



Sociology Of Deviant Behaviour: Attitude, Behaviour And Conditions

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ABSTRACT

Sociologically, a deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied while a deviant behaviour is one that people so label. Deviance lies in the eyes of the beholder. There is nothing inherently deviant in any particular attitude, act, or condition, until some section or groups define them as deviant. Deviance only exists when it is created by society. Hence, the ethos of the society of the time is kernal in labelling acts and persons. As deviancy can be in attitude, behaviour and conditions, so too, theories of deviancy are of psychological, biological and sociological. Psychological theories address attitudinal deviancy, while biological theories respond to behaviour deviancy and sociological theories answers to sociological deviancy. Thus 'ABC' of deviancy is explained by the 'PBS' theories of deviancy. Social determinism approach stresses that though human beings are endowed with free will, it gets neutralised in the social situations and, finally, the individual gives in to the ways of society. Social Disorganisation theory suggests that disorganized societies tend to have more deviants; and Anomie theory holds that it is normlessness that leads individuals to deviancy while social control theory reasons that most people would avoid deviant behaviour if they have a strong bond with social conventions (norms) and institutions like family, religion and state. Social learning theory asserts that every new member in the society learns socially acceptable as well as unacceptable (deviant) behaviour from his/her surroundings and the preceding generation(s). Differential association and learning theory further consolidates that it is not just anyone but rather, it is from the most significant persons, friends and neighbours that most behaviour are learned. Social milieu and neighbourhood, therefore, are of crucial importance in developing deviants. Theory of Triadic Influence (TTI) ultimately comprehends these different components and streams them in a triadic order of personal, social and environment factors. All the three exert sway at three levels- Ultimate/underlying causes, Distal or predisposing influences and Proximal or immediate predictors- which lead to an individual's choice of decisions, experiment and, finally behaviour. This paper is a theoretical discourse that concludes the view that deviancy and deviant behaviour are subject to society and the historical time, not permanent or absolute.

Key Words: Deviancy; Attitude, Behaviour and Conditions (ABC); Psychological, Biological and Sociological (PBS); Theory of Triadic Influence (TTI); Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATOD); Experimental Tobacco Use (ETU); Experimental Alcohol Use (EAU); Social Referents.

INTRODUCTION

Having taken nearly 400 years to arrive at an acceptable definition to the sociological meaning of the term 'deviance,' today 'deviance' refers to behaviour that is banned, censured and carrying a certain stigma or liable to be penalized, whereas in non-sociological terms 'deviance' is behaviour which violates society's standards and, therefore, considered unacceptable. The most basic definition of deviance is that it is a behaviour that is statistically infrequent. A contrast could be traced between the normal, which is common, and the abnormal or deviant, which is uncommon (Nair, 2008). Deviance, in a sociological context, describes action or behaviour that violates social norms, including formally enacted rules as well as informal violations of social norms. In non-sociological terms 'deviance' is behaviour which violates society's

standards and therefore, considered unacceptable. Normally, people seldom speak of deviancy, they comment on specific acts or behaviour without categorizing such acts or behaviour

Deviant behaviour is an unacceptable behaviour or action that is unorthodox to social norms and cultural norms. An individual deviates from what is generally expected in a normal pattern and is acceptable in the society. Norms are standard behaviour; “a shared expectation of behaviour that connotes what is considered culturally desirable and appropriate” (Oxford Dictionary of Sociology, 1994). Haralambos and Holborn (2000) defines norm as “a specific guide to action acceptable and appropriate behaviour in particular situation.”

Deviant behaviour is a violation of this norm although it can be interpreted in many ways as social norms are different from one culture to another. There are basically two types of deviant behaviour: Formal Deviance and Informal Deviance. A deviant behaviour of violating enacted laws such as homicide and theft is formal deviance while deviant behaviour that violates social norms which are not codified by laws is informal deviance (Deviant Behaviour, 2015). Examples for former are violations of codified laws, rules, regulations and codes of conduct while picking of nose in public and belching loudly are examples for informal deviance (Mondal, n.d).

