

## Preface

Friends, in unit-8, you learned about three-tier structure of panchayati raj. Effective implementation of panchayati raj calls for its members to play their roles with loyalty. Each society has a structure of norms that guides its members to play their role according to their status. When a member acts against these norms, situation of social deviation occurs. In this unit, we will learn about what is called as social deviation, what are its features and will discuss about juvenile delinquency and youth unrest.

The word 'social norms' is used to denote prevailing rules in society in sociology. Social norms, guiding members how to behave in society, are bases of any social system and are found universally in all human societies. Friends, you cannot imagine your school sustaining without rules. Society makes efforts to maintain unity, integrity and continuity by regulating its members' behaviour through social norms. These efforts, creating an atmosphere of group life, inspire members to behave in a way that is helpful in satisfying human needs and maintaining social relations.

In the context of pursuing social norms, two kinds of behaviour are found in society :

- (1) Behaviour according to norms (norm conformity)
- (2) Behaviour against norms (social deviation)

Each society has its unique set of norms which includes folkways, customs, values, acts enacted by the state, traffic rules etc. If members of a society accept social norms and act according to them, such behaviour is known as the behaviour which is in conformity to social norms. However, all members of a society do not always behave in conformity to social norms. Certain members of society, knowingly or unknowingly, behave against norms. Such behaviour is known as social deviation. Increase in such kind of behaviour in society becomes challenging and problematic and puts unity and integrity of society at risk. Therefore, sociology studies socially deviant behaviour.

## Definition of socially deviant behaviour

**Horton and Hunt :** 'Any failure to conform to customary norms is social deviance'.

**Marshall Clinard :** 'When behaviour of members in a disapproved direction exceeds the tolerance limit of society, it is known as social deviance'.

According to sociologist Robert Merton, social deviance is individual's behaviour which is against socially accepted norms. He has explained the concept of social deviance in detail in his theory of anomie. Howard Becker terms social deviance as infraction of socially accepted rules. In brief, social deviance is behaviour against norms or behaviour violating the norms established by society.

There are two types of norms for maintenance of social system: (1) affirmative norms means those norms that indicate what an individual should do, for example, respecting elders and (2) negative norms means those norms which indicate what should not be done, for example, one should not steal.

In brief, it can be said that social norms specify whether individual's behaviour is right or wrong or it is appropriate or inappropriate. Both individual and society are closely involved in formation of social norms. It should be specified here that only those norms which are supported by the group or society acquire the form of social norms. Individual contributes to the maintenance of social system by complying with these norms.

After having primary understanding of deviant behaviour, let us get familiar with features of social deviance.

**Features of social deviance :**

**(1) Social deviance is a behavioural incident :**

Established norms of society are implied in individual's behaviour. In other words, an individual in a society behaves in the context of established norms, and in this sense, conformity to norms or their violation is a behavioural incident.

**(2) Social deviance is a universal incident :**

Social deviance is found in all kinds of societies in the world, whether they are simple or developed. Though it is desirable that all members of society behave in conformity to norms, it is not possible for all members to do so in all situations and therefore social deviance occurs. In this sense, social deviance is a universal incident.

**(3) Social deviance is relative :**

Social deviance is relative. It means that a behaviour which is considered deviant in one society may not be considered same in another. For example, drinking is a deviant behaviour in Gujarat as it is prohibited here but it is not a deviant behaviour in Maharashtra. Norms of any society are directly related with the culture and the values of that society and because of variation in culture and values norms also differ from one society to another. In this sense, social deviance is termed as relative.

**(4) Diversity of social deviance :**

Diversity of caste, sex, religion, village, town etc. of Indian society results in diversity of social norms. Diversity of norms, in turn, increases the possibility of social deviance. Therefore, it is also necessary to understand the concept of tolerable limit of behaviour. According to this concept, if the behaviour of individual or group is within the limit of tolerance, it is not considered as deviance. But when it crosses the limit of tolerance as decided by society, it becomes challenging and deviance.

