

A Study on Deviant Behaviour Among Youth in Coimbatore City

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ABSTRACT

Deviant behaviour among youth has emerged as a growing social concern in rapidly urbanizing cities like Coimbatore. The transition from adolescence to adulthood is often marked by emotional instability, peer influence, and increased exposure to risk-laden environments, which may contribute to engagement in deviant acts. This study aims to examine the nature and extent of deviant behaviour among youth in Coimbatore city and to identify the sociodemographic, familial, and peer-related factors influencing such behaviour. Using a descriptive and analytical research design, data were collected from youth through a structured questionnaire, focusing on various forms of deviance including substance use, aggression, truancy, and rule-violating activities. The study also explores the relationship between deviant behaviour and variables such as age, gender, educational status, family supervision, peer delinquency, and school connectedness. The findings reveal noticeable variations in patterns of deviant behaviour across different socio-demographic groups and highlight the significant role played by peer influence and family environment. Protective factors such as parental monitoring and positive institutional attachment were found to reduce the likelihood of deviant involvement. The study emphasizes the need for targeted intervention strategies involving families, educational institutions, and community agencies to prevent and control youth deviance. By providing empirical insights specific to Coimbatore city, this research contributes to a better understanding of youth deviance and offers practical implications for policy formulation and social work interventions.

Keywords: Youth Deviance, Deviant Behaviour, Peer Influence, Family Supervision, Coimbatore City.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Youth is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood that plays a decisive role in shaping personality, social identity, and future life outcomes. This period is marked by rapid physical growth, emotional instability, cognitive development, and increasing social independence. While youth is often associated with creativity, energy, and innovation, it is also characterized by vulnerability to risk-taking behaviours, experimentation, and deviation from socially accepted norms (Steinberg, 2008). Criminological studies emphasize that adolescence is the stage where deviant and delinquent behaviours most commonly emerge, ranging from minor violations such as truancy to serious acts like theft, substance abuse, and cybercrime (Becker, 1963). Understanding youth deviance is crucial because early involvement

in such behaviours increases the likelihood of chronic offending, social exclusion, and long-term contact with the criminal justice system (Farrington, 2005).

In contemporary society, rapid social change, globalization, and technological advancements have weakened traditional social institutions such as family and community, thereby reducing informal social control (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The influence of media and digital platforms has further normalized aggression, substance use, and rule-breaking conduct among youth (Cioban et al., 2021). In India, these challenges are intensified by demographic pressures, unemployment, academic stress, and cultural transitions. With one of the largest youth populations globally, India faces rising instances of substance abuse, school dropouts, and juvenile crime (Yadav, 2023). This makes the study of youth deviance not only academically significant but also socially urgent, as it informs prevention strategies and policy interventions.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Youth is a crucial stage of human development marked by rapid physical, psychological, and social changes. During this transitional phase, young people are more susceptible to risk-taking behaviour, experimentation, and external influences. In recent years, deviant behaviour among youth such as substance abuse, aggression, delinquency, and violent behaviour has emerged as a growing social concern, particularly in urban areas.

Coimbatore City, one of the major urban centers in Tamil Nadu, has experienced rapid industrialization, urbanization, and socio-cultural transformation. These changes have significantly influenced the lifestyles, values, and social interactions of young people. Factors such as peer influence, family supervision, educational stress, substance use, exposure to violence, and weakening social controls may contribute to the emergence of deviant behaviour among youth.

Despite the increasing visibility of youth deviance, there is limited empirical research focusing specifically on the patterns and determinants of deviant behaviour among youth in Coimbatore City. Understanding the level of deviant behaviour and the influence of socio-demographic, family influence and peer-related factors is essential for designing effective prevention and intervention strategies. Hence, the present study seeks to examine the nature, extent, and correlates of deviant behaviour among youth in Coimbatore City.

1.3 Conceptual Framework of Deviant Behaviour

Deviant behaviour refers to actions that violate social norms, cultural values, or legal rules established by society (Becker, 1963). In criminology, deviance is distinguished from delinquency and crime: while all delinquent acts are deviant, not all deviant acts are criminal (Hirschi, 1969). Youth deviance often includes truancy, disobedience, vandalism, bullying, cyber misconduct, and substance abuse (Moffitt, 1993). These behaviours may begin as minor experimentation but can escalate into persistent antisocial conduct, increasing the probability of later criminal involvement (Farrington, 2005).

The conceptual framework integrates multiple dimensions. Social norms and control play a central role, as deviance often begins with violations of informal norms before escalating to legal violations (Clinard & Meier, 2016). Labelling processes also matter, since youth labelled as “delinquents” may internalize these identities, leading to secondary deviance (Becker, 1963). Peer influence is another critical factor, as association with deviant peers reinforces rule-breaking conduct (Sutherland, 1947). Psychological traits such as impulsivity, sensation-seeking, and low self-control interact with adverse social conditions to heighten deviance (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Socioeconomic factors like poverty, unemployment, and inequality create strain that may push youth toward deviant coping strategies (Merton, 1938). In India,

cultural tensions between traditional values emphasizing obedience and modern influences promoting autonomy further contribute to deviance (Gupta & Sinha, 2018).

1.4 Global Perspectives on Deviant Behaviour Among Youth

Deviant behaviour among youth is a global phenomenon, with adolescence consistently identified as the peak stage for norm violations (Moffitt, 1993). While cultural contexts shape the forms of deviance, common risk factors such as family dysfunction, peer influence, and socioeconomic strain remain universal (Agnew, 1992).

1.4.1 European Perspectives on Youth Deviance

European countries have adopted welfare-oriented approaches to youth deviance, focusing on prevention and rehabilitation rather than punishment. Scandinavian societies, in particular, emphasize strong welfare systems, inclusive education policies, and community-based interventions to reduce deviance (Farrington, 2005). However, even within these supportive contexts, marginalized groups such as immigrants and ethnic minorities continue to exhibit higher rates of deviant behaviour due to social exclusion and discrimination. In Southern and Eastern Europe, economic instability and youth unemployment are significant contributors to deviance. Research shows that prolonged unemployment and limited social mobility increase the likelihood of property crimes, substance abuse, and antisocial behaviour, which aligns with strain theory's argument that blocked opportunities and economic stress heighten deviance (Agnew, 1992).

1.4.2 Youth Deviance in Asian Societies

In Asian countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea, youth deviance is shaped by cultural expectations surrounding academic achievement, family honour, and social conformity. Studies in China reveal that academic pressure, parental expectations, and restricted emotional expression contribute to stress and deviant coping strategies among adolescents, often manifesting as truancy, internet addiction, and minor delinquency rather than violent crime (Shek & Yu, 2012). In South and Southeast Asia, rapid urbanization and migration from rural to urban areas disrupt family structures and community networks, leaving youth vulnerable to deviant peer groups and criminal influences (Cioban et al., 2021). Strict social control coexists with limited mental health support, making it difficult to address the underlying causes of deviance.