What is meant by deviant behaviour and what constitute deviancy are matters of interest as much as concern, especially to the youth and adolescents. Though it is labelled as ‘deviant behaviour’ society distinguishes both attitude and conditions as deviancy. It can be observed that a behaviour per se is labelled ‘deviant’ behaviour but when the same behaviour is acted by certain people and under certain circumstances, it is treated ‘normal’. Hence a ‘confusion’ arises in the ordinary thinking adolescent. This article tries to clear this puzzlement from the sociological perspectives by substantiating that deviancy and deviant behaviour exist only in the framework of society and in the prism of a specific view.

1. Deviancy : Attitude, Behaviour, Conditions

The early terminology for ‘deviance’ being ‘wrong doing’ concentrated on the ‘why’ of that action. The answer pertaining to this has come to be considered today as ABC, attitude, behaviour, and conditions of deviance. Goode (2005), cited in Adler and Adler (2003), says “people can be labelled deviant as the result of the ABC of deviance, their attitude, behaviour, or conditions” (p.8). One may be branded as deviant for alternative sets of attitudes or belief system as much as for behaviour and these are the byproducts of the conditions in which one is placed.

Deviancy is a social construct as it is society that labels certain behaviour as deviant. Simple societies have less behaviour types labelled as deviant whereas complex pluralistic societies have multiple and competing symbolic-moral universes that clash and negotiate (Ben-Yehuda, 1990). Deviance is relative and social morality is continually restructured (Ben-Yehuda, 1990; Schur, 1980). Mostly, deviancy is seen as human behaviour like drug abuse, alcoholism, gambling, adultery, etc., and that too those behaviours that are regarded as indicating ‘blemish of individual character’ (Goffman, 1963). Certain commonly considered deviant behaviours are picking of nose in public, naked exposure in public, licking of ground, binge drinking, homicide, suicide, theft, robbery, rape, prostitution.

In a stratified society, certain sections or classes have the upper hand in labelling and defining certain forms of behaviour as deviance. This power is closely associated with the power structures of society and presumably higher the social position, greater the influence (Ben-Yehuda, 1990; Gusfield, 1963) and the power to define a behaviour as deviant. Deviance creation is linked to political and moral powers of a social system. The alleged deficiencies of a social group are revealed and reviled by the proponents/crusaders of the deviancy attributes. Becker (1963) observed that successful moral crusaders are generally dominated by those in the upper strata of society. Though dominated and highly influential, the moral and political powers need the broader public support. And to achieve this purpose the deviancy proponents mobilize the power, create a perceived threat for the moral or social issue in question, generate public awareness of the issue and propose a clear and acceptable solution to the problem, and overcome resistance to the crusade (Ben-Yehuda, 1990; Becker, 1963). Thus, terming behaviour as ‘deviant’ is a process that involves various players of the social system. Hence Marcionis et al., (2011) hold that the issue of social power is inseparable from a definition of deviance because some groups in society can criminalize the actions of another group by using their influence on legislators and influential sections of society. In general terms, people are regarded

as 'deviant' for their outward actions, which may be intentional or inadvertent, such as violating dress code or speech conventions, sexual behaviour, committing murder, and the like.

Deviance can be ascribed, achieved or conditional. Conditional deviance has an achieved status when it denotes something deviant that has been done, while some behaviours have an ascribed status. While becoming too fat, too thin, or tattooing the body are of the former category, socio-economic status such as being poor, a person of a particular ethnicity, colour, handicaps, height, weight, colour fits the latter category (Adler & Adler, 2003). Some deviances are crimes (murder) while most are not, whereas most are legal (drugs such as alcohol, tobacco) while some are illegal (drugs such as opium).