**(5) Social deviance is a behaviour against social expectations :**

As each society formulates social norms for its sustenance and for regulating individual's behaviour, it is natural that social expectations are associated with social norms. Society expects that its members' behaviour should comply with norms so that social system and harmony is maintained and social goals become easier to obtain. Behaviour which is against such social expectations is known as social deviance.

**(6) Social deviance is an undesirable social behaviour :**

The behaviour of an individual or a group which disrupts social order is always undesirable. Situations like communal riots, activities of naxalites, drug trafficking etc, are always undesirable for most of the people and they express their displeasure towards anarchy created by deviant behaviour. Thus, social deviance is an undesirable social behaviour.

A number of factors are responsible for deviant behaviour of individual in any society. Poor socialization, poor implementation of norms, poor methods of punishment, vagueness of norms, corrupt regime, disharmony between norms, techniques of defense and mass media help in creating situation for deviant behaviour. In normal circumstances, deviant behaviour is detrimental for society. However, sometimes, deviant behaviour results in such changes that are beneficial to society. Violation of certain

existing norms which prevent development of society and spread a sort of rigidity in society plays a constructive role for society. Examples are, protest of *sati pratha* by Raja Ram Mohan Roy or *Dandi Kooch* (Dandi march) of Gandhiji. Thus, deviant behaviour is visible in both destructive and constructive forms.

Deviant behaviour includes both criminal and anti-social behaviour. If any individual or group violates any law enacted by the state, it is termed as crime. For example, behaviour against the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 is a deviant behaviour. However, definition of crime tends to change overtime and the behaviour for which a law is enacted cannot be termed as deviant behaviour before the enactment of that law. Only after enactment of law it is termed as deviant. Example is, Domestic Violence Act of 2005. When an individual or group violates or acts against the established norms such as mores, customs and traditions, it can be termed as unsociable.

Friends, after getting familiar with deviance, we will learn about juvenile delinquency.

### **Juvenile delinquency :**

A child, from the initial period of life, tries to learn and assimilate cultural aspects of society such as norms, values etc. and particularly by imitating others learns and prepares him/her self to act as a responsible person. Children are known for their ignorance, lack of sense and fickle. They make us think about juvenile delinquency when they behave against social norms or laws.

The concept of juvenile delinquency is related to age; illegal behaviour of children aged 7 to 18 years is termed as juvenile delinquency and such children are known as juvenile delinquents. According to the part 2 (12) of Juvenile Justice Act 2015, “child” means a person who has not completed eighteen years of age. Increasing incidents and coverage of juvenile delinquency have attracted the attention of sociologist and anthropologists.

### **Definition of juvenile delinquency**

**Terminological dictionary of sociology :** ‘In broader sense, juvenile delinquency includes those anti-social activities of children of below certain age, which are prohibited by law or law has defined them as crime with the provision of certain legal action against them’.

**Hansa Sheth :** In sociological research, ‘juvenile delinquent’ indicates towards those children against whom police officers or court has taken some legal action’.

**Sethna :** ‘Juvenile delinquent involves wrongdoing by a child or a young person, who is under age specified by the law of the place concerned’.

In brief, all those activities of children which go against society and culture and are responsible for social disorganization are termed as juvenile delinquency and the child involved in such activities is known as juvenile delinquent.

### **Causes of juvenile delinquency**

It is generally not possible that any incident has only one reason behind it. This applies to juvenile delinquency too. The factors responsible for juvenile delinquency are too linked with each other to be separated out. However, they can be divided into two parts :



- (1) Social and economic factors
- (2) Personal and psychological factors

**(1) Social and economic factors :**

Socio-economic factors have prominent effect on deviant behaviour of children. They include family, school, peer group, means of contact etc. Let us understand them in detail.

**(1) Family :**

Family is a fundamental unit of socialization and the process of socialization is being affected by a variety of factors such as size of family, family's socio-economic condition, education of family members, relations between parents and children, methods applied by parents to regulate the behaviour of their children, etc. Fulfillment of child's physical and mental needs by family generates a feeling of social and psychological security in the child. However, unhappy relations between husband and wife or between parents and their children affect emotional development of child. Disharmony in family relations leads to the feeling of insecurity and contempt. Lack of the feeling of oneness with family members compels the child to spend time outside the home. In such times, if the child doesn't get favorable atmosphere outside the home s/he turns towards criminal activities.