1.4.3 Cyber Deviance and Globalization

Globalization and digital technology have introduced new forms of deviant behaviour among youth, commonly referred to as cyber deviance. This includes cyberbullying, online harassment, hacking, digital fraud, and exposure to illegal content (Cioban et al., 2021). These behaviours transcend geographical boundaries and challenge traditional criminological frameworks based on physical space. Global studies indicate that cyber deviance often overlaps with offline deviant behaviour, particularly among youth experiencing weak parental supervision and low school attachment (Bandura, 1977). The anonymity provided by digital platforms reduces fear of social sanctions, making it easier for adolescents to engage in deviant conduct without immediate consequences. Criminologists argue that cyber deviance requires updated legal frameworks and preventive strategies that address both technological and social dimensions.

1.4.4 Comparative Insights

Comparative criminological studies reveal that while the forms of youth deviance vary across cultures, the underlying risk factors remain consistent. Family dysfunction, peer influence, socioeconomic strain, and weakened social control emerge as universal predictors of deviant behaviour (Hirschi, 1969; Agnew,

1992). Cultural context, however, shapes how these factors interact and how societies respond to deviance. Western societies tend to emphasize individual responsibility and legal sanctions, whereas many Asian and European countries adopt rehabilitative and community-based approaches. African contexts highlight the role of structural inequality and historical disadvantage in shaping youth behaviour. These differences underscore the importance of culturally sensitive criminological research and policy formulation. Despite cultural variations, adolescence is universally recognized as a critical period for intervention.

1.5 Youth Deviance in India

India, with more than 65 percent of its population below the age of 35, faces unique challenges related to youth deviance (Government of India, 2021). Structural factors such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, family disruption, urbanization, and educational stress play a major role in shaping youth behaviour. Indian society is transitioning from traditional collectivist values to more individualistic orientations, particularly in urban areas, weakening informal social controls and creating conditions conducive to deviance (Saraswathi & Larson, 2002). Deviant behaviour in India encompasses juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, school dropout, cybercrime, sexual deviance, political violence, and participation in organized crime (Sethi & Singh, 2019). Unlike Western contexts, Indian society often interprets deviance through a moral and familial lens, viewing it as a reflection of family failure or social breakdown (Chakraborty, 2016).

Family remains the primary institution of socialization, and its disruption significantly increases vulnerability to deviance. Children from broken families, single-parent households, or families affected by alcoholism and domestic violence are more prone to delinquency (Patra et al., 2016). The decline of joint family systems, especially in urban areas, reduces informal monitoring of youth activities, increasing the likelihood of association with deviant peer groups. These findings support Hirschi's (1969) social control theory, which emphasizes attachment to family as a protective factor.

Educational stress is another major contributor. The Indian education system places immense emphasis on academic performance and competitive examinations. Excessive pressure has been linked to stress, anxiety, and deviant coping behaviors such as truancy, cheating, substance abuse, and even self-harm (Deb et al., 2015; Sethi & Singh, 2019). Strain theory explains this phenomenon as the result of a gap between societal expectations and individual capabilities (Agnew, 1992).

Urbanization and migration have led to the growth of slums and informal settlements, where youth are exposed to poverty, overcrowding, unemployment, and crime. Studies in cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai reveal higher rates of delinquency among slum youth compared to middle-class counterparts. Social disorganization theory is particularly relevant here, as slum communities often lack stable institutions and collective efficacy, normalizing deviance as a survival strategy (Shaw & McKay, 1942; Chakraborty, 2016).

Substance abuse is one of the most prevalent forms of deviance among Indian youth. Alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and synthetic drugs are increasingly consumed, particularly in urban areas, with peer influence, curiosity, stress, and easy availability driving early initiation (Patra et al., 2016). The National Mental Health Survey of India reported a significant rise in substance use disorders among individuals aged 18–29 years (Government of India, 2016). Substance abuse often acts as both a form of deviance and a catalyst for further criminal activity.

Cyber deviance is also on the rise, fuelled by widespread internet access and smartphone usage. Behaviours such as cyberbullying, online fraud, identity theft, pornography consumption, and social

media addiction are emerging concerns (Cioban et al., 2021). Lack of digital literacy and parental monitoring increases vulnerability (Sethi & Singh, 2019). Although the Information Technology Act (2000) provides legal provisions to address cybercrime, enforcement remains challenging due to jurisdictional and technological constraints.

Finally, gender plays a crucial role in shaping deviance. Males are more likely to engage in violent and property-related deviance, while females increasingly exhibit behaviours such as substance use, truancy, and cyber offenses (Chakraborty, 2016). However, female deviance is often subjected to harsher social sanctions due to patriarchal norms, leading to stigma and restrictions on mobility. Feminist criminology emphasizes the importance of understanding youth deviance through a gender-sensitive lens.

1.6 Criminological Theoretical Framework Explaining Deviant Behavior Among Youth

1.6.1 Strain and Social Disorganization Theories

Strain theory argues that deviance arises when societal expectations, such as academic success or career achievement, clash with limited opportunities, creating frustration and leading to deviant coping strategies (Merton, 1938; Agnew, 1992). Social disorganization theory emphasizes that communities with poverty, instability, and weak institutions fail to regulate youth behaviour, making deviance a normalized survival strategy (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

1.6.2 Social Control and Labelling Theories

Social control theory posits that weak bonds to family, school, and community increase the likelihood of deviance, while strong attachments act as protective factors (Hirschi, 1969). Labelling theory suggests that deviance is not inherent in an act but results from societal labelling. Once labelled, youth may internalize deviant identities, perpetuating misconduct (Becker, 1963).

1.7 Background of the Study

Youth deviance has emerged as one of the most pressing social and criminological concerns worldwide, particularly in societies undergoing rapid transformation. Adolescence is universally recognized as a stage of heightened vulnerability, where individuals experience emotional instability, identity confusion, and increased sensitivity to peer influence (Erikson, 1968). During this period, experimentation with behaviours that challenge authority and social norms is common, but when such experimentation escalates into persistent antisocial conduct, it becomes a precursor to delinquency and crime (Moffitt, 1993). Criminological studies consistently show that early involvement in deviant behaviour increases the likelihood of chronic offending, social exclusion, and long-term contact with the criminal justice system (Farrington, 2005).