Deviant attitudes are as much prevalent and common as deviant behaviour. When deviance is associated with attitudes and beliefs it is termed as 'cognitive deviance.' Religious, political and scientific beliefs that are regarded as unacceptable come under this category. '...holding unconventional, unorthodox, unpopular or deviant beliefs may be regarded as 'cognitive deviance.' Beliefs become deviant when they disagree and violate the norms of a given society, or an institution or a sect within the society and that leads to negative reactions from the members of society. When the expressions of certain beliefs violate the prevailing norms in society or groups and generate negative reactions, it is termed as deviant (Goode, 2005).

Sociologically, deviance exists when there exists (1) something that violates a social norm or rule; (2) a person or persons to whom that violation is attached; (3) an audience or group of persons who judge and evaluate the normative violation; and (4) the likelihood that negative social reactions will follow the discovery of that violation (Goode, 2005).

2. Socio-Cultural Factors on Deviancy Formation

The theory of 'Differential Association' explains deviant behaviour as a product of learning in interaction with other persons, principally with intimate personal groups. The deviant and variant behaviour of a child is often the reflection of his surroundings as well. Children follow certain behaviour patterns by imitation and are affected more by what their social referents do than by what they say, and they carry these into their adolescent and adult behaviour. The environment in which the children grow has a strong influence on their impressionable minds and it is through their early association with their parents that they form the concepts of right and wrong. Freud termed this sense of right and wrong, as super ego, i.e., conscience.

In Bhattacharya's (2000) view, feelings of inadequacy, frustration, and emotional insecurity in an individual play a dominant role in giving rise to deviancy. The need for security, response, recognition and development are basic needs of every child. The desire to be wanted, loved and understood is innate to every child. These desires increase as one grows up and everyone expects them to be met from the family and others. If these needs are not adequately met in the crucial periods of a child's growing up period, dissatisfaction and hostility start agitating in their minds. The consequences of such a situation can lead to disastrous results both for the individual and society. What determines the anti-social propensities in an individual is determined by what happens in the infancy and childhood even more than the adulthood. No one is born a deviant or delinquent; rather one becomes a deviant through learning process in a specific environment. A child adopts himself or herself more by imitating rather than by listening. This highlights the fact that one's family and social factors influence the behaviour of the individuals, as well as his/her beliefs and attitudes. Parampukattil (2006) cited a list of social factors like wrong upbringing, neglect and lukewarm attitudes of the 'significant others', unhappy home, large family, feeling of insecurity, lack of recreational facilities, abject poverty and unwholesome surroundings as conditions that lead adolescents to deviancy. Any one or a combination of these factors can lead an adolescent to deviant and delinquent activities.

Factors of deviancy could be general or specific. General factors include physical, socio-cultural, areal and regional factors. Physical factors consist of geography, climate, and season and weather, whereas dislocation, migration, and heterogeneity of population and cultural clash of conduct norms are socio-cultural factors (Gillin et al., 1965). Areal and regional differences include areas and regions which are categorized as frontiers, political borders, inter-urban, peri-urban areas, metropolitan regions and effect of class, sex, age and so on. These factors aid higher deviancy possibilities (Parampukattil, 2006). Collective practices of the community, unrestricted promotion of its use without any censors, lenient attitude to its use in public and in private are indications of its cultural acceptance and tolerance and can be categorised as socio cultural factors. Environmental factors include family conditions, peer factors, community conditions,

economic conditions, the religious and other factors like superstitions, factions and feuds and exploitation of children by adults (Bhattacharyya, 2000; Gillin et al., 1965).

The specific factors of deviancy include biological and environmental factors. Biological factors constitute physical and hereditary factors (Gillin et al. 1965), constitutional factors and the glandular activity of the deviant. Glandular activity refers to mental deficiency and the defective and deficient constitution of persons. Mental deficiencies and mental disorders which come under mental and psychological factors (Bhattacharyya, 2000) are also classified under biological factors (Madan, 1966).

