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Abstract

The mechanism of social development in any society is fundamentally built upon mutual respect, harmonious interpersonal relations, stable behavioral norms, and appropriate methods of upbringing. To ensure this, it is essential to establish a healthy social environment, apply suitable educational methods, and adhere to the traditional customs and behavioral standards embedded in the society's collective memory across generations. However, in contrast to these normative constructs, the phenomenon of *deviance* also exists—a behavioral framework rooted in an individual's socio-psychological world, level of consciousness, interaction with the surrounding environment, and the mechanisms shaping the broader societal structure. Deviance refers to a sequence of behaviors observed in individuals that deviate from accepted societal norms, moral standards, and the traditional methods of upbringing. These behaviors are often incompatible with established social systems or are perceived as foreign or abnormal, and in many cases, rebellious in nature. Historically, deviant behavior has been observed across all human societies. In contemporary times, deviance is particularly characteristic of youth lifestyles and manifests in various forms, including alcoholism, drug addiction, domestic conflicts, criminal behavior, moral decline, depression, suicide, and other related issues. The study of deviant behavior holds significant relevance for both Iranian and Azerbaijani societies, especially in identifying effective preventive measures tailored to each socio-cultural context. Today, we live in a modern society that is rapidly integrating with Europe and embracing new values and organized social systems. Our contemporary society is marked by diversity and multidimensionality. In this context, it is critically important for young people in our country—amid the process of global integration—to adopt proper educational and moral development frameworks. This includes respecting and reinforcing socially accepted norms and values, preserving moral traditions, and understanding the mechanisms and expressions of moral growth. As the world continues to globalize, its effects—both positive and negative—inevitably influence newly emerging, economically stable societies. On the positive side, such influences can enhance the intellectual potential of youth, fostering their development into honest, patriotic, and socially responsible individuals. Conversely, negative influences may arise due to a lack of willpower or ineffective parenting, leading to the adoption and normalization of inappropriate or deviant behaviors.

Keywords: deviant behavior; youth; socio-psychological factors; social development; globalization; moral values; education

Introduction

In our developing society, the increasing adoption of new values has added greater complexity and diversity to social life, becoming more perceptible year after year. The multidimensionality and dynamism of this development process have made individuals' attitudes toward these emerging

values more evident and distinct. Unlike the traditional norms of the past, today's set of new values increasingly demands a higher level of intellectual engagement from individuals.

One significant aspect worth highlighting is that, in recent years, the focus on intellectualism in the education and upbringing processes has inadvertently relegated the development of moral qualities among youth to a secondary position. This shift has, in many cases, led to the formation of characteristics that deviate from national and cultural mentalities. Therefore, identifying the mechanisms of moral development in youth, exploring its genesis, and clarifying the contributing factors allows us to outline the principles of proper educational approaches and move away from deviant behavioral tendencies.

From another perspective, investigating this problem also facilitates the refinement of educational strategies and ultimately contributes to the formation of psychologically well-adjusted youth prepared for societal integration. As is evident, by examining various aspects of social dynamics and deviance, it becomes possible to analyze both the current structure and future prospects of society—differentiating constructive behaviors from destructive ones.

In view of the above, the topic "**Socio-Psychological Factors of Deviant Behavior Among Youth in the Contemporary Period: A Comparative Study of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan**" has been selected as a relevant and timely subject for research.

Scope and Development of the Topic

An analysis of existing studies reveals that the problem has been addressed from multiple dimensions, which may be broadly categorized into three main directions:

1. The essence of deviance and the root causes of its emergence.
2. The impact of deviance on the social dynamics of society.
3. The socio-psychological causes of deviant behavior observed in youth and the social characteristics of such behaviors.

In Azerbaijan, prominent researchers have contributed significantly to the study and teaching of social psychology, as well as to the understanding of personality development. Among them are A.S. Bayramov, A.A. Alizadeh, T.T. Babayeva, C.A. Tahmasib, and others. Their scientific efforts have advanced our knowledge on key issues in social psychology in Azerbaijan, including the study of individuals' socio-psychological lifestyles and the influence of external guiding principles in personality formation.