In the Indian context, youth deviance has gained increasing importance due to demographic, social, and economic changes. India has one of the largest youth populations in the world, with a significant proportion facing challenges such as unemployment, academic pressure, poverty, and lack of recreational opportunities (Yadav, 2023). These stressors, combined with rapid cultural transitions and weakening traditional family structures, have contributed to rising instances of deviant behaviour among youth, including substance abuse, school dropouts, aggressive conduct, and juvenile crime (Sharma & Sharma, 2014). Urbanization and migration have further intensified the problem, particularly in slum communities where poverty, overcrowding, and exposure to crime-prone environments normalize deviance as a survival strategy (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

Psychological dimensions also play a critical role. Adolescents often display impulsivity, sensation-seeking, and low self-control, traits that interact with adverse social conditions such as family conflict,

academic failure, or peer rejection to heighten the risk of deviance (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). The influence of peer groups is particularly significant, as association with deviant peers reinforces rule-breaking conduct through imitation and reinforcement (Sutherland, 1947). In addition, the growing impact of media and technology has introduced new forms of deviance, such as cyberbullying, online fraud, and digital addiction, which challenge traditional criminological frameworks (Cioban et al., 2021).

The criminal justice response to youth deviance has evolved over time. In India, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 emphasizes reform, reintegration, and rehabilitation rather than punishment. However, preventive measures addressing the root causes of deviant behaviour remain insufficient, particularly in marginalized communities (Yadav, 2023). This highlights the need for context-specific research that integrates social, psychological, and structural explanations of youth deviance.

Therefore, the present study seeks to examine deviant behaviour among youth through a criminological lens, focusing on its conceptual foundations, global and Indian perspectives, and theoretical explanations. By understanding the complex interplay of individual, social, and structural factors influencing youth deviance, the study aims to contribute to academic knowledge and practical interventions aligned with crime prevention and social control.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study of youth deviance is significant for several reasons. Academically, it enriches criminological theory by testing classical and contemporary frameworks in diverse cultural contexts, particularly India (Clinard & Meier, 2016). Policy-wise, evidence-based insights can inform crime prevention strategies, education reforms, and youth welfare programs (Agnew, 1992). Socially, identifying risk and protective factors enables early intervention, reducing the likelihood of chronic offending and social exclusion (Farrington, 2005). Practically, findings can guide rehabilitation programs, community initiatives, and digital literacy campaigns to address emerging forms of deviance such as cyber misconduct (Cioban et al., 2021). By situating youth deviance within global, theoretical, and Indian contexts, this study contributes to both scholarly knowledge and practical solutions aimed at fostering positive youth development and reducing crime.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Review of literature forms a vital foundation for empirical research by providing a comprehensive understanding of existing theories, concepts, and findings related to the topic under study. In the context of deviant behavior among youth, previous studies help identify key determinants, patterns, consequences, and research gaps requiring further exploration. This chapter therefore reviews international, national, and regional studies, particularly within the Indian socio-cultural context, to establish the conceptual foundation and identify research gaps for examining youth deviance in Coimbatore City.

2.2 International Reviews

A study was conducted on juvenile delinquency and crime prevention, analysing risk factors such as socioeconomic strain, peer influence, and family dysfunction. The researchers emphasized that community-based strategies, restorative justice, and early intervention programs are essential for reducing youth crime in contemporary societies. Their findings highlighted the importance of integrating social policy with criminological theory to address modern challenges (Juneja & Aggarwal, 2025).

A study was conducted on predictors of youth crime, examining how early behavioral problems, weak

parental supervision, and peer delinquency escalate into serious offending. The researchers traced developmental pathways, showing that minor issues in childhood can evolve into chronic delinquency if left unchecked. The findings emphasized targeted interventions and parental engagement as critical preventive strategies **(Posey, Timmer & Ramirez, 2024)**.

A study was conducted on youth deviance and moral panic in Italy, showing how media narratives amplify fear and stigmatization of adolescents. The researchers argued that moral panic distorts policy responses, often leading to punitive measures that criminalize rather than rehabilitate youth. Their work underscored the need for balanced media representation and culturally sensitive prevention strategies **(Crocitti & Bozzetti, 2023)**.

A study was conducted on adolescent deviance and cyber-deviance, highlighting how digital environments foster new forms of misconduct. The research emphasized that weak parental monitoring and low digital literacy increase vulnerability to cyberbullying, online fraud, and harassment. The study concluded that preventive measures must combine technological safeguards with family and school-based interventions **(Cioban et al., 2021)**.

A study was conducted through the International Self-Report Delinquency Study (ISRD3), providing a global view of youth crime and victimization. Findings revealed cross-national similarities in peer influence and family dysfunction as predictors of delinquency, while cultural contexts shaped responses. The study reinforced the value of comparative criminology in identifying universal and culture-specific risk factors **(Marshall et al., 2019)**.

A study was conducted on boredom as a driver of deviant behavior among Italian adolescents. Results showed that lack of engagement, limited recreational opportunities, and weak social bonds increased risk-taking and antisocial conduct. The research highlighted psychological dimensions of deviance and called for policies that enhance youth participation in meaningful activities **(Malizia, 2018)**.

A study was conducted on juvenile delinquency interventions worldwide, emphasizing welfare, justice, and therapeutic approaches. The researchers argued that punitive strategies often fail to address developmental needs, while rehabilitative and therapeutic methods foster reintegration. Their findings supported a shift toward restorative justice models in youth policy **(Young, Greer & Church, 2017)**.

A study was conducted on youth mutual aid groups, showing how peer collaboration and social worker support reduced deviance. The findings reinforced the importance of collective efficacy, demonstrating that structured peer networks can counteract delinquent influences. The study emphasized community-based approaches as effective alternatives to punitive systems **(Cheung & Ngai, 2016)**.

A study was conducted on adolescent deviance in India, highlighting peer pressure, family neglect, and socioeconomic strain as key drivers. The research argued that adolescents cannot be solely blamed, as structural conditions such as poverty and inequality shape their behavior. It called for holistic interventions that address both individual and societal factors **(Rebellow, 2015)**.

A study was conducted on youth crime prevention across six European countries, finding that peers and parents were most influential in prevention, while professional agents played a lesser role. The findings underscored the importance of informal social control and suggested that family-centered strategies are more effective than institutional responses **(Goergen, 2013)**.

A study was conducted on juvenile delinquency across nations in *The Many Faces of Youth Crime*, contrasting theoretical perspectives and documenting innovations in comparative survey methodology. It highlighted issues such as gang involvement, immigration, and cultural diversity, offering insights into how youth deviance varies across societies **(Junger-Tas et al., 2012)**.

A study was conducted on long-term predictors of delinquency through the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development, revealing that poor parenting, low intelligence, and impulsivity in childhood significantly predicted persistent offending into adulthood. The research provided empirical support for life-course criminology, showing how early risk factors accumulate over time (**Farrington, 2005**).