3. Sociology of Deviance

Sociologically, deviance is not a judgment of right and wrong of an action, belief or attitude. Though deviance is being different, it is not to be equated with 'different'. That is to say, 'differentness is not a definitional criterion of deviance' even though deviant activities, beliefs, and conditions statistically differ from those of the majority. Lots of things that are different are conventional, and lots of activities that are engaged in by the majority are deviant (Goode, 2005). Neither is deviance defined by harm as both are separate and are independent of one another. Many harmless activities are deviant, and many harmful activities are conventional and we could be deviant if we do not participate in them. For example, cigarettes kill more people - 440,000 each year, than illicit drugs, -20,000 (Horgan et al., 2001), but its manufacturers are not locked up or stigmatized. Most people do not condemn tobacco officials, in spite of the strong anti-smoking drives. Though the two are loosely related, it is not defined by them.

Further, deviance is only relative and not absolute. What concerns one is how society or a major section of the community views and reacts to the person who enacts it. Behaviour becomes deviant only when it is seen and reacted to in a society or in a certain context. For example, Gorer (1967), as cited in Goode, 2000, argues that adultery is not seen as deviant among the Lepchas of Sikkim; rather they tolerate and even encourage it, whereas in Saudi Arabia, it is most decidedly deviant, so much so that if found engaging in it, the female partner is likely to be punished severely, even put to death (Minai, 1981). Deviance is relative to time and place because what is considered deviant in one social context may be non-deviant in another.

4. Sociological Approach to Deviancy

Structural Functionalism Theory, (Emile Durkheim, Robert Merton), viewing society as a moral phenomenon, has its roots in morals (norms, values and laws) that are taught to individuals to regulate their behaviour. According to it, structural opportunities or lack of it, rather than some psychological or individual pathology, is the root cause of deviance¹. Deviant behaviour is the result of the discrepancy between socially sanctioned means and the realisation of highly desirable goals. According to functionalism, deviance is that which violates the norms of a society or a section of society².

For Erikson (1996) deviance is functional for society, because it serves as a means to unite people in indignation against the moral degradation and social disintegration and helps in defining morality and bringing people together. He held the view that 'deviance' aids in defining morality and in bringing people together. Deviance (norms-violation) reminds others of the rewards of conformity. For Durkheim, deviance is inevitable in all societies, and argues that deviance is normal rather than pathological, as it serves a positive function in society. Adler and Adler (2003) state "when the number of people declared 'deviant' by current moral standards rises or falls too much, society alters its moral criteria to maintain the level of

¹The young members are taught 'right' and 'wrong' in a society early in life, and most people conform to it right throughout adulthood. These moral beliefs determine how people behave, what they want and who they are. Durkheim suggested that societies with high degrees of social integration (bonding, community involvement) would increase the conformity of the individuals. He saw norms existing at the societal level and lack of social integration creating a situation where they were no longer becoming a significant part in the individual. He referred to this condition as /anomie' and claimed that anomie was creating social disintegration, leading to deviance (Adler & Adler 2003). Thus, anomie results from the lack of access to culturally and socially prescribed goals and the lack of availability of legitimate means for attaining these goals.

Structural theory locates the root cause of deviance in the invisible social structure that makes up the society. It tries to explain why there are more cases of deviance in some societies than in others, by arguing that those with greater degrees of inequality are likely to show more crime than those where people have roughly similar amounts of the good things available.

² Functionalism argues that some actions are more likely to be punished because they are seen as deviance more or less universally in societies and cultures across the world and are viewed as dysfunctional, and holds that tolerating them could lead to their widespread enactment resulting into a weaker, less cohesive and less viable society, and calls for punishment, condemnation, or censure of the norm violator. Incest is such an act, because it undermines the foundation of the society and the family (Davis, 1949, 1976).

deviance in the optimal range” (p.44-45). At different times society may “define deviancy down” (Moynihan,1993)³ or may “define deviancy up” (Krauthammer, 1993)⁴. What deviancy does for society is to define certain boundaries for everyone and enforce the ‘collective conscience’ of the community.