Deviant behavior, though often considered abnormal, is not foreign to the fabric of social life. Several researchers have investigated this subject from both specific and general perspectives. For instance, E.I. Shafiyeva ("Abnormal Psychological Development in Children"), C.A. Tahmasib ("Reflections on Problems of Mental Development," "Reflections on the Socialization of Personality"), and others such as S.Sh. Pashayev, E.A. Piriyeva, M.A. Hamzayev, and A.A. Alizadeh have made considerable contributions. More general explorations have been offered by S.M. Majidova ("Street Children"), I.A. Mirzayeva ("Social Psychology of the 21st Century: Personality, Society, and Governance," "Practical Psychology of the Family"), and M.H. Mustafayev ("The Key Factors in the Moral Development of Youth," "Manifestations of Moral Qualities in Youth").

Comparative and International Perspectives

It is also important to consider foreign literature on the topic. Numerous Russian-, English-, and Persian-language authors have extensively studied deviance, conducted comparative analyses, and drawn significant conclusions. Notable Russian authors include:

- T.A. Khagurov (*Introduction to Modern Deviantology*),
- G.O. Perov and S.I. Samygin (*A Short Course in Sociology*),
- O.A. Karmadonov (*Social Deviation as a Value-Normative Model*),
- A. Cohen (*Deviant Behavior and Its Control*),
- L.M. Abolin, E. Aronson, P. Wilson, R. Eykert (*Socio-Psychological Laws of Human Behavior in Society*),
- V.A. Bodrov (*Informational Stress*),

- V.K. Vilyunas (*Fundamental Problems in the Psychological Theory of Emotions*),
- K. Izard, E.P. Ilyin, P. Kutter, among others.

    From English-language sources, the following authors have made significant contributions:
- P.A. Tyson (*A Developmental Line of Gender Identity, Gender Role, and Choice of Love Object*),
- J.C. Perry (*Longitudinal Studies of Personality Disorders*, *Journal of Personality Disorders*),
- C.S. Carver & T.L. White ("Behavioral Inhibition and Affective Responses to Impending Reward and Punishment: The BIS/BAS Scales", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1994, Vol. 67, Issue 2),
- I.H.A. Franken ("Psychometric Properties of the Dutch BIS/BAS Scales", *Journal of Psychopathology and Assessment*, 2005, Vol. 27), among others.

The issue has also been widely studied in neighboring Iran. Numerous surveys and research materials conducted in the Islamic Republic of Iran were referenced and prioritized during this investigation. Among notable Persian-language researchers are:

- S. Bashardust (*Marital Conflicts and Adaptation Patterns in Tehran High School Girls*, *Journal of Science and Research in Psychology*, Islamic Azad University of Khorasgan),
- A. Biyabangard (*Methods to Enhance Self-Esteem in Children and Adolescents*),
- Ğ. Khoyinejad and A. Rajavi (*Mother-Adolescent Conflicts and Criminal Behavior as a Behavioral Model*),
- R. Nelson and S.L. Izrael (*Child Behavioral Disorders*),
- Mohammad Hossein Farjad (*Study of Social Issues in Iran*), and others.

Literature Review and Research Rationale

Studies conducted in various countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, within the field of pedagogy, have reflected similar concerns as those outlined above. In particular, elements such as creativity and the tendency toward autonomy within the educational process are emphasized, and these aspects are considered central to the leitmotif of moral development. However, in many of these studies, the genesis and structural understanding of the problem are not presented at a level sufficient to satisfy the comprehensive requirements of this research.

The primary direction of this investigation follows a **sociological approach**, focusing specifically on the **socio-psychological structure of deviance**, its constituent elements, and the psychological laws governing its formation. Various researchers—including L. Kohlberg, J. Piaget, K. Gilligan, S. Freud, U. Lindsey, G. Kelly, A. Bayramov, A.A. Alizadeh, M. Hamzayev, B. Aliyev, S. Seyidov, M. Valiyev, E. Ismayilova, and others—have attempted to study moral development from multiple angles and perspectives.

Moreover, elements of moral education and formation have been addressed in the national-ethnic heritage, as well as in the works of prominent authors and poets. Despite the importance of these investigations, it is difficult to assert that the problem has been explored thoroughly and comprehensively. Nonetheless, these sources provide invaluable material for the present study.