Larger number of children in poor families directly affects child's education. Child needs to be involved in economic activity in a tender age to support the family. Moreover, elders of the family being busy in livelihood activities become unable to give adequate attention to child rearing. Such circumstances lead the child towards criminal activities.

Methods adopted for controlling teens in family also affect the process of their socialization. For example, controlling method being too strict or too loose or lack of it or contrariness in methods obstructs personality development of child. Sometimes when a child's reasonable demand is strictly negated, child tends to do improper activities such as running away from home or stealing etc. It is also desirable that both mother and father adopt similar method for regulating the behaviour of their child. Contrary methods of controlling child prevent development of specific behaviour pattern in child. In such circumstances, child tends to get inspiration from other than family members and try to imitate him/her which may increase the possibility of deviance in child. Moreover, child feels deprived in broken home caused by divorce or death and the situation affects his/her socialization.

**(2) School :**

Like family, school is also an important medium of socialization. Experiences of school-life contribute significantly towards personality development of child. However, excess of discipline, frequent punishment or school norms causing mental tension result in child being averse to school and education. In such circumstances, child prefers to remain absent from school. If child doesn't get suitable atmosphere outside the school and home for a longer period of time, possibility of deviance is increased.

**(3) Peer group :**

Peer group means the group of persons of same age. This group also plays an important role in shaping personality of child. Due to contact and proximity to the friends of peer group, child develops the feeling of oneness and intimacy with them. Behaviour of the friends of peer group belonging to different cultures directly affects child's psyche. In such time, company of bad friends may inspire the child to behave in a deviant manner.

**(4) Mass media :**

Through mass media such as cinema, television, mobile, internet, teens are exposed to everything including those which are not appropriate for their age. Excess of mass media, daily telecast of crime

related news and indecency have distorted child's mind. Curiosity, ignorance and lack of discrimination etc. may lead the child towards deviant behaviour.

#### **(5) Urban atmosphere :**

Urban atmosphere, to certain extent, encourages children for criminal behaviour. Urban community is a remote community in which a child can easily hide his/her criminal behaviour with lesser fear of being identified. Further, social control becomes less effective in dense areas and slums. Thus, such kind of urban atmosphere, in one way or the other, encourages child to move towards criminal activities.

#### **(2) Personal and psychological factors :**

Personal and psychological factors also play an important role in pushing child towards delinquent behaviour. The child with lack of discretion tends to move towards deviance. In addition, presence of rebellion attitude, high-mindedness, feeling of insecurity, cowardice, lack of self-control, inferiority, lack of sympathy, frustration, disappointment, violent behaviour etc. also compels child to act against society or norms.

In brief, it is certain that no child is born criminal; but it is child's surroundings and his/her personal traits that lead him/her to involve in criminal activities. And therefore, it can be said that personality is a diamond which gets matured in the shell of culture.

Thus, aforementioned factors affect social and psychological development of child. Deficiency in any of these factors affects child's behaviour and encourages him/her towards deviance.

#### **Efforts to reform juvenile delinquents**

The problem of child delinquency is challenging for any society. Therefore, transformation of their criminal attitude into constructive one through reformation and not through punishment seems to be the fundamental need. With consideration of this, the constitution of India has made certain legal provisions for children. According to these provisions, certain institutions, managed by governmental and non-governmental organizations, have been established. Economic and administrative responsibilities of these institutions have been given to the state. Some of the important institutions from among these are described below :

##### **(1) Juvenile court :**

Juvenile court is different from other courts of India. The first juvenile court was established in 1941 in Kolkata. Generally, in juvenile court, proceedings take place against children under the age of 16 years, who are found offenders. The judges of juvenile courts are experts in laws and child psychology and the atmosphere of juvenile court is sympathetic. After obtaining all the details about the reasons behind child's criminal behaviour, the convict child is sent to reform home for improvement and not for punishment.