In a certain sense it can be said that a deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied while a deviant behaviour is one that people so label. According to Becker (1963), deviance lies in the eyes of the beholder, emphasising that there is nothing inherently deviant in any particular act, until some section or groups define the act as deviant. Deviance only exists when it is created by society. Hence, it might be improper to consider an act as deviant or normal without considering the ethos of the society of the time.

5. Sociological Theories of Deviance

There are psychological, biological and sociological theories explaining deviancy. Psychological theories, such as the free will or rationalistic theories of Cessare Beccaria (1738-1794) and Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), argue that violations of rules, norms and laws are caused by the ‘Free-will’ of an individual and hence are the primary responsibility of the individual as against the biological theorists who attribute it to the biological makeup of the deviant individual. The social theorists hold the society, social patterns, social control systems, cultural and familial environment and social nature of human beings as influential factors that conditions deviant behaviours. These theories seem to address the ‘ABC’ of deviancy: i.e., psychological theories explains attitudinal deviancy, biological theories addresses behaviour deviancy and sociological theories responds to deviancy of conditions. Thus ‘ABC’ of deviancy are explained by ‘PBS’ of theories. This paper deliberates on sociological theories.

Stressing the importance of social factors as causes of deviancy and holding society responsible for the behaviour of the individual, social theories assert that although humans may have freewill, it gets neutralised in society, and finally behaviour emerges as a product of that society. The proponents argue that fluctuations in rates of deviance occur as a result of substantial changes in basic social, economic, and political conditions (Mc Caghy et al., 2003).

The fact of the matter could be that all these factors are at play at different degrees in different individuals. While agreeing with Goode (2005), who articulated “Today, no single perspective or approach is dominant in the study of deviance... for all these are concerned entirely with an explanation of deviant behaviour” (p. 76), this author is inclined to stress the supersedence of social and cultural factors involved in deviant behaviours. Hence, social theories such as Social Disorganisation Theory⁵, Anomie or Strain Theory⁶,

³ In a survey, teachers in 1940 listed 1) talking out of turn; (2) chewing gum; (3) making noise; (4) running in halls; and (5) cutting in line as the most important problems in the school, while in 1990 in a repeat of the survey the list consisted of (1) drug abuse; (2) alcohol abuse; (3) pregnancy; (4) suicide; (5) rape. Basing on this finding, Krauthammer (1993), argued that there had been an explosion of deviancy in American society over the period of fifty years. He expressed his view in a column titled “Defining Deviancy Up”.

⁴ In that column he recalled the view of Moynihan (1993) expressed in an essay in *The American Scholar* entitled “Defining Deviancy Down” where, citing examples of American society of 1940s and 1960s, he argued that when the rate of deviancy reaches such vast and incomprehensible proportions, the society adopts the only singular form of denial. To address the situation society defines away this phenomenon in the only way possible: by redefining deviancy down so as to explain away and make “normal” what a more civilized, ordered, and healthy society would long ago have labelled—and once long ago did label—deviant. He regards the phenomenon of lowering the threshold to make it appear normal in order to keep the volume of deviancy – redefined deviancy-within manageable proportions as ‘defining deviancy down’.

In contrast, Krauthammer (1993) says that defining deviancy down is only half truth and that there is also a complementary phenomenon of defining deviancy up. In his words “...while for the criminals and the crazies deviancy has been defined down (the bar defining normality has been lowered), for the ordinary bourgeois deviancy has been defined up (the bar defining normality has been raised)”, making once innocent behaviour being treated as deviant.