When specified, it becomes clear that it is not feasible to cover every study related to the problem at both the individual and general levels. However, one critical issue must be emphasized: **the socio-psychological problems underlying deviant behavior among youth remain insufficiently studied**. This significant gap justifies the relevance and timeliness of selecting this issue as the object of academic investigation.

Research Object and Subject

Object of the Study:

The research focuses on the manifestations and levels of the deviance phenomenon that impede the formation of proper social behavior among youth, the regulation of behavioral patterns within society, and the organization of effective educational and upbringing processes.

Subject of the Study:

The subject matter includes the formation pathways of moral development in youth, the socio-psychological problems that arise, the mechanisms of development, the nature and direction of influencing factors, and a psychological analysis of the means and methods for eliminating deviant behavior. The central aim is to explore the essence and origins of behavioral issues experienced by youth through the use of specialized methodologies and psychological experiments. The study seeks not only to support youth in overcoming these challenges but also to examine the mechanisms leading to negative moral development and to identify solutions for eliminating them.

A fundamental **research hypothesis** underpins this work: *There is a correlation between the level of moral development in youth and their degree of self-awareness.* This correlation is, in turn, influenced by ethnosocial factors. The emergence and shaping of ethical norms among youth depend significantly on the structure and implementation of education and upbringing within both the family and the school system.

Research Objectives

To achieve the stated aims, the study sets out to fulfill the following research tasks:

1. To identify the theoretical aspects of the problem by analyzing relevant sociological, pedagogical, and psychological literature, and to systematize these approaches according to defined criteria.
2. To explore the forms and manifestations of behavioral traits among youth and, based on the principle of genetic development, address deviant behavior across different age stages. This includes guiding youth toward correct developmental pathways through appropriate educational interventions.
3. To determine the **social mechanisms** behind healthy development in youth, including identifying and classifying the factors that influence changes in specific developmental elements.
4. To analyze the consequences of **misguided educational processes**, including the social and familial repercussions of poor upbringing in the home, school, and broader society. This involves identifying the root causes of youth delinquency, substance abuse, and criminal behavior.
5. To develop and propose **practical corrective measures** for these problems and to design mechanisms for implementing the research findings in educational and psychosocial practice.

Scientific Novelty of the Research. For the first time in the modern period, the dynamics of processes affecting youth, the manifestation characteristics of emerging maladaptive behaviors, and the systematization of factors influencing their formation have become the object of psychological investigation. In this context, the present study provides several original contributions:

- The natural and socio-psychological regularities of the developmental potential of youth in the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, along with the genesis and dissemination patterns of both positive and negative behavioral traits, have been taken as the foundational framework.
- The factors influencing the formation of an appropriate social and psychological environment among youth, as well as the emergence of various group formations, have been analyzed separately and experimentally, with the underlying regularities among them being explored.
- The social causes that influence the development of the individual as a personality within society have been studied. Inhibiting aspects of this process have been identified, and the necessity of using appropriate methods to eliminate them has been repeatedly emphasized.
- Systematic proposals have been made to achieve positive outcomes in this domain.

Key Propositions Submitted for Defense. The process of moral development in youth is not only characterized by adaptive changes in accordance with developmental dynamics, but also significantly depends on the nature of influencing factors. Although the developmental trajectory of this process generally adheres to certain regularities, the level of adequacy in self-evaluation and self-respect also plays a crucial role.

The formation of moral qualities in youth does not occur abruptly; rather, it is a gradual process that intensifies against the background of the development of various psychological functions. Especially, the emergence of a new stage of thinking enhances youths' ability to manipulate their own perceptions, which in turn influences moral development. In addition to various influencing factors, existing societal norms and stereotypes exert a strong influence on the formation and consolidation of this process.

To eliminate certain negative influences that hinder the healthy development of youth in the moral and social environment, it is necessary to apply well-measured methods through the participation of youth in the educational process.

Methodological and Methodical Foundations of the Research. The methodological basis of the research is grounded in general scientific principles and theories concerning the mechanisms, structures, and manifestations of moral development as established in contemporary psychology. The study primarily refers to L. Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Simultaneously, the research is based on the assumption that the formation and manifestation of behavior in the future depend not only on external factors but also on the individual-psychological characteristics and overall personal qualities of the youth.

