



Factors Influencing Deviant Behaviour Among Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The adolescents of today are the hope of tomorrow. The energy and the intelligence possessed by the present generation were surprising the people in their middle age and old age. In reality however, many people have started to express their grievances toward the behaviour of the adolescents. The deviant thought and behaviour exhibited by an adolescent influence their entire peer group and this further deteriorates their morality. It raises lot of questions about the factors responsible for these behaviours. The adolescents cannot be solely blamed for all the behaviours they exhibit rather the contributing factors for these deviant acts must be well checked and analysed. Features like educational system, family and parenting, peers, and social support system play a pivotal role in influencing the behaviours of the adolescents.

Deviant Behaviour

Deviant behaviour can be defined as non-compliance to the norms and regulations of the society, culture, organization, institution and legislation. The origin of deviant behavior could be traced along with the origin of human race. Deviant behavior is seen among people right from the beginning of the existence of human beings. Though it is an inevitable problem of global society, research studies indicate that the density and intensity of deviance in human behavior has been alarmingly increased and is creating a massive disruption in the balance of the society. Deviant thoughts and behavior of people is the epicenter of majority of contemporary social problems. Adolescents are people in their transitional age of human development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood. They are neither considered as children nor as adults during this period of adolescence. Though they have the potential to influence the social and economic development of the country, the offensive behavior committed by the adolescents is in increasing pace that threatens the peaceful functioning of the society.

Reviews

A number of research is been carried out to identify and find reasons for the drastic change in the behaviours and attitudes of children, adolescent and youth population which are deviant from social norms. Deviance describes an action or behavior that violates social norms, including a formally enacted rule (e.g., crime), as well as informal violations of social norms (e.g., rejecting folkways and mores) (Macionis J; Gerber, 2010). The delinquency model states that chronic delinquency unfolds in a series of predictable steps, starting at a very young age (Patterson, DeBaryshe and Ramsey, 1989). A maturity gap encourages adolescents to mimic anti-social behaviours in ways that are normative and adjustive (Moffit, 1993).

International status

Azizi Yahaya and friends in the year 2010 studied the correlations between the family atmosphere and deviant behaviour in adolescents in the Pontain District, Johor. The study examined the parenting styles of the adolescent's parents and correlated with the deviant behaviour of the adolescents. The results reveal that majority of the parents practice authoritative nurturing style and the parent's physi-

cal behaviour influence the physical, verbal and anti-social behaviour of the adolescents.

Mbuthia and Winnie in the year 2014 undertook a study on perceived factors influencing deviant behaviour among the youth in Njathaini community at Kenya. The researchers examined the different forms of deviant behaviour found among the youth in Njathaini semi-slum. The most common forms of deviant behaviour observed were drug use, pre-marital sex and alcohol dependency. Perception on youth deviant behaviour was positively associated with employment status, training and skills as well as duration of stay in the slums. Socio-economic factors were found to be of statistical significance to deviant behaviour of the youths in the study area. Further, the study recommended guidance and counselling by relevant organisations to the youth on the dangers of engaging in deviant behaviour.

Department of statistics, Malaysia in 2009 reported that there were 14,691 juveniles who were arrested as a result of committing different offences from year 2002 – 2004. In addition, there was an increase of juvenile cases from 5,114 cases in 2007 to 6,048 juvenile cases in 2009. This accounts for an average of 497 cases per month and 16 cases per day.

National status

Henry Poduthase, in the year 2012 studied parent-adolescent relationship and juvenile delinquency among the adolescents in Kerala, India. The purpose of the study was to explore and compare, from the adolescent's perspective, the parent-adolescent relationship and juvenile delinquency among the adolescents who have engaged in delinquent behaviour and those who have not. The results indicated that parental attitudes and behaviours contributed directly or indirectly toward the behaviour of adolescents. The study also showed that adolescents with delinquent behaviour live in families where parental fights, alcohol dependency and abusive punishments were common.

Mehar and Shihabudeen in 2010 studied on differences in the perception of family functioning among adolescents with internalizing and externalizing disorders. The results revealed that the adolescents of the two clinical groups differed significantly on the general functioning, prob-

lem solving, communication, and roles subscales of Family Assessment Device (FAD) as assessed by adolescents, and their parents. It was also found that negative parenting and exposure to deviant peers influenced aggression among adolescents.

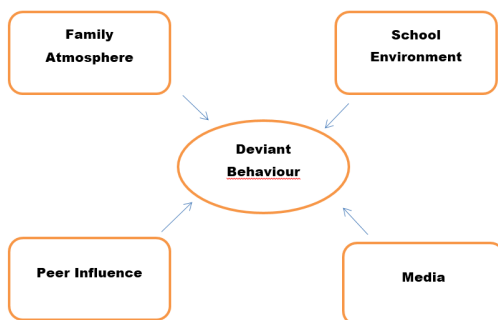
Deviant behaviour among adolescents – Indian Context

In recent times, the deviance in the behaviour of adolescents has become a global issue and it requires immediate attention. On one hand, the energy and the intelligence possessed by the present generation were surprising the people in their middle age and old age, however; on the other hand, the social anguish is increasing day by day in due with the offensive behaviours of adolescents.

A school boy who killed his own class teacher, the active involvement of an adolescent in a gang rape, college students who killed their Principal in an arrogant manner, school children who consumed liquor inside the classroom, and an adolescent school girl who created a havoc in the public under intoxication, were few examples of issues that stormed our country in the recent years. According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), India, the juveniles in conflict with law were alarmingly increasing every year and the majority of the juvenile crimes (64%) are committed by those in the age group of 16-18 years. This illustrates how serious the phenomenon is and necessary steps have to be taken instantly. The miserable situation existing in our country is that, a deviant behaviour is recorded only when it has well transformed into a crime. There is a dearth of evidence on adolescent's deviant behaviour in its initial stage which is essential to curb further deterioration.

Factors influencing deviant behaviour

The deterioration in the moral standards and non-adherence to norms seen among the adolescents is indeed confusing. It raises lot of questions about the factors responsible for these behaviours. The adolescents cannot be solely blamed for all the behaviours they exhibit rather the contributing factors for these deviant acts must be well checked and analysed. Features like educational system, family and parenting, peers, and social support system play a pivotal role in influencing the behaviours of the adolescents.



Family Atmosphere

Family environment plays an important role in the personality development of the adolescents. Parent's failure in disciplining the children is one of the reasons for the adolescent's deviant behaviour. It can't be denied that parents are responsible to provide a healthy environment for their children in terms of happiness and fun, when they fail to do it children become deviant which was continued in their adolescence.

School Environment

The environment at school also plays a vital role for the adolescents to become deviant. When the educational system pressurizes the students with heavy work load without a proper channel for recreation, the pupil might pick up undesirable attitudes and behaviours. A school without a counselor fails to address the holistic needs of its wards. The excessive importance given to academic performance and competency skills makes the students too weak to accept their failures and to work on it positively.

Peer Influence

Majority of the adolescents are influenced by the attitude and behaviour of their peer groups. They quickly learn the behaviour of their friends irrespective of whether it is positive or negative. Adolescents in order to be accepted in their peer group adapt any extreme behaviour though it might become hazardous to themselves or others.

Media

Media is the mirror of the society. The influence of media in the behaviour of adolescents is enormous. The glamour of the industry, the fame of the actors, has blindfolded the youth from consequential thinking.

Thus the deviant behaviour of adolescents has its roots from the environment in which he/she lives in. Factors such as family, school environment, peer influence and media definitely decides on the kind of youth they build for the country.

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