⁵ **Social Disorganisation Theory:** Placing the disorganisation in society as the cause of deviancy, social disorganisation theory contents that increase of social Disorganisation in a given neighbourhood or community comparably increases deviant behaviours in individuals (Traub & Little, 1999; Park, 1926). Deviancy is the outcome of the inability of the society to develop ‘strong formal and informal linkages’ among their populaces resulting into failure to regulate the behaviour of their fellow neighbour (Bursik & Grammick, 1993). According to it, deviants are the way they are, as a result of the fact that they are “disproportionally exposed to the disruptive forces of rapid social change” (Pfohl, 1994, p. 209).

⁶ **Anomie Theory :** According to anomie theory, also called ‘strain theory’, disturbance in social order results in a certain kind of strain or pressure in individuals triggers deviant behaviour. Anomie is a state of disruption of the social order characterized by a situation of normlessness (Durkheim), and a disjunction between culturally defined goals and structurally available opportunities (Merton). Condition of anomie influences the frequency of deviant behaviour according to Robert Merton who reasoned that “social structures exert a definite

Social Control Theory⁷, Learning Theory as well as Social Learning Theory and finally the Theory of Triadic Influence (TTI) are considered here. While Social Disorganisation Theory, Anomie or Strain Theory and Social Control Theory stress on the social conditions as the factor, Learning Theory and Social Learning Theory focus on the social nature of humans as the factor. TTI is a systematic exposition of various possible factors that conditions or causes deviant behaviours and their influence on individuals at varied levels.

Sociological theories underline the inexorable influence of social conditions in deviancy development in society. The conditions that generate deviancy are the social condition of 'disorganisation' or 'lack of strong formal and informal linkages' among community members (social disorganisation theory), 'disturbance in social order' resulting in undue pressure on individuals (anomie theory) and 'absence of social control mechanism' in a society (social control theory). Learning theory and social learning theory endorse the social nature and socialisation process of humans as conditions accountable for deviance as it is socially learned than innately acquired.

Learning theory and Social Learning theory: While Learning theory maintains that deviance is acquired from others who are closely associated with the deviant, Social Learning or Differential Association theory⁸ (1939) of Edwin Sutherland (1883-1950) and Donald Cressey (1919-1987) advocate that deviant behaviour is socially learned and that too, not just from anyone but from one's most significant friends, family members and immediate neighbourhood. Deviance is learned by face to face interaction between people who are close or intimate with one another⁹.

Socio-biological theories accept that human biology has an influence on human behaviour and, as such, on deviant behaviour. It applies biology in explaining deviant behaviour and argues that human behaviour is genetically determined to the extent that biology defies human learning potential and that human mind is

pressure upon certain persons in the society to engage in non-conforming rather than conforming conduct" (Merton 1957, p.132). In this context, deviancy is the result of strain and frustration arising from individual's failure to achieve 'culturally defined goals' with the available institutionalized means within the existing social environment (Parampukattil, 2006). Anomie, 'absence of norms', creates social disintegration and leads to deviance (Adler & Adler, 2003).

Social Control Theory: Absence of balanced social control mechanism, according to social control theory, (Hirschi, 1969), effects in non-conforming or deviant behaviour in society. Social control rests to the extent to which people develop a stake in conformity, 'a bond to society' and their lack of ties with the conforming, mainstream, law abiding culture frees them to engage in deviance. What causes deviant behaviour is the absence of social control that censures conformity and conventional behaviour. Most people do not engage in deviant or criminal acts because of strong bonds with or ties to conventions and social institutions.

⁸Albert Bandura's (1977) **social learning theory** contends that every new generation learns human behaviour from the environment and the behaviour of the preceding generation(s) through the process of learning. He calls those individuals as 'models', who provide examples to observe and imitate, and include parents, friends within the peer group, teachers and significant others from whom the new generation learns its behaviour. The learning happens when individuals pay attention to some of these people (models) and encode their behaviour before they imitate (copy) the behaviour they observed (McLeod, 2011). Further an individual is more likely to imitate those people whom s/he perceives as similar to herself/ himself and is not necessary that s/he imitates all those behaviours he is exposed to. However, as their circle enlarges from people with non-deviant ideas and behaviour to people holding deviant attitudes and behaviour, they are more likely to adopt them and engage in deviance. Therefore, the more one has friends with deviant attitudes and deviant behaviour, the more likelihood of s/he is to become one.