Scientific-Theoretical Significance of the Research. Given that proper behavioral culture is a complex and multidimensional process, the examination of its developmental dynamics and social status is of great importance in enriching sociology with new insights. Furthermore, identifying and systematizing the general regularities of this process in youth provides a foundation for the emergence of new scientific directions in the teaching of sociology and related elective disciplines. Understanding deviant behavior as a process, highlighting its various aspects, and addressing the negative phenomena associated with the behavioral culture of youth contribute to the development of new methodologies aimed at social correction and improvement.

Practical Significance of the Research. The findings of this research can be widely applied in fostering the moral development and upbringing of university students. Introducing new creative approaches in the moral enhancement of youth paves the way for the development of their personal qualities. By identifying the direction of dynamic changes in youths' moral attributes, a deeper understanding of their self-perception is enabled, allowing for the elimination of developmental deficiencies specific to this life stage. Moreover, the outcomes of this study can inform the development of scientific-methodical recommendations for educators and can be used in the research activities of experts at scientific institutions studying various aspects of pedagogical practice.

THE PROBLEM OF DEVIANCE AND ITS ESSENCE

1.1. The Concept of Deviant Behavior and Its Causes. Deviant behaviors comprise a set of social actions that occur randomly in the lives of individuals within society and are not necessarily foreign to the social sphere. However, the character, nature, and particularly the causes of such behaviors represent a compelling subject of socio-psychological inquiry and remain highly relevant. As is known, deviantology—an essential subfield of sociology—encompasses various types of deviant behavior, including criminality, drug addiction, terrorism, corruption, suicide, creativity, and others.

Scholars characterize the problem of deviance as a distinct social issue that is inextricably linked with the fabric of social life and is seen as inevitable. According to J. Glinski, the issue of deviance is such a fundamental social concept that it requires societal structures to be grounded in legal norms [54, 26]. Deviant behavior occurs when an individual deviates from the generally accepted moral principles and behavioral models of society. Within a collective where individuals live together, such behaviors are often perceived as "alien" and efforts are made to exclude them from the social environment.

One might ask: Have the fixed norms accepted throughout the history of different societies always been based on fully ethical and legal principles? Could society, by embracing certain bad habits, reject individuals who embody positive but unfamiliar norms, thereby labeling them as deviant? Clearly, the indicators of deviance are specific individuals or groups formed by them. These

subjects aim to propagate behavior models that are entirely new within their social context, either consciously or subconsciously.

These new behavioral models do not emerge suddenly in the consciousness and mindset of individuals; rather, they develop gradually over decades and are shaped by historical succession. In some cases—particularly among youth and minors—deviance may arise due to weaknesses in upbringing and education, eventually infiltrating their behavior. Initially, these tendencies do not fully manifest in the individual's actions. In this early stage of deviation, the manifestations are not yet pronounced, and thus the behaviors cannot be definitively categorized as deviant.

However, if timely preventive measures are not taken, the inclination toward deviance intensifies, ultimately dominating the individual's behavior, directing and shaping it toward specific goals. Even in the presence of societal threats within a youth's environment, deviant tendencies may still arise despite efforts to maintain integrity. Even if an individual's social cognition has not been corrupted by faulty upbringing, the strong desire for deviant behavior can severely impact their social psychology, eventually affecting both consciousness and conduct.

In this context, the individual's willpower and factors preventing deviant tendencies play a crucial role. If a society continues to harbor public threats and their consequences have engulfed it entirely, it may be rightfully described as a "sick society." A "sick environment" differs significantly from a "sick individual." While the negative impacts of a single sick person can be relatively contained and mitigated, the repercussions of a deviant group or society cannot be measured within the same boundaries. This represents a dire social reality and escalates beyond deviance into a full-fledged "social disaster."

Overcoming this requires not only national but also international cooperation. For example, if a country faces a high prevalence of alcoholism, crime, and terrorism, this poses a significant threat to neighboring nations. Consequently, states engage in joint efforts to combat deviance, develop partnership programs, and mitigate the damages caused by "infected environments."