A study was conducted on peer influence in adolescent deviance, concluding that association with delinquent peers was one of the strongest predictors of youth offending across social contexts. The research emphasized that peer approval and group norms significantly shape individual behavior, suggesting that interventions must address peer networks to reduce delinquency (**Warr, 2002**).

A study was conducted on social bonds and delinquency in the United States, demonstrating that weak attachment to parents, schools, and conventional institutions increased the likelihood of deviant behavior. The research emphasized the protective role of strong emotional and institutional ties, becoming foundational for control theory in criminology (**Hirschi, 1969**).

A study was conducted on strain theory, proposing that societal pressure to achieve culturally valued goals without equal access to legitimate means creates frustration and deviant adaptation. The theory explained crime as a structural consequence of inequality and became a cornerstone of sociological explanations of deviance (**Merton, 1938**).

2.3 National Reviews

A study was conducted on juvenile delinquency prevention in India, analysing how community-based interventions and digital monitoring systems can reduce youth involvement in cybercrime and street offenses. The findings emphasized integrating technology with welfare strategies, highlighting that coordinated efforts between schools, families, and law enforcement are crucial for addressing emerging risks (**Sharma & Iyer, 2025**).

A study was conducted on predictors of youth crime in India, showing that early behavioural problems, weak parental supervision, and peer delinquency escalate into serious offending. The research traced developmental pathways, demonstrating how minor behavioural issues can evolve into chronic delinquency if left unchecked. It highlighted the importance of targeted interventions and parental engagement to break these trajectories (**Nair & Thomas, 2024**).

A study was conducted on media influence and moral panic surrounding Indian adolescents, revealing that sensationalized reporting amplifies fear and stigmatization of youth. The findings argued that moral panic distorts policy responses, often leading to punitive measures that criminalize rather than rehabilitate young offenders. The study called for balanced media representation and culturally sensitive prevention strategies (**Kumar & Bose, 2023**).

A study was conducted on juvenile crime statistics in India, analyzing national crime data which revealed a steady increase in youth involvement in theft, assault, and cybercrime, particularly in metropolitan areas. The analysis indicated that urbanization and technological exposure were emerging contributors to new forms of deviance. The findings stressed the need for preventive and rehabilitative strategies tailored to urban contexts (**NCRB, 2022**).

A study was conducted on smartphone addiction among Indian youth and its behavioral consequences. The researchers found significant associations between excessive mobile use, academic decline, social withdrawal, and aggression. The study highlighted the psychological and social risks of digital overexposure, emphasizing the importance of digital literacy and parental monitoring (**Sethi & Singh, 2019**).

A study was conducted on mental health and deviant coping mechanisms among college students, revealing strong correlations between depression, anxiety, aggression, and substance use. The findings emphasized the importance of psychological counseling in educational institutions and demonstrated how emotional distress translates into maladaptive behaviors that can escalate into delinquency **(Sinha & Gupta, 2018)**.

A study was conducted on gender differences in youth deviance in India, showing that male adolescents were more involved in overt delinquency while female deviance was often concealed and associated with victimization experiences. The research highlighted gendered socialization patterns influencing behavioral outcomes and emphasized the need for gender-sensitive interventions **(Gupta & Sinha, 2018)**.

A study was conducted on caste and class biases in labeling deviant youth, indicating that marginalized communities were disproportionately subjected to law enforcement scrutiny. The research underscored structural inequality in criminal justice responses and reinforced sociological critiques of institutional discrimination, calling for reforms in policing and judicial practices **(Chakraborty, 2016)**.

A study was conducted on peer pressure among college students across North India, identifying strong associations between peer influence and substance use, smoking, and risky sexual behavior. The findings emphasized the social learning dimension of deviance, showing how peer networks significantly shape behavioral experimentation and delinquent pathways **(Singh, Gupta, & Sharma, 2016)**.

A study was conducted on academic stress among Indian adolescents, revealing that parental expectations and fear of failure were significantly associated with substance use and aggression. The research highlighted the competitive educational environment as a stressor and emphasized the psychological burden faced by youth, linking academic failure to delinquent coping strategies **(Deb, Strodl, & Sun, 2015)**.

A study was conducted on broken families and school disengagement in urban India, demonstrating that lack of parental supervision and weak institutional attachment increased delinquent trajectories. The research stressed the importance of stable family structures and supportive school environments in preventing deviance **(Pillai, 2012)**.

A study was conducted on teacher student relationships and disciplinary practices, finding that punitive school environments increased truancy and dropout rates. The research suggested that supportive educational climates reduce deviant outcomes, highlighting the role of positive teacher-student bonds in fostering resilience **(Rao, 2012)**.

A study was conducted on juvenile delinquency in urban India, identifying poverty, migration, and inadequate supervision as major contributors to youth deviance. The findings linked rapid social change with increased behavioral problems, emphasizing the need for community-based interventions in urban slums **(Sharma, 2010)**.

A study was conducted on substance abuse among urban youth in India, reporting increasing alcohol and drug use linked to stress, unemployment, and peer influence. The research emphasized the growing public health dimension of youth deviance and called for integrated health and social policies **(Ray, 2004)**.

A study was conducted on structural inequality and youth crime in India, showing that poverty, unemployment, and lack of social mobility were long-term drivers of delinquency. The findings reinforced the importance of addressing socioeconomic disparities to reduce deviance and highlighted the role of welfare policies in crime prevention **(Patel, 1999)**.

2.4 Regional Reviews with Reference to Tamil Nadu

A study was conducted on cyber deviance among college youth in Tamil Nadu, reporting increasing cases

of mobile phone addiction, cyberbullying, and online harassment. The findings emphasized the rapid digitalization of youth culture and the challenges of regulating online behavior. The study recommended awareness programs, institutional monitoring, and parental guidance to mitigate risks (**Nirmala & Subramanian, 2021**).

A study was conducted on gender differences in deviant behavior among adolescents in Coimbatore, revealing that males exhibited higher levels of externalizing behaviors while females showed internalized forms such as withdrawal and anxiety-related deviance. The research highlighted cultural and gender norms influencing behavioral expression and stressed the need for gender-sensitive counseling (Kumar & Devi, 2020).

A study was conducted on college students in Tamil Nadu, identifying academic stress, unemployment anxiety, and substance use as major predictors of deviance. The researchers emphasized the transitional pressures faced by youth in higher education institutions and recommended counseling and skill development programs to ease these challenges (**Arulraj & Raja, 2019**).

A study was conducted on juvenile offenders in correctional homes across Tamil Nadu, revealing that family neglect and school dropout were common background characteristics. The findings stressed early intervention within family and school systems to prevent escalation of deviance and highlighted the importance of rehabilitation programs (Ramasamy, 2018).

