

CHAPTER 7: DEVIANCE

- Society teaches to conform countless rules to its member
- Law is just one part of complex system of Social Control
- Norms guide all human activities

“Deviance is recognized violation of cultural norms”.

- One category of Deviance → **Crime:** “ *The violation of Society’s formally enacted criminal law*”
- Criminal Deviance → Wide Range of Behavior (Traffic Signal Violation.. Murder etc.)
- Deviant actions or attitudes → positive or negative .. common → another person **OUTSIDER.**
- Deviance can be without action or choice (elderly person in company of youngsters or Disable person in company of healthy)

We are all subject to → **SOCIAL CONTROL**

“Attempts by society to regulate people’s thoughts and behavior”

- Informal (parent praise, friends make fun about choices)
- Formal → CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM: “*A Formal response by police, courts and prison officials to alleged violations of the law*”.

Biological and Psychological explanations of Deviance:

Body structure, muscles, not feeling of guilt, psychopaths.

The social Foundation of Deviance

Deviance and conformity shaped by society:

1. Deviance varies according to cultural norms.

- norms vary place to place → deviance varies
example: gambling casinos: legal or illegal, Malaysia don’t allow female to wear tight jeans etc.

2. People become deviant as others define them that way.

- Borrow a pen from workplace → criminal or mentally ill
 - How others perceive, define and respond
3. ***Both norms and the way people define rule-breaking involve social power.***
- Karl Marx: powerful protect their interests.
 - Homeless people and election campaign → speak against Govt.

The functions of Deviance: Durkheim's Basic Insight

there is nothing abnormal about deviance. In fact, it performs four essential functions:

1. Deviance affirms cultural values and norms.

As moral creatures, people must prefer some attitudes and behaviors to others. But any definition of virtue rests on an opposing idea of vice: There can be **no good without evil** and **no justice without crime**. Deviance is needed to define and support morality.

2. Responding to deviance clarifies moral boundaries.

By defining some individuals as deviant, people draw a boundary between right and wrong. academic honesty and cheating

3. Responding to deviance brings people together.

4. Deviance encourages social change.

Deviant people → push a society's moral boundaries → suggesting alternatives → to the status quo → encouraging change.

Merton's Strain Theory:

Robert Merton argued that society can be set up in a way that encourages too much deviance. Specifically, the extent and type of deviance people engage in depend on whether a society provides the *means* (such as schooling and job opportunities) to achieve cultural *goals* (such as financial success).

Conformity lies in pursuing cultural goals through approved means.

Example: someone who gains wealth and prestige through talent, schooling, and hard work.

Innovation—using unconventional means (street crime) rather than conventional means (hard work at a “straight” job) to achieve a culturally approved goal (wealth). Because not everyone who wants conventional success has the opportunity to attain it

Example: people raised in poverty may have little hope of becoming successful if they play by the rules and engage in stealing, drug dealing, or other forms of street crime.

Ritualism

The inability to reach a cultural goal may also prompt another type of deviance that Merton calls *ritualism*.

Example: many people may not care much about becoming rich but rigidly stick to the rules (the conventional means) anyway in order to at least feel “respectable.”

Retreatism A third response to the inability to succeed is *retreatism*: rejecting both cultural goals and conventional means so that a person in effect “drops out.”

Example: Some alcoholics, drug addicts, and street people.

Rebellion The fourth response to failure is *rebellion*. Like retreatists, rebels such as radical “survivalists” reject both the cultural definition of success and the conventional means of achieving it.

Example: they go one step further by forming a counterculture supporting alternatives to the existing social order.

LABELING DEVIANCE

- Deviance and conformity → flexible
- Symbolic interactionism → **Labeling Theory**: “*the idea that deviance and conformity result not so much from what people do as from how others respond to those actions*”.
- People define same behavior in number of ways.

Primary Deviance and Secondary Deviance

Primary Deviance: “*Norms violation that provoke slight reaction from others and have little effect on person’s self-concept*”. (Skipping school)

Secondary Deviance: “*is a response to primary deviance sets in motion, by which a person repeatedly violates a norm and begins to take on a deviant identity*” (application of Thomas theorem : situations that are defined real become real in their consequences).

Secondary deviant → Career → **STIGMA**:

- People develop stronger commitment → to deviant behavior → acquire a *stigma*.
“*stigma is a powerful negative label that greatly changes a person’s self-concept and social identity*”.

- Stigma → master status → person become socially isolated.
- Entire community → formally stigmatized → individual → Degradation Ceremony (criminal trial).

Retrospective and Projective Labeling

Once people stigmatize an individual, they may engage in **retrospective labeling** → interpreting someone's past in light of some present deviance.

Example: after discovering that a priest has sexually molested a child, others rethink his past, perhaps musing, "He always did want to be around young children." Retrospective labeling, which distorts a person's biography by being highly selective, typically deepens a deviant identity.

People may engage in **projective labeling** of a stigmatized person → using the person's deviant identity to predict future actions.

Example: Regarding the priest, people might say, "He's going to keep at it until he gets caught."

CRIME

"Crime is the violation of criminal laws enacted by a locality, a state or the federal Government."

All crimes are composed of two elements:

- (i) The act itself
- (ii) Criminal intent
 - Intent ranging from willful conduct to negligence. (first degree murder or consider a killing justifiable as in self-defense).

Types of Crime

1. Crimes against the person(violent crimes):

Crimes that direct violence or the threat of the violence against others.

- (i) Murder, Manslaughter (the willful killing of one human being by another)
- (ii) Aggravated assault (an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of serious bodily injury)
- (iii) Forcible rape (the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will)

- (iv) Robbery (taking or attempting to take anything of value from the custody or control of a person/persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or putting the victim in fear)

2. Crimes against Property (property crimes):

Crimes that involve theft of property belonging to others.

- (i) Burglary (the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a serious crime or a theft)
- (ii) Larceny-theft (the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession of another)
- (iii) Auto theft (the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle)
- (iv) Arson (the criminal act of deliberately setting fire to property)

3. Victimless Crimes (crime without complaint):

Violation of law in which there are no obvious victims.

- (i) Illegal drug use
- (ii) Prostitution
- (iii) Gambling
 - People who commit such crimes are offenders and victims.

DEVIANCE and POWER

❖ Based on karl marx's idea, social conflict theory holds that laws and other norms reflect the interests of powerful members of society. And following crimes cause extensive social harms, offenders are rarely branded as criminals.

➤ White-collar Crime

Crime committed by people of high social position in the course of their occupations.

Example: bank embezzlement, business fraud, bribery, and antitrust violations etc.

➤ Corporate Crime

Corporate crime is the illegal actions of a corporation or people acting on its behalf.

Example: violation of business and accounting laws or knowingly selling faulty or dangerous products . deliberately polluting environment

➤ **Organized Crime**

Organized crime is a business supplying illegal goods or services. (criminal organizations → shopkeeper..protection)

Example: sale of illegal goods and services—often sex, drugs, and gambling—to willing buyers.