Fortunately, government-level intervention programs are designed to prevent the situation from escalating to this level. Bilateral cooperation, collective struggle, conventions, treaties, and alliances are all aimed at preventing the threat from growing and becoming a large-scale social crisis. In this regard, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran—being friendly and brotherly nations—have developed cooperative programs and joined partnership conventions to support one another in addressing such threats.

The Complexity of Human Behavior and the Social-Psychological Dimensions of Deviance in Modern Society

Human behavior is so complex that characterizing it in absolute terms or establishing universally acceptable normative standards would be an oversimplification. It would therefore be a mistake to label all behavioral deviations as manifestations of deviance or classify them under a single social concept [47, p.14]. Deviations and behavioral irregularities are ubiquitous in human conduct and cannot always be systematically categorized. More importantly, researchers studying deviance must carefully define the boundaries of inclusion within this group and suggest methodological approaches accordingly. In other words, behavioral anomalies are to some extent inevitable in all individuals. If we were to consider all such cases as deviant, deviantology would become an all-encompassing field, absorbing nearly all aspects of human behavior. Yet, human nature is intrinsically rich and multifaceted, and its behavioral manifestations must be thoroughly studied [Goffman, 2009].

Every action or behavior has a source—a cause or a stimulus. This may originate from emotions such as anger or joy, family dynamics, interpersonal conflicts, societal influences, or broader collective interactions. Both the type and nature of behaviors vary significantly depending on an individual's personality and character traits. Humans differ by nature in their moral values, intellect, cognitive style, and perception. Consequently, their reactions to events and interpretations of life situations are diverse and multi-dimensional. Each individual perceives reality through a unique lens; thus, their emotional responses and coping strategies differ accordingly. For instance, following

the experience of romantic rejection, one person may develop hatred, another might go as far as committing an act of violence, while another individual may perceive it as fate and continue their life unaffected. This example underlines the seriousness of behavioral variability and raises the critical question: What compels a person to take such an extreme step?

From birth, a person is surrounded by a formative social environment—whether it be the biological family, foster care institutions, shelters, or other social groupings. These primary environments play a crucial role in shaping individual behavior. Such environments can either nurture a person into a responsible, law-abiding citizen or foster criminal tendencies. Later-acquired habits and cognitive structures influence how one interprets and responds to life events. Nevertheless, the foundational upbringing either normalizes certain behavioral patterns or conditions the individual to reject them [Lacan, p.89].

Deviance, therefore, must be examined within the broader context of the social system, which itself is in constant flux. As old systems are replaced with new ones, the individual psyche and consciousness undergo significant transformations. Shifts within social systems often involve contradictions, antagonisms, and structural frictions that give rise to behavioral irregularities. These tensions inevitably affect individuals' worldviews and behavioral expressions. Thus, it becomes difficult to define strict boundaries for behavior or identify early signs of deviance. Although initial indicators may be subtle or go unnoticed, repeated behaviors can eventually manifest as harmful patterns that are challenging to reverse. Compounding the issue is the tendency for individuals not to perceive their behavior as problematic, normalizing it in the absence of societal critique. Without public condemnation, these "normalized" behaviors may escalate, ultimately leading to socially unacceptable or unethical outcomes.

For example, when a child or adolescent encounters a novel or inappropriate behavior for the first time, they may lack the cognitive maturity to comprehend it. One must also consider their level of conscious development. Scientific studies confirm that full cognitive maturity in humans generally occurs between the ages of 25 and 30. Consequently, adolescents and young adults are considered the most vulnerable group prone to deviant behaviors and are therefore a central focus of deviance-related research.

In the early stages of deviance, societal reaction may not be immediately evident. However, as deviant behavior becomes habitual, society is compelled to respond, either through moral condemnation or formal disciplinary measures. Deviant behavior often correlates with legal infractions or actions deemed immoral and socially foreign. In such cases, the individual is confronted by public reproach or legal consequences. If the behavior is committed not individually but within a group or gang context, the group may be legally designated a "criminal organization" and subject to corresponding legal sanctions. These punitive actions aim to mitigate the negative impacts of the group's behavior and rehabilitate its members. Importantly, group-based deviance— also known as complex deviance—presents unique challenges. Unlike individual deviance, where actions may arise from internal motivations, group deviance often involves ideological manipulation and coercion. This undermines social stability, negatively influences youth development, and makes intervention more difficult.