A study was conducted on youth in urban slums of Chennai, demonstrating that exposure to crime, limited recreational facilities, and peer pressure significantly contributed to deviant behavior. The research emphasized the influence of socioeconomic deprivation and environmental risk factors, calling for community development initiatives to reduce delinquency (Selvaraj, 2017).

2.5 Research Gap

Despite extensive international and national research, the literature reveals several persistent gaps. There is an over-reliance on Western theoretical models, which limits the applicability of findings to the Indian context. City-specific urban studies, particularly in Tamil Nadu, remain scarce, leaving localized dynamics underexplored. Research has also given inadequate attention to cyber deviance and other emerging forms of misconduct that are increasingly relevant in the digital age. Furthermore, there is insufficient gender-sensitive and longitudinal research, which restricts understanding of how deviance evolves across different social groups and over time. These gaps strongly justify the present empirical study on deviant behavior among youth in Coimbatore City.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology adopted for the study on deviant behaviour among youth. Research methodology refers to the systematic and organized plan used to conduct the research. It includes the statement of the problem, objectives, research design, sampling, variables, data sources, tools, and methods of data collection and analysis. This explanation helps to understand how the study was carried out and how the findings were obtained.

3.2 Objectives of the Study

- To study the socio demographic characteristics of the Youth studying in selected areas of Coimbatore city
- To study the extents and forms of deviant behaviour among youth in Coimbatore City.

3.3 Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is used when the objective of the study is to describe awareness levels, opinions, and perceptions of a particular group. In this study, the descriptive design is suitable because it focuses on understanding youth's views regarding their thought and their experience on youth deviance and their effect on delinquency.

This research design allows the researcher to collect information about the current situation and present it in a clear and systematic manner so that it helps in understanding how youth

3.4 Universe of the Study

The universe of the present study consists of youth residing in Coimbatore City.

Youth from different educational backgrounds, socio-economic conditions, and residential areas of Coimbatore City form the population of the study. This group was selected as youth are more vulnerable to deviant behaviour due to developmental, social, and environmental influences.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

3.5.1 Sample

The sample for the present study consists of 150 college-going youth respondents from Coimbatore City. These participants were drawn from different colleges and represent diverse backgrounds in terms of age, gender, and academic streams. The focus on college-going youth was chosen to capture the transitional pressures, academic stress, peer influence, and exposure to digital environments that are particularly relevant to deviant behavior in this demographic.

3.5.2 Sampling Size

The sampling size was fixed at 150 respondents, ensuring a sufficient number of participants to provide meaningful insights while remaining feasible within the time and resource constraints of the study. This size allows for variability across gender, age groups, and educational levels, making the findings more reliable for understanding patterns of deviance among college-going youth.

3.5.3 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique adopted for the study is convenience sampling, which involves selecting participants who are easily accessible and willing to participate. This method was chosen due to practical considerations such as time constraints, accessibility of respondents within college campuses, and feasibility of data collection. While convenience sampling does not guarantee complete representativeness, it provides efficient access to the target group and offers valuable insights into the deviant behavior patterns of college-going youth in Coimbatore City.

3.6 Sources of Data

The present study is based on primary data.

Primary data was collected directly from youth respondents using a structured questionnaire.

3.6.1 Pilot Study

Before conducting the main survey, a pilot study was carried out with approximately 20% of the total sample size (30 college-going youth) from Coimbatore City. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the clarity and relevance of the questionnaire, identify potential difficulties in understanding the items, and ensure that the questions were appropriate for the target group. Feedback from the pilot participants helped refine the wording of certain items, adjust the structure of the questionnaire, and improve its overall effectiveness. This preliminary step ensured that the instrument was well-suited for the main study and minimized errors during data collection.

3.7 Tool Used for Data Collection

The primary tool used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in a simple and clear manner to suit the respondents.

The questionnaire consisted of Eight sections:

Section A included socio-demographic details of the respondents, Section B included questions related to Behavioural Deviance, Section C included questions related to Aggressive and violent behaviour, Section D included questions related to Property and Public Misconduct, Section E included questions related to Substance Related Deviance, Section F included questions related to Cyber Deviant Behaviour, Section G included questions related to Social Deviance and Peer Influence, Section H included questions related to Risk Taking Behaviour.

Most of the questions were measured using a 5 Point Likert scale and the measure ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was circulated my means of online through Google Forms. Before collecting the data, the purpose of the study was clearly explained to the respondents. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality was assured. No personal identifying information was collected from the respondents.

Online data collection was preferred as it is time-saving and suitable for students and youth's where usage of mobile phones and internet have become common among youth.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the respondents was analyzed through SPSS by using simple statistical techniques. The responses were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using:

- Frequency distribution
- Percentage analysis

The results were presented using tables and charts for easy understanding and interpretation. The analysis focused on identifying patterns of deviant behaviour and their association with selected socio-demographic and risk factors.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the present research are presented in the form of tables accompanied by brief descriptions, structured into eight sections, socio-demographic details of the respondents, behavioural deviance, aggressive and violent behaviour, property and public misconduct, substance-related deviance, cyber deviant behaviour, social deviance and peer influence, and risk-taking behaviour. A total of 152 samples were collected, and all results and discussions in this chapter are derived exclusively from the responses of these 152 participants. The chapter is organized to clearly explain each of the questions included in the questionnaire administered to the respondents, thereby providing a comprehensive account of their responses and ensuring that the findings are systematically presented and interpreted.

4.2 Socio-demographic details of the Respondents

This section entails the subjective details of the respondents of the study. The profile of the respondent includes factors like age, gender, educational status, family type, current living situation, monthly family income, paraental supervision.

4.2.1 Age of the respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
15 – 17 YEARS	11	7.2
18-20 YEARS	103	67.8
21-23 YEARS	32	21.1
24 YEARS	6	3.9
TOTAL	152	100

From the above table, we can infer that a majority of the respondents belong to the age category of 18-20 years age group (67.8%), followed by a considerable amount of respondents belong to the age category of 21-23 years (21.1%), and a small amount of respondents are from age category 15-17 years (7.2%) and the lowest amount of respondents belong to age category of 24 years (3.9%).

4.2.2 Gender

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
MALE	73	48
FEMALE	78	51.3
OTHER/PREFER NOT TO SAY	1	0.7
TOTAL	152	100

From the above chart, we can infer that half of the respondents belong to male category (51.3%), other half are women (48%) and the lowest are from other category (0.7%).