In the process, the people around the individual either reinforce or reprimand the individual's imitation. The theory is of the opinion that when an individual receives a rewarding response from the others, s/he is likely to continue performing the behaviour and vice versa.

The norms and values of deviant sub-culture, the rationalizations for legitimizing deviant behaviour, the techniques necessary to commit the deviant acts, the status system of the sub-culture, etc., are also learned by the deviants in this process. They look at deviance, thus, as a process that occurs while shifting from more normative friends to more deviant friends and not deciding to be deviant at a fixed point of time. People do not fall into deviance through their own devising or by seeing it in the mass media, but rather by having the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, traditions and motives passed down to them through interpersonal means.

This theory affirms that the age at which individuals encounter deviant behaviour and the intimacies of deviant relationships proportionally increase the process of influence. They may drift between deviance and legitimacy (Martza 1964) for some time, before finally choosing deviance over conventional behaviour. Quitting deviance too is similarly a gradual and difficult process that involves shifting between normative and deviant behaviour. The learning theory postulates that a person becomes deviant or delinquent because of an excess of definitions favourable to violation of norms. When favourable definitions exceed unfavourable ones, an individual will turn to deviance.

⁹In the view of the proponents, deviant behaviour is developed by individuals as a result of reading a book or a newspaper, seeing movies or watching television. These knowledge, skills, sentiments, values and traditions and motives are passed down as a result of 'interpersonal' - not impersonal - means. The earlier in age one is exposed to these values and attitudes (which Sutherland calls as 'definitions') favourable to deviance, the greater the likelihood that one will, in fact, become deviant (Goode, 2005, p 67-70).

For example, if as a child, one smokes or drinks alcohol or apong and receives no strong disapproval or retraction from the significant others, he deduces that these are acceptable and are appreciated (reinforced), and hence is more inclined to emulate than reject or repudiate. The use of the term 'identification' by social learning theory is different from imitation as it may involve more than one behaviour whereas imitation usually involves copying of a single behaviour (Bandura 1977; Bandura et al.1961).

biologically programmed to accept certain experiences while rejecting others (Wilson, 1975; 1978). According to it, law-abiding behaviour must be learned, for it is not inherent that people will conform.

All sociological theories locate deviance in the social domain and renounce the tendency towards one-dimensional psychological explanation that roots causation in pathology, compulsion, neurosis, or maladjustment. Learning theory proposes that deviance is acquired from closely associated others and social learning theory furthers it by claiming that this learning happens from one's most significant friends, family members and immediate neighbourhood.

Theory of Triadic Influence (Flay & Petraitis, 1994) offers a meta theoretical orientation suggesting higher order descriptions and explanations of human behaviour. The theory describes a theoretical framework on experimental tobacco use (ETU) and experimental alcohol use (EAU) among adolescents, a causal process on the onset of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) and the causes of ETU and EAU and on preventing ETU and EAU (Flay et al., 2009). It proposes that an increased focus on distal and ultimate levels of influence will produce greater and more sustainable health behaviour and reduce deviant behaviour patterns with regard to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. According to it, behaviour is the result of three streams of causes of behaviour (intrapersonal, interpersonal, and socio-cultural-environmental) that flow through three levels of causation (ultimate → distal → proximal). Multiple factors in each of the three streams interact with factors in each of the other streams finally converging on decisions/ intentions as the final predictor of behaviour. The theory also advocates a reciprocal/feedback effect to alter the original causes of the behaviour (Flay, 2007).

