. Hence, these two determinants are correlated in the early initiation of deviance.

**7. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this study is to examine the correlation between determinants of early



initiation among deviants. It is crucial to identify the extent to which demographic factors affect the determinants of early initiation among deviants and the relationship among determinants of early initiation in deviance in order to identify the significance of the determinants in contributing to early initiation among Malaysian deviants. The findings shows stress and depression perceived before the initiation of deviance has a significant difference among race groups, educational attainment groups, and marital status groups; religious factors before the initiation of deviance also shows significant difference among age groups, educational attainment groups, marital status and employment status group; schools factors before the initiation of deviance are significantly different among age groups, race groups, educational attainment groups and marital status; early victimization before the initiation of deviance also demonstrates significant difference among age groups and race groups. Besides that, this study also found that stress and depression are significantly correlated with early victimization before the initiation of deviance; religious factors are significantly correlated with school factors before the initiation of deviance; school factors are significantly correlated with early victimization before the initiation of deviance.

This information is valuable to raise the awareness, knowledge and understanding of youths towards determinants that are correlated in contributing to deviant behaviors. It is exclusively vital to notify educational institutions to carry out programs that reinforce the consciousness to refrain students from initiating deviance at an early age. For example, designed programs that help students to identify stress and depression symptoms and inculcate knowledge on ways to deal with stress; emphasize the importance of religious beliefs and practices as well as implant knowledge on how to be a spiritually healthy person; help students to enhance their school attachment and assist student to regain interest in studying; reduce school bullying perpetration and victimization in order to create a more protective school environment or climate as well as aid and support students who happen to be victims from home. These efforts will definitely able to protect youth against deviance.

It is suggested to select a larger population with larger samples that include female respondents because population selected in this study consists of only male respondents due to the

geographical constraint. In view of boundless determinants can contribute to deviance in this modern era, many other aspects of factors that led to deviance such as the internet influence, the impacts of addiction to high technological gadgets, poor cognitive development are suggested for further research. Further study into such aspects will help us to recognize other significant determinants that led to deviance among Malaysian youth of the contemporary generation.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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