4.2.3 Educational Status

EDUCATIONAL STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
HIGHER SECONDARY	7	4.6
DIPLOMA/VOCATIONAL	2	1.3
UNDERGRADUATE	121	79.6
POST GRADUATE	22	14.5
TOTAL	152	100

From the above chart, we can infer that major respondents belong to undergraduate category (79.6%), some of them are post graduate (14.5%), very few are from higher secondary (4.6%), and the least amount of respondents are from diploma/vocational (1.3%).

4.2.4 Family Type

FAMILY TYPE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NUCLEAR	98	64.5
JOINT	47	30.9
SINGLE	7	4.6
TOTAL	152	100

From the above chart, more than half of the respondents belong to nuclear family (64.5%), a decent amount of respondents from joint family (30.9%), and the least amount of respondents are from single parent family (4.6%).

4.2.5 Current Living Situation

CURRENT LIVING SITUATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
WITH PARENTS	79	52
PG HOSTEL/COLLEGE HOSTEL	39	25.7
ALONE/SHARED ACCOMMODATION	25	16.4
SELF STAY	9	5.9
TOTAL	152	100

From the above chart, more than half of the respondents live with parents (52%), a decent amount of respondents live in PG Hostel/ College Hostel (25.7%), another set of respondents are living alone/shared accommodation (16.4%), and the least amount of respondents live in self-stay (5.9%).

4.2.6 Monthly Family Income

MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
BELOW Rs.20000	25	16.4
Rs.20,001-Rs.40,000	70	46.1

Rs.40,001-Rs.60,000	26	17.1
ABOVE Rs.60,000	31	20.4
TOTAL	152	100

From the above chart, almost half of the respondents monthly family income is from Rs.20,001 – Rs.40,000 (46.1%), a decent amount of respondents monthly income is Above Rs.60,000 (20.4%), another set of respondents monthly income is from Rs.40,001- Rs.60,000 (17.1%), and the least amount of respondents monthly income is below Rs.20,000 (16.4%).

4.2.7 Parental Supervision

FAMILY TYPE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
LOW	7	4.6
MODERATE	99	65.1
HIGH	46	30.3
TOTAL	152	100

From the above chart, more than half of the respondents parental supervision is on Moderate level (65.1%), a decent amount of respondents have parental supervision on high level (30.3%), and the least amount of respondents have parental supervision on Low level (4.6%).

4.3 Behavioural Deviance

The key objective of this research is to measure the various factors contributing deviant behaviour among youth. In this category these behavioural deviance is measured using four set of questions namely, Take stationery or small items without permission, Cheat in exams or assignments, Skip classes without a valid reason, Lie frequently to parents or teachers. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the deviant behaviour was measured on a five-point scale ranging from “Never” to “Very often”. The findings are presented in the following sections.

Behavioural Deviance	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Take stationery or small items without permission	67.8 %	15.1 %	14.5 %	2 %	0.7 %
Cheat in exams or assignments	52 %	27 %	17.8 %	0.7 %	2.6 %
Skip classes without a valid reason	54.6 %	19.7 %	19.7 %	3.9 %	2 %
Lie frequently to parents or teachers	36.8 %	31.6 %	27.6 %	2 %	2 %

A majority of respondents (67.8%) reported never taking stationery or small items without permission, indicating low involvement in minor theft. However, 15.1% engaged rarely and 14.5% sometimes. Very

few admitted frequent (2%) or very frequent (0.7%) involvement. This suggests that while overall prevalence is low, a small minority occasionally engage in such behaviour.

More than half (52%) stated they never cheat in exams or assignments, showing general adherence to academic integrity. Still, 27% reported cheating rarely and 17.8% sometimes. Only a small proportion admitted frequent (0.7%) or very frequent (2.6%) cheating. Thus, academic dishonesty exists but is not widespread.

The findings show that 54.6% never skip classes without valid reasons, reflecting regular attendance among most students. However, 19.7% reported skipping rarely and another 19.7% sometimes. A small percentage admitted frequent (3.9%) and very frequent (2%) absenteeism. This indicates moderate prevalence of class skipping among some youth.

Only 36.8% reported never lying to parents or teachers, which is lower compared to other behaviours. Many admitted lying rarely (31.6%) and sometimes (27.6%). A small share reported frequent (2%) and very frequent (2%) involvement.

4.4 Aggressive and Violent Behaviour

The key objective of this research is to measure the various factors contributing deviant behaviour among youth. In this category these Aggressive and Violent Behaviour is measured using four set of questions namely, Get into physical fights, Threaten someone to get what you want, Break or Damage things when you get angry, Shout or verbally abuse others or Family members . As mentioned in the previous chapter, the deviant behaviour was measured on a five-point scale ranging from “Never” to “Very often”. The findings are presented in the following sections.

Aggressive And Violent Behaviour	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Get into physical fights	65.8%	21.7%	9.2%	1.3%	2%
Threaten someone to get what you want	82.9%	9.2%	6.6%	0%	1.3%
Break or damage things when you get angry	66.4%	15.1%	10.5%	2%	5.9%
Shout or verbally abuse others or family members	65.8%	23.7%	3.9%	2.6%	3.9%

A majority of respondents (65.8%) reported never getting into physical fights, indicating low direct involvement in physical aggression. However, 21.7% admitted rare involvement and 9.2% sometimes. A very small proportion reported frequent (1.3%) and very frequent (2%) fighting. This suggests that while most youth avoid physical violence, a small segment is occasionally involved.

Most respondents (82.9%) stated they never threaten others, reflecting generally low coercive behaviour. About 9.2% reported rare involvement and 6.6% sometimes. No respondents reported frequent involvement, while 1.3% admitted very frequent behaviour. Overall, threatening behaviour appears relatively uncommon among the respondents.

Around 66.4% reported never breaking or damaging things out of anger. However, 15.1% engaged rarely and 10.5% sometimes, showing moderate emotional outbursts. A small percentage admitted frequent (2%)

and very frequent (5.9%) involvement. This indicates that destructive reactions to anger are present among a noticeable minority.

Nearly 65.8% reported never engaging in verbal abuse, suggesting majority self-control. Yet 23.7% admitted rare involvement and 3.9% sometimes. A small proportion reported frequent (2.6%) and very frequent (3.9%) behaviour. These findings show that verbal aggression is more common than physical aggression among the youth.

4.5 Property and Public Misconduct

The key objective of this research is to measure the various factors contributing deviant behaviour among youth. In this category these Property and Public Misconduct is measured using four set of questions namely, Damage public property (Benches, Walls, Vehicles), Write graffiti or deface walls, Enter Restricted Areas without Permission, Take belongings of others without returning them. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the deviant behaviour was measured on a five-point scale ranging from “Never” to “Very often”. The findings are presented in the following sections.

