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## Deviant Behavior

### Question 1

The relativistic perspective of philosophy involves a number of things. Firstly, the only person with the right to decide on whether an action, a thought, a choice, or a decision is right or wrong is the person involved. Any other person's idea regarding the subject must not be taken into consideration. Different external forces, persons, or interested parties have no right to condemn or disapprove anything the person in question does. It is beyond humanity to determine the standard level of morals (Elias 32). Secondly, facts, events, or objects should not be judged based on the already established realities of life. The determination of the credibility of various actions or their truthfulness is something that goes beyond human experience. Thirdly, what things, matters, or issues are or should be are not things that should be determined according to a given sample. People are different; hence, they experience different universes or realities, so it would be a big mistake judging one person with another's experience.

On the other hand, the absolutist approach takes into account some principles that differ from those of the relativistic approach. The absolutist approach firstly affirms that actions, thoughts, and decisions by humans can be either right or wrong depending on the determining factor (Elias 51). The final determination depends on prior presumptions. Secondly, various events, facts, and ideas can be determined as either right or wrong in relation to the reality of

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humans. Whatever brings about well-being is determined as right, and something bringing about suffering is determined as wrong in accordance with the human mind. Thirdly, the rule supports that there is some uniformity among humans. So, according to the absolutist perspective, different people experience the same universes and realities as well. From that, it is very easy to predict a person's behavior or judge a person with regard to the other.

The social power perspective considers the existence of a dominant group and a subordinate one (Elias 146). The subordinate suffers oppression from the superior group. An example of a situation was the use of blacks as scapegoats to blame them for selling drugs and justify the upper-class drug-using whites. The perspective is quite extensive, since it goes ahead to cover even feminism. Deviance is the kind of behavior that does not align to the set social norms in a given society. The impact of this behavior is so big that the society in question condemns it. Deviance can be either criminal or non-criminal. Criminology happens to be the sociological discipline that handles crime. Some of the unwanted behaviors include alcoholism, nudity, and excessive gambling. However, it is critical to note that norms differ from one social group to another.

The theory of relativism best describes the impish behavior. The various principles forwarded by relativism match up to the characteristics of an unwanted activity. Considering that relativism stands for the freedom of an average human to do whatever he or she likes, then this matches up to unnecessary behaviors, because the person in question stands to be right regardless of the action done by him or her. The insistence on independent thinking by the relativism approach also goes ahead to support deviant behavior by exposing freedom to think in any way. All decisions made are the best, since the person making them is under scrutiny. Judging this sort of behaviors is wrong, since the relativism approach states that no one can determine events,

objects, or facts to be either true or false. A person characterized by unneeded behaviors is thus immune to any judgments. The theory rises against uniformity among people, because different individuals have different realities and living styles. Consequently, it is wrong to condemn someone with such behaviors, since, whichever way, he or she stands to be right. Any person that chooses poor behavior should thus prepare for much criticism from other persons.

## Question 2

The term deviance is mostly used to refer to some unusual or bad behavior. However, in sociology the meaning goes beyond that. In the simplest terms, discarded behavior refers to that kind of behavior that defies the rules recognized as desirable in any given society. The behavior has its lowest limits and highest limits as well (Humphrey & Schmaleger 22). For example, the failure to obey the traffic rule is a minor form of disobedience. On the other end, killing someone is a great form of naughtiness considering the condemnation it receives in every society.

The world is a collection of many societies. Every society has its own way of life. Depending on the society's way of life, it is easy to determine both the acceptable social values and the unacceptable ones. The unacceptable ways of life are the deviant ways. Societies somehow differ when it comes to setting up what they call acceptable values or deviant behaviors (Humphrey & Schmaleger 268). Examples of these variations are clear from the perspective of how different communities observe the issue of gender roles. For instance, in the United States of America, there is no great social emphasis when it comes to the gender roles. Both men and women are equal and can perform various roles in the society well. On the other hand, some societies lay much emphasis on the gender roles. A perfect example is the social context of African Nations. In most African countries, the gender roles are clearly stipulated. It paints a bad picture whenever a member of different sex goes ahead to do roles associated with a group. It all

narrows down to one society that has social rules regarding a given matter, which are more stringent than in other societies.