TTI arranges different theories and variables by different levels (tiers) of causation. Those variables (e.g., intentions) that have a direct effect on behaviour are called causally proximal or immediate, and those variables (e.g., motivation to comply with or please others) that are mediated through other variables like social normative beliefs are called distal or predisposing, while the third variables (e.g., style of parenting or prices of alcohol and cigarettes) are mediated by even more variables, and so are more causally distal and are called underlying or ultimate causes of behaviour. The third variable includes ethnic culture, personality and neighbourhood environment. In TTI these variables are arranged into three relatively distinct types or streams of influence corresponding to Person, Situation and Environment, and proposes that each of the influences acts through the levels of causation.

The PERSONAL influences are intrapersonal characteristics that contribute to one's self-efficacy regarding specific behaviour, while inter-personal SOCIAL influences are social situations/contexts or micro-environments that contribute to social normative beliefs about specific behaviour and cultural-ENVIRONMENTAL influences are multiple socio-cultural macro environmental factors that contribute to attitudes toward specific behaviour. The effects of ultimate and distal causes of behaviour flow predominantly within each stream (personal, social and environmental factors) and act through a small set of proximal predictors of behaviour (self-efficacy, social normative beliefs, attitudes and intentions) with multiple mediating factors in between.

In the terms of Glandz et al., (2002), the TTI addresses both (1) a theory of the problem, in which the focus is on explanation and prediction of human behaviour and (2) a change theory, in which the emphasis is on guiding the development of human behaviour interventions.

Conclusion

Modernist thinking was all about search of an abstract truth of life; postmodernist thinkers believe that there is no universal truth, abstract or otherwise. Truth is relative and subjective. Subjective experiences are truths. Post structural thinking challenges broad structural thinking (Marx, Freud) which essentially assumed that observable phenomena could be best examined by underlying structures or relations. Whereas structuralism might view meaning as fixed, post structuralism would argue that meaning is multiple, unstable and open to interpretation (Weedon, 1987) because it is produced within a language or discourse. Language and meaning must be interpreted in relation to specific social, historical and political contexts as discourses are situated socially, historically and politically (Fook, 2012). Post modernism emphasises on social context and constant connection of this with an individual's experience. Reality is multifaceted and not logo centric so as to classify it with an 'either' 'or' choice.

The theories above articulate the various dimensions and socio- cultural factors of deviance. Invariably these theories maintain that the immediate family and neighbourhood influences adolescents in choosing deviant attitude, behaviour and conduct. Social determinism approach stresses that though human beings are

endowed with free will, it gets neutralised in the social situations and, finally, the individual gives in to the ways of society. Social Disorganisation theory suggests that disorganized societies tend to have more deviants; and Anomie theory holds that it is normlessness that leads individuals to deviancy while social control theory reasons that most people would avoid deviant behaviour if they have a strong bond with social conventions (norms) and institutions like family, religion, state and so on. Social learning theory asserts that every new member in the society learns socially acceptable as well as unacceptable (deviant) behaviour from his/her surroundings and the preceding generation(s). Differential association and learning theory further consolidates that it is not just anyone but rather, it is from the most significant persons, friends and neighbours that most behaviour are learned. Social milieu and neighbourhood, therefore, are of crucial importance in developing deviants. Theory of triadic influence (TTI) ultimately comprehends these different components and streams them in a triadic order of personal, social and environment factors. All the three exert sway at three levels- ultimate/underlying causes, distal or predisposing influences and proximal or immediate predictors- which lead to an individual's choice of decisions, experiment and finally behaviour.

Thus it is cogent to conclude that society provides the 'Conditions' upon which individuals develop 'Attitude' that results in 'Behaviour' (ABC of deviancy). Hence, judging behaviour as deviant or normal would be improper outside its socio-cultural ambit. No behaviour is deviant away from the society... in time, place, how and how much. It is related to context, time, person and quantity. Focus of sociological theories is that society and its system are responsible for creating and labelling deviants in society.

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