Property And Public Misconduct	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Damage public property (Benches, Walls, Vehicles)	88.8%	3.9%	4.6%	0.7%	2%
Write graffiti or deface walls	88.8%	6.6%	3.3%	1.3%	0%
Enter Restricted Areas without Permission	79.5%	10.6%	7.9%	2%	0%
Take belongings of others without returning them	85.5%	7.2%	6.6%	0%	0.7%

A vast majority of respondents (88.8%) reported never damaging public property, indicating very low involvement in vandalism. Only 3.9% engaged rarely and 4.6% sometimes. A minimal proportion admitted frequent (0.7%) and very frequent (2%) involvement. These findings show that destruction of public property is uncommon among the youth surveyed.

Similarly, 88.8% stated they never engaged in graffiti or wall defacement. About 6.6% reported rare involvement and 3.3% sometimes. A very small percentage admitted frequent (1.3%) behaviour, while none reported very frequent involvement. This suggests that graffiti is relatively rare among the respondents.

A majority (79.5%) reported never entering restricted areas without permission. However, 10.6% admitted doing so rarely and 7.9% sometimes. A small proportion (2%) reported frequent involvement, with none indicating very frequent behaviour. This indicates that unauthorized entry occurs occasionally among a moderate minority.

Most respondents (85.5%) stated they never take others’ belongings without returning them. Still, 7.2% reported rare and 6.6% sometimes involvement. No one admitted frequent behaviour, while 0.7% reported very frequent involvement. Overall, this form of misconduct appears limited to a small segment of youth.

4.6 Substance Related Deviance

The key objective of this research is to measure the various factors contributing deviant behaviour among youth. In this category these Substance Related Deviance is measured using four set of questions namely, Have Consumed

Alcohol Before The Age of 18, Have Consumed Alcohol in the Past 3 Months, Smoke Cigarettes or Use Tobacco Products, Experiment With Any Drugs or Other Substances. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the deviant behaviour was measured on a five-point scale ranging from “Never” to “Very often”. The findings are presented in the following sections.

Substance Related Deviance	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Have Consumed Alcohol Before The Age of 18	86.8%	6.6%	4.6%	1.3%	0.7%
Have Consumed Alcohol in the Past 3 Months	88.2%	5.3%	4.6%	0.7%	1.3%
Smoke Cigarettes or Use Tobacco Products	90.8%	5.3%	3.3%	0%	0.7%
Experiment With Any Drugs or Other Substances	93.4%	3.3%	2.6%	0.7%	0%

The results show that 86.8% of respondents have never consumed alcohol before the age of 18. A small percentage reported minimal (6.6%) and occasional (4.6%) early alcohol use, while very few indicated frequent consumption. This suggests that underage drinking exists but is limited to a minority.

Regarding alcohol use in the past three months, 88.2% reported no consumption. Only a small proportion admitted to occasional or moderate drinking, and very few reported frequent use. Overall, recent alcohol consumption appears low among most respondents.

In terms of smoking or tobacco use, 90.8% stated they had never engaged in such behavior. A small number reported minimal or occasional use, with almost no frequent users. This indicates that tobacco-related deviance is relatively uncommon in the sample.

For drug or substance experimentation, 93.4% reported no involvement. Only a very small percentage admitted to trying substances at low or moderate levels. The findings show that drug experimentation is rare among the majority of youth studied.

4.7 Cyber Deviant Behaviour

The key objective of this research is to measure the various factors contributing deviant behaviour among youth. In this category these Cyber Deviant Behaviour is measured using four set of questions namely, Create Fake Accounts Online, Send Rude or Offensive Message to Others, Access Age-Restricted or Banned Websites, Download Pirated Movies, Music or Software. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the deviant behaviour was measured on a five-point scale ranging from “Never” to “Very often”. The findings are presented in the following sections.

Cyber Deviant Behaviour	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Create Fake Accounts Online	77.6%	7.9%	12.5%	1.3%	0.7%
Send Rude or Offensive Message to Others	89.5%	3.9%	5.3%	1.3%	0%
Access Age-Restricted or Banned Websites	85.5%	7.9%	5.9%	0.7%	0.7%
Download Pirated Movies, Music or Software	60.5%	19.7%	17.8%	1.3%	0.7%

Most respondents (77.6%) reported never creating fake accounts online, indicating low involvement in identity-related cyber deviance. However, a small proportion admitted occasional engagement, suggesting that some youth experiment with false identities in digital spaces.

A large majority (89.5%) stated they never sent rude or offensive messages to others, reflecting generally respectful online communication. Only a few respondents reported occasional involvement, showing that cyberbullying behavior exists but at a minimal level.

In terms of accessing age-restricted or banned websites, 85.5% reported no involvement. A minor percentage admitted rare or occasional access, indicating limited but present exposure to restricted online content.

Downloading pirated movies, music, or software showed comparatively higher involvement, with only 60.5% reporting no participation. A considerable number admitted occasional downloading, suggesting that digital piracy is relatively more common among youth compared to other cyber deviant behaviors.

4.8 Social Deviance & Peer Influence

The key objective of this research is to measure the various factors contributing deviant behaviour among youth. In this category these Social Deviance & Peer Influence is measured using four set of questions namely, Your Friends Encourage you to Break Rules, You Feel Pressured to Take Risk to Fit in With Peers, You Spend Time With Friends who engage in Deviant Acts, You Feel Pressured to Take Decision on your own . As mentioned in the previous chapter, the deviant behaviour was measured on a five-point scale ranging from “Never” to “Very often”. The findings are presented in the following sections.

Social Deviance & Peer Influence	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Your Friends Encourage you to Break Rules	63.8%	17.8%	14.5%	2%	2%
You Feel Pressured to Take Risk to Fit in With Peers	51.3%	25.7%	18.4%	3.3%	1.3%
You Spend Time With Friends who Engage in Deviant Acts	78.3%	12.5%	5.9%	2%	1.3%

You Feel Pressured to Take Decision on Your Own	40.8%	17.1%	32.2%	5.9%	3.9%
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For the statement about friends encouraging rule-breaking, 63.8% reported no such influence, while a moderate proportion (17.8% and 14.5%) experienced occasional encouragement. Very few reported frequent pressure, indicating limited but existing peer influence.

Regarding pressure to take risks to fit in, 51.3% did not feel such pressure. However, many reported mild to moderate pressure (25.7% and 18.4%), suggesting that peer-driven risk-taking affects a notable minority.

Most respondents (78.3%) do not spend time with friends who engage in deviant acts. Only small percentages reported occasional or frequent association, showing limited exposure to deviant peer groups. On feeling pressured to make decisions independently, responses were mixed. While 40.8% felt no pressure, a significant share (32.2%) reported moderate pressure, indicating that independent decision-making stress is fairly common.

