

**Q: Define Deviance and briefly explain the reasons ( theories ) of why there exist deviance in any society? ( 2017, 2017 supplementary, 2018 supplementary, 2019 and 2020 )**

## **Deviance**

### **Introduction:**

- Sociologists use the term deviance to refer to any violation of norms, whether the infraction is a minor like driving over the speed or major like murder.
- Deviation is the violation of social norms ( what behavior people are expecting and is acceptable ) and cultural standards.

### **Definition of term Deviance:**

- Behavior that violates significant social norms and disapproved by large number of people as a result.
- It is an act that is forbidden by society and usually it is against culture.
- Deviance is a behavior, belief, trait or other characteristics that violates a norm and cause a negative reaction.

### **Deviants:**

- The person whose behavior does not match with the norms of the society is called deviant.

### **Conformist:**

- The person whose behavior is closer to the norms of society is called Conformist.

### **Types of Norms**

- Norms are classified in two types:

### **Mores:**

- Norms that have great moral significance or in simple word we say more serious norms called MORES.

### **Folkways:**

- The norms which relate with our daily routine and it have not great moral significance are called FOLKWAYS.

### **TYPES OF DEVIANCE**

- The violation of norms can be categorized as two forms.

### **Formal Deviance:**

- Formal deviance can be defined as a crime when violated law in a society.
- For example: Murder and Robbery etc.

### Informal Deviance:

- Informal deviances are minor violations that break unwritten roles of social life.
- For Example: Disrespecting the teacher and Speaking too loudly etc.

### **Theories of Deviance to explain Crime in a society/Sociological explanation of why people do Deviance**

- There are many causes of Deviance which are given below;
  - Improper socialization means Illiterate persons
  - Lack of education
  - O religious education and morality
  - Rejection by neighborhood
- The following are some theories to explain why people do crime in a society:

### Structural Strain/Anomie Theory:

- American sociologist **Robert K. Merton** developed structural strain theory as an extension of the functionalist perspective on deviance.
- This theory traces the origins of deviance to the tensions caused by the gap between cultural goals and the means people have available to achieve those goals.
- According to this theory, societies are composed of both culture and social structure. Culture establishes goals for people in society while social structure provides (or fails to provide) the means for people to achieve those goals.
- In a well-integrated ( well-developed or well-balance ) society, people use accepted and appropriate means to achieve the goals that society establishes.
- In this case, the goals and the means of the society are in balance.
- It is when the goals and means are not in balance with each other that deviance is likely to occur.
- This imbalance between cultural goals and structurally available means can actually encourage deviance.

### Labeling Theory:

- Labeling theory is one of the most important approaches to understanding deviant and criminal behavior within sociology.
- It begins with the assumption that no act is intrinsically ( naturally ) criminal. Instead, definitions of criminality are established by those in power through the formulation of laws and the interpretation of those laws by police, courts, and correctional institutions.
- Deviance is therefore not a set of characteristics of individuals or groups, but rather a process of interaction between deviants and non-deviants and the context in which criminality is defined.
- Those who represent forces of law and order and those who enforce the boundaries of proper behavior, such as the police, court officials, experts, and school authorities, provide the main source of labeling.

- By applying labels to people, and in the process creating categories of deviance, these people reinforce the power structure and hierarchies of society.
- Typically it is those who hold more power over others, on the basis of race, class, gender, or overall social status, who impose rules and labels on others in society

### **Social Control Theory:**

- Social control theory, developed by **Travis Hirschi**, is a type of functionalist theory that suggests deviance occurs when a person's or group's attachment to social bonds is weakened.
- According to this view, people care about what others think of them and conform to social expectations because of their attachments to others and what others expect of them.
- Socialization is important in producing conformity ( accordance with ) to social rules, and it is when this conformity is broken that deviance occurs.
- Social control theory focuses on how deviants are attached, or not, to common value systems and what situations break people's commitment to these values.
- This theory also suggests that most people probably feel some impulse ( need or desire ) toward deviant behavior at some time, but their attachment to social norms prevents them from actually participating in deviant behavior.

### **Differential-Association Theory:**

- This theory of Differential-Association is a learning theory is a learning theory that focus of the process by which come to come to commit deviance or criminal act.
- According to the theory, created by **Edwin H. Sutherland**, criminal behavior is learned through interaction with other people.
- Though this interaction and communication, people learns the values, attitudes, techniques and motivates for criminal behavior.
- Differential-Association theory emphasizes the environment plays a major role in deciding which norms people learn to violate.
- Interaction people have with their peers and other in the environment.
- Those who associate with delinquent ( Criminal or lawless or lawbreaker ) , deviants and criminals learn to value deviance.
- The greater the frequency, duration and intensity of their immersion ( involvement or concentration ) in deviant environment, the more like it is that they will become deviant.

### **Conclusion**

- To conclude that Any violation of norms is called deviance. It is against the social manners of family and marriage.
- It is natural that man deviated from norms. The deviation when grow serious it is a problem if it is ordinary there is no problem.

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