##### **(2) Probation :**

Probation means experimental freedom. When a child is found convict in the court for the first time, s/he is sent on probation in stead of reform home. During the period of probation, child's relation with family and society continues as before; but under the supervision of probation officer and for the period decided by the court. Probation office observes child's behaviour with family, friends and neighbourhood with the aim of bringing about improvement in child's behaviour.



### **(3) Reformatory schools :**

In states where there is no act for children, reformatory schools have been established according to Reformatory School Act, 1987. Juvenile court sends those children to such schools who are found convict. Convict children under the age of 15 are kept in such schools for 3 to 7 years of period. In such schools, their basic needs are met and efforts are made to bring about improvement in them by offering them a suitable atmosphere. Provisions are made for their education and vocational training so that they become self-reliant in future and have access to livelihood.

### **(4) Borstal schools :**

At first, the Borstal school was founded in 1902 in a town named Borstal in England. According to legal provisions, such schools have been founded in India too. In Borstal schools, young convicts aged 15 to 21 are detained and there have been special provisions for their improvement. Borstal schools are functioning in those states where juvenile acts have been implemented. Borstal schools are of two types : (1) Closed and (2) Open. In both these two types of Borstal schools, juvenile delinquents of both sexes are given industrial training according to their age. Training related to agriculture, industry, construction, etc. is given to boys and cooking, domestic work related training is provided to girls.

Generally, in a Borstal school, convicts are detained for a period of two to three years; but considering their positive behaviour, school authority can decide for their early release. Responsibility of observation of children released from the school and their placement in appropriate occupations rests with probation officer.

### **(5) Certified schools :**

The states where juvenile acts have been implemented also have certified schools which are run with the help of financial assistance provided by private institutions and public fund. These schools are meant for caring, treatment and improvement of juvenile delinquents. They are of two types: (1) Junior certified school and (2) senior certified school. Convicts under the age of 12 years are sent to former while those aged 12 to 16 years are sent to latter. Along with general education, technical education is also given to them. Local worker or probation officer is given the responsibility of observing the child released from certified school.

### **(6) Palak grih :**

Juvenile convicts under age of 10 years are sent to palak grih (caring homes) as these children cannot be sent to certified schools. In these homes, efforts are made to improve their behaviour with offering them a homely atmosphere. These caring homes are run by private organizations with the help of financial assistance from the government.

### **(7) Remand home :**

Remand home is a secured place for detention of juvenile convicts. According to juvenile act, juvenile offenders are detained in remand home till completion of their cases in juvenile court. Here, by developing closeness with children and collecting necessary information about them, their behaviour is observed and then classified. Generally, remand homes are run by private organizations with the help of financial aid of the government.

Thus, in above mentioned institutions, improvement in behaviour of juvenile delinquents is attempted with the aim that they internalize the norms and values of society and so the contribution of these institutions in converting criminals into ideal citizens can be termed as significant.

## Youth unrest

The modern world is becoming youth-centered. They have been accepted as an independent power. India has become a country of youth as 65 percent of its population belongs to them. Formation of a dignified and prosperous nation is possible if the creativity of youth, known as the future of society and the nation, is utilized in a beneficial way.

They are backbone and an important component of society. What are they doing? What are they thinking? What are the challenges before them? Knowing this and guiding them properly will benefit both nation and society. Therefore, we will try to understand the meaning of youth and youth unrest and the reasons behind youth unrest.

### Meaning of youth :

Youth is a biological factor and considering this, persons between the age of 15 to 35 are termed as youth. Known and young scholar Dr. Bhupendra Brahmabhatt, mentioning characteristics of youth in his 'Sociological Study of College Youth' writes that idealist, short-tempered, singing and dancing, forgetful, workaholic, talkative, enthusiastic, rough, violent, powerful persons are known as youth. They are fast in making and breaking relationships. They hold perceptions ranging from extreme optimism to pessimism. They are interested in new technology and knowing the unknown'.