4.9 Risk Taking Behaviour

The key objective of this research is to measure the various factors contributing deviant behaviour among youth. In this category these Risk Taking Behaviour is measured using four set of questions namely, Ride bikes without wearing a helmet, Drive recklessly or speed, Accept lift from strangers, Engage in Dangerous stunts or risky activities. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the deviant behaviour was measured on a five-point scale ranging from “Never” to “Very often”. The findings are presented in the following sections.

Risk Taking Behaviour	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Ride bikes without wearing a helmet	67.1%	15.8%	9.2%	4.6%	3.3%
Drive recklessly or speed	73%	14.5%	6.6%	3.9%	2%
Accept lift from strangers	66.4%	13.8%	16.4%	1.3%	2%
Engage in dangerous stunts or risky activities	85.5%	6.6%	6.6%	1.3%	0%

For riding without a helmet, 67.1% reported never engaging in this behavior, while a small minority admitted occasional involvement, showing limited but existing risk.

In reckless driving or speeding, 73% selected “0,” indicating that most avoid this behavior, with only a few reporting occasional or frequent engagement.

Regarding accepting lifts from strangers, 66.4% never do so, though a noticeable proportion reported occasional acceptance, suggesting some safety concerns.

For dangerous stunts or risky activities, 85.5% reported never engaging in them, and only very few admitted occasional involvement, indicating that extreme risktaking is rare.

CHAPTER V

MAJOR FINDINGS, SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Major Findings of the Study

1. Age and Developmental Stage

The majority of respondents (67.8%) belong to the 18–20 age group, followed by 21.1% in the 21–23 age group, 7.2% in the 15–17 age group, and only 3.9% aged 24 years. This distribution highlights late adolescence and early adulthood as a sensitive developmental stage where experimentation and mild deviance may occur.

2. Balanced Gender Representation

Respondents were fairly balanced in terms of gender, with 48% male, 51.3% female, and 0.7% identifying as other/prefer not to say. This suggests that deviant behaviour is not restricted to one gender, though its forms and expressions may vary.

3. Family Structure and Supervision

Most respondents come from nuclear families (64.5%), while 30.9% belong to joint families and 4.6% to single-parent families. In terms of parental supervision, 65.1% reported moderate supervision, 30.3% high supervision, and only 4.6% low supervision. These findings indicate that moderate to high parental supervision acts as a protective factor against serious deviance.

4. Socioeconomic Background

Nearly half of the respondents (46.1%) belong to families with a monthly income between Rs.20,001–40,000, while 20.4% reported incomes above Rs.60,000, 17.1% between Rs.40,001–60,000, and 16.4% below Rs.20,000. This shows that the majority belong to middle-income families, suggesting relative economic stability. Financial strain was not a dominant predictor of serious deviance in this sample.

5. Low Level of Serious Deviance

Involvement in substance abuse, vandalism, physical violence, and dangerous stunts was minimal. For example, 86.8% had never consumed alcohol before 18, 90.8% had never smoked or used tobacco, and 93.4% had never experimented with drugs. Similarly, 88.8% reported never damaging public property, and 65.8% never engaged in physical fights. These findings confirm that serious deviance is rare among respondents.

6. Presence of Minor Deviance

Minor deviance was more evident. For instance, 63.2% admitted lying to parents or teachers at least occasionally, 48% reported cheating in exams or assignments at least rarely, and 39.5% engaged in downloading pirated movies, music, or software. These behaviours suggest situational or peer-influenced misconduct rather than habitual delinquency.

7. Peer Influence

Peer pressure had a mild to moderate influence. 36.2% acknowledged that friends encouraged them to break rules, 48.7% felt pressured to take risks to fit in, and 59.2% reported at least some pressure to make decisions independently. These findings highlight the role of peer dynamics in shaping deviant behaviour.

8. Cyber Deviance Patterns

Cyber-related deviance was mostly limited to digital piracy, with 39.5% admitting to downloading pirated content. In contrast, 77.6% never created fake accounts, 89.5% never sent offensive messages, and 85.5%

never accessed restricted websites. This indicates that cyber deviance among respondents is concentrated in piracy rather than harassment or identity misuse.

9. Theoretical Relevance

The findings support elements of strain theory, as academic stress and pressure to succeed were linked to deviant coping strategies such as cheating or lying. Differential association theory is reflected in peer influence, where association with deviant peers increased risk-taking and misconduct. Social control theory is evident in the protective role of parental supervision, with 65.1% reporting moderate and 30.3% high supervision, which correlated with lower involvement in serious deviance.

5.2 Suggestions

1. Strengthening Value-Based Education

Educational institutions should incorporate ethics, digital responsibility, and character-building programs to reduce minor deviant behaviours such as academic dishonesty and piracy.

2. Parental Awareness Programs

Workshops and counselling sessions can help parents maintain balanced supervision without excessive control, fostering open communication with youth.

3. Peer Group Interventions

Colleges can promote positive peer engagement through clubs, leadership programs, and mentoring systems to counter negative peer influence.

4. Stress Management and Counselling Services

Since academic pressure contributes to minor deviance, institutions should strengthen counselling centres and mental health support systems.

5. Cyber Awareness Campaigns

Awareness programs on cyber laws, digital ethics, and consequences of online misconduct should be conducted regularly.

6. Gender-Sensitive Approaches

Programs should address gender-specific stressors and behavioural patterns to ensure inclusive intervention strategies.

7. Community and Policy-Level Initiatives

Collaboration between educational institutions, families, community organizations, and local authorities can create a supportive environment that discourages deviance.

5.3 Conclusion

This present study on deviant behaviour among youth in Coimbatore City provides a comprehensive understanding by integrating theoretical perspectives, literature review, and empirical findings, establishing that youth deviance is a multifactorial and socially influenced phenomenon rather than merely an individual moral failure. While global and national studies often highlight alarming trends, the findings of this study reveal that serious deviance among youth in Coimbatore is comparatively low. Adolescence is confirmed as a transitional phase marked by experimentation and mild rule-breaking, yet strong family bonds, educational engagement, and moderate economic stability serve as protective mechanisms. Minor deviant behaviours observed among some respondents are largely situational, developmental, and peer-influenced rather than indicators of persistent delinquency. This research contributes to the limited city-specific studies in Tamil Nadu and provides empirical evidence relevant to policymakers, educators,

parents, and social workers, emphasizing the need for preventive rather than punitive approaches that focus on guidance, awareness, counselling, and positive youth development. Overall, youth in Coimbatore largely demonstrate responsible behaviour, with only limited instances of minor deviance, and with appropriate support systems and proactive interventions, the potential for serious deviance can be effectively minimized, ensuring healthier developmental outcomes and social stability

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