The principle of relativism applies to ill-disciplined behaviors (Humphrey &, Schmaleger 195). The standards of naughtiness vary depending on a number of factors, which may include location, age, social status, and individual society attributes. In terms of location, a person who chooses to speak loudly in a governmental function is deviant, whereas if it were a party, such speech would be acceptable. When a three-year-old child cries in a supermarket, everybody understands it and does not perceive crying as misbehaving. When an adult does the same, other people may consider this person as deviant. In the area of social status, a famous personality may skip to the front of a long queue. In such a case, no one will consider the personality as deviant, but a person of a lower status that does the same seems disrespectful.

Under the sector of individual societies, a special focus is given on the various societies. Societies differ in terms of what they consider as deviant. For instance, in the United States, customers who make their purchases in department stores are discouraged to negotiate over the prices of goods and services. Anyone who bargains is considered to be deviant. It is very different when it comes to other countries, especially the Third World nations, since the same practice is tolerable.

Deviance also goes ahead to involve even the cultural norms. For example, in Japan, any person who is shown a business card and takes a short time to study its details is considered as deviant. In some other parts of the world, an individual who focuses on a business card for a longer period is not seen as a deviant person. People are classified as deviant with regard to the traits they exhibit. Social control is a mechanism that assists humanity in correcting deviant behavior. Social control makes the members of any society conform to the stipulated rules

governing that particular society. Positive sanctions and negative sanctions are established to assist in exercising control. Positive sanctions involve socially constructed expressions of approval. On the other hand, negative sanctions involve socially constructed expressions of disapproval.

### Question 3

The explanation of deviant behavior from a psychological perspective holds a number of basic assumptions. The first assumption is that a person who shows deviant behavior should be accountable for the personal mischief. Secondly, personality is said to play a big role in any exhibited deviant behavior. All persons showing deviant behavior are considered to be weird personalities. So, deviant behavior is said to emanate from dysfunctional or inappropriate mental processes in a given individual.

The psychoanalytic theory developed by Sigmund Freud holds that all humans have natural drives and urges (Jerome 103). The unconscious part of a human being represses the drive. Freud adds that all humans have criminal tendencies naturally. However, the thinker believes that socialization helps control these tendencies. Socialization of children is crucial, since it determines what kind of people children will grow up to be in the future. Poorly socialized children end up with disturbed personalities. The personality disturbance makes them direct antisocial impulses inwards or outwards.

The cognitive perspective affirms that deviant behavior emanates from the way people organize their thoughts from a moralistic perspective (Jerome 203). Lawrence Kohlberg classifies moral reasoning into three facets. The first is the preconvention stage, whereby a child's reasoning is tied to obedience and evasion of punishment. Second is the conventional stage. In the conventional stage, a child wants to live up to the expectation of his or her family or other important people. The social system is the system that is in charge during this stage of

development. The third stage is post-conventional stage, and in this stage, an individual is not pinned down by the society's assertions. The sad part about this theory is the fact that anyone who skips any of these stages automatically develops naughty behavior. Those adults who show weird behavior are considered as individuals who skipped a certain stage.

The learning theory focuses much on the consequences of behavior and associated rewards (Jerome 450). Individuals are said to develop deviant behavior after witnessing rewards or consequences attributed to given sets of behaviors.

On the other hand, the structural approach employs the concept of society as being a complex unit made up of a number of parts. For anyone with the need to obtain an in-depth understanding of the structural approach, great knowledge on social structure and social function is required. Emile Durkheim is among a number of thinkers who employs this principle significantly in writing his works. The philosopher embraces the disobedience character by stating that it assists a great deal in the achievement of social order. The philosopher stipulates some advantages of the impish behavior.

First, irresponsible behavior assists humanity in the definition of norms. Unacceptable behaviors, such as theft or murder, are punishable. When a person goes behind bars, other members of a given society understand the acceptable behaviors much better. Culturally held values are encouraged by most societies. In any society, the wrong and the right need to be stipulated clearly. The response given to deviant behavior serves as a lesson to other individuals. For example, a student who comes late for a class is sent out, and this sort of punishment serves as a lesson to the rest of the class.

The strain theory developed by Robert Merton insists that the lack of access to institutionalized means or legitimate ways of achieving success can lead to negative behavior

among groups. Merton is from the school of thought that stands for the idea that blocking some people from the cultural upheld goals leads to conflicts. People always want to fulfill their dreams through the institutions available. The failure to provide them with the various opportunities automatically causes deviant behavior. The philosopher affirms that humanity adapts its goals in accordance to the response to the structures the society erects for the achievement of those goals. The reactions born include such archetypes as conformists, innovators, ritualists, retreatists, and rebels.

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