**Youth Unrest**

### Meaning of youth unrest :

The youth, known as the base of development for any society or nation, are capable of bringing about revolutionary changes in society with their potentialities. Qualities found in the youth, such as new vision, power of imagination, reasoning, and eagerness to fulfill the desired aim, inspire and provide strength to carry out multiple activities. With changing time, today's youth are living with a number of aims, expectations, desires and ambitions. In order to satisfy their desires or ambitions they compete with others in this age of competition, with the help of modern education and technology. In such circumstances, interruptions in the way of realizing their aims affect their psyche. State of mental disturbance among the youth which is caused by non-achievement of aim/s is termed as youth unrest.

Youth unrest tends to be against the whole society or it may be against a part or certain parts of the society and is expressed in different ways. Sometimes, they express their unrest in destructive or violent form which becomes challenging for society and also a matter of concern from the viewpoint of safety, security and order in society.

When the needs of the youth are not met and their problems are not solved, the way they respond to the situation with expression of their emotions, demands and dissatisfaction is termed as youth unrest. Such expression is also visible in form of organized movement, *gherav* (encirclement), procession, strike etc. The status of unrest of students associated with educational institutions can also be termed as youth unrest.

The youth power is synonymous to nuclear power. Its positive use will lead towards the welfare



of the world and negative use may destroy the whole world. The feeling of unrest or dissatisfaction among the youth interrupts the development of society. Youth unrest, with the increasing spread has become a challenge for whole social system.

### **Reasons of youth unrest**

Like any other social problem, youth unrest is also a result of multiple factors. These reasons are described below :

#### **(1) Social reasons**

##### **(1) Family :**

Family is one of the important social reasons for youth unrest as the institution of family is being influenced by a number of variables in the present time. Small nuclear families, replacing joint families, are increasing in number and have created a number of problems in family-life. Factors like everyday friction between husband and wife, divorce, broken home, etc. have adversely affected the youth psyche. Moreover, in this age of inflation, both husband and wife need to be involved in livelihood activities to maintain the family. They, therefore, are not able to spare adequate time after their children. As a result, the children, in absence of love and warmth expected from parents, feel lonely and dissatisfied, which ultimately result in their unrest.

##### **(2) Value-conflict :**

Individual's behaviour is guided by established values of society. Weakening of these values or fundamental changes in them creates a sort of value-conflict in the minds of youth. Overtime, this value-conflict leads to unrest among them and the unrest ultimately leads them towards agitation or revolt.

##### **(3) Changed aims :**

The youth of today, for whom aims of life have changed, wants to succeed in all fields of life as fast as possible with no consideration of means to get success. In other words, they want to succeed in their life by hook or crook. However, unrest occurs in them if their aims are not realized.

##### **(4) Generation gap :**

There is approximately twenty years' difference between two generations. Changes that occur in these twenty years caused by a number of variables lead to difference of opinion between new and old generations. This is known as generation gap; visible in almost all fields of society. Conflict arises between elders and the youth because of the difference in their way of thinking. While the former believe in doing things wisely and patiently, the latter have the tendency of hurriedness in whatever they do with their ideas being revolutionary. Thus generation gap is responsible for the youth unrest.

#### **(2) Educational reasons :**

The youth means carriers of change and these carriers of change also expect fundamental changes in education system. Absence of massive changes in method of teaching, syllabus and method of examination leads to frustration among the youth. For example, the youth of today having the world in their grasp through the use of cell phone of 3G or 4G, are not satisfied with education method using chalk-duster, pen and pencil.

Education acts as a base of development for any society. Development takes place in true sense of the term only when educated young persons have access to employment matching their qualification. However, the present situation is different. In absence of opportunities of employment, with the increasing number of educated youth, the number of educated unemployed is also increasing. Absence of employment creates feelings of disappointment and depression among the youth which are responsible for youth unrest.



It is necessary that the youth get proper educational guidance in their student-life. Amidst changing social system and a variety of educational courses absence of guidance for selection of subjects leads the youth to anxiety, restlessness and frustration. In many cases, where parents are not able to satisfy such needs, children tend to misbehave.

The education system performs two types of functions: (1) educate the youth so that they can sustain themselves and (2) their socialization. When the youth do not get jobs matching with the education they have obtained, or get jobs of lower level, they feel frustrated. This creates the feelings of dissatisfaction and anger towards the education system. Moreover, educational institutions of today have been deficient in cultivating social and democratic values, values of national unity in the youth. Both of these situations lead to youth unrest.

### **(3) Biological and psychological reasons :**

When an adolescent becomes a youth, change in hormones in the body affects his/her psyche. In this age, the youth are very curious to know and understand various things; but absence of right guidance at the right time creates a situation of uncertainty which leads to unrest.

The youth are known to be more sentimental and less responsible with lack of total understanding and therefore they need proper guidance so that they act sensibly. If they don't get proper guidance, they can move towards destructive activities. The feeling of freedom being prominent among the youth, they have a tendency of opposing the authority. Under the influence of contacts with various persons, institutions and mediums, a variety of thoughts and ideas emerge in their minds which also affect their behavioural expressions. Thus, in the age of immaturity, these thoughts and ideas create a situation of uncertainty in their minds and which ultimately leads to unrest.

The youth believe that their demands will not be accepted unless they ask for it very strongly. Moreover, due to misinterpretation of freedom in democracy (here, freedom means arbitrariness), they express their sentiments through improper behaviour. The youth, engrossed in fun and always longing for uninterrupted independence, have a fickle mind. These youth are often heard saying, 'do not bother for us and make us coward, we will commit mistakes but learn from them and become responsible'. Therefore, there is a need to communicate with them and support them. In other words, they need to be guided with an understanding of their problems and issues.

Thus, multiple factors are responsible for deviance. It is necessary for the integrity and continuance of society that each member internalizes the established norms of society and act accordingly. Failure in internalizing norms and values creates the situation of deviance. Such deviance becomes responsible for the emergence of several social problems in society. In the next unit, we will get detailed knowledge about social problems.

### **Exercises**

#### **1. Answer the following questions in detail :**

- (1) Explain definition and meaning of juvenile delinquency.
- (2) Discuss the reasons of juvenile delinquency.
- (3) Explain about any five institutions of juvenile justice reform.
- (4) Explain the meaning and causes of youth unrest.

#### **2. Give concise answers to the following questions :**

- (1) Juvenile court.
- (2) Probation.

- (3) Borstal schools.
- (4) Youth unrest.
- (5) Features of social deviance.

**3. Answer the following questions in brief :**

- (1) Define social deviance.
- (2) Define juvenile delinquency.
- (3) What is known as anti-social behaviour ?
- (4) What is meant by probation ?
- (5) Give meaning of youth unrest.

**4. Answer the following questions in one sentence :**

- (1) How social deviance is defined by Robert Merton ?
- (2) What is known as crime ?
- (3) Who is known as juvenile delinquent ?
- (4) Where did the Borstal school first establish ?

**5. Choose the right options from the following :**

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| (1) Which scholar has defined deviant behaviour ?                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (a) Horten and Hunt      (b) Hansa Sheth      (c) Fidlender      (d) Carl Marx |                          |
| (2) When was Dowry Prohibition Act enacted ?                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (a) 1951      (b) 1961      (c) 1965      (d) 1972                             |                          |
| (3) The secured place to detain juvenile delinquent .....                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (a) Juvenile court      (b) Remand Home      (c) Palak grih      (d) Probation |                          |
| (4) When was the juvenile court established in India ?                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (a) 1931      (b) 1941      (c) 1947      (d) 1950                             |                          |
| (5) When was Domestic Violence Act implemented ?                               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (a) 2004      (b) 2005      (c) 2006      (d) 2007                             |                          |

**Activity**

- Make a list of the cases of juvenile delinquency found in society.
- Organize a discussion on impacts of mass media on juvenile delinquency.
- Prepare a report on social impacts of deviant behaviour that occur in your surroundings.