1.2 Deviance as a Social-Psychological Factor in the Social Dynamics of Society

The social dynamics and structure of society are inherently characterized by diversity and uniqueness. Sociality and individuality are interwoven concepts, fundamentally rooted in human nature and conditioned by geographic and cultural environments. The individual's social development is heavily shaped by the accumulation of life experiences up to the present moment [74, p.67]. These formative experiences influence one's life trajectory, personal identity, and position within society.

Among these foundational influences, the family plays an irreplaceable role. It shapes not only the individual's personality and behavior but also their social integration, regardless of whether the influence is positive or negative. Dialectical transformations within society inevitably affect all social institutions, including the family. These transformations may unfold gradually or occur in abrupt,

dramatic shifts, resembling the evolution of institutional frameworks such as law, religion, and political systems [51, p.12]. As studies show, historical shifts within society also manifest within the family unit in various forms. The complexity of studying this issue lies in the fact that families are deeply influenced by political, religious, and legal institutions across different societies.

Scholars emphasize the role of the family not only in shaping the individual but also in preserving cultural values, moral ideals, and historical legacies. For instance, sociologist George Peter Murdock identified key family functions, including sexual, reproductive, educational (or socializing), and economic functions [Freud; Holley *et al.*]. Of these, the educational function is particularly crucial in the context of preventing deviant behavior. Proper upbringing within the family ensures the intergenerational transmission of societal norms, cultural traditions, and behavioral standards, thus contributing to the maintenance of social cohesion.

In today's world, the format and focus of social research are constantly evolving. According to recent online studies, more than 200 million people globally are registered as drug addicts, with a significant number of these cases linked to familial dysfunction and inadequate upbringing [67, p.45]. In other words, one of the most alarming social issues of the 21st century is the increasing tendency among youth and even children to abuse narcotic substances—a quintessential example of deviant behavior. When deviance is not addressed at the familial level, its consequences often spiral into broader societal crises. According to 2007 global statistics, millions continue to suffer from the devastating effects of drug addiction, confirming its status as a major global threat [73, p.85].

Frequent Manifestations of Deviance in Society and Its Underlying Factors

The frequent occurrence of deviant behavior within society can often stem from prevailing anarchic conditions. Notably, the detrimental behaviors exhibited by leaders serve as particularly salient examples. Proponents of leadership and voluntarism theories argue that masses are incapable of accomplishing any constructive task without guidance or leadership. Conversely, some scholars contend that leaders impose their will upon the people through coercion, while others maintain that the masses willingly follow leaders whom they choose to accept and govern them. Thus, if a leader possesses authority, this authority is inherently derived from the mass itself. Even a non-authoritarian leader who becomes a perpetual and exemplary figure for the people remains a product of the masses. However, under authoritarian regimes, the masses invariably become subjugated to the leader's will. Historical examples include Stalin, Mao, Mussolini, Hitler, Castro, Saddam Hussein, and others, who exercised absolute dominion over their populations [Perry, p. 56].

Leaders possess the capacity to mobilize followers, exhibit willful and decisive action, and often prioritize courage over rationality. It is important to emphasize the substantial role propaganda plays in this process. Erich Fromm argued that relentless propaganda diminishes critical thinking, rendering individuals more susceptible to emotional rather than rational appeals. Heightened emotional tension can motivate the masses toward heroic acts or self-sacrifice, and thus, even noble causes can become objects of mass fanaticism. Freud suggested that masses are capable of selfless loyalty to ideals and can contribute to significant cultural creativity, enriching language, folklore, and folk music [Cloninger, 1987].

At the same time, it should be noted that masses often constitute a contingent rather than necessary aggregation of individuals in specific circumstances. Their collective emotional direction is governed less by shared traditions and more by anger or, at times, primal impulses. Totalitarian regimes seek to transform the populace into such masses because they are easily directed, controlled, and transformed into fanatical groups. As Ortega y Gasset observed, the slogan of Mussolini's fascists, "Everything for the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State," typifies mass ideology [Franken, 2002]. The dictatorship of the State is the highest form of violence institutionalized as a law of behavior and accepted through direct action [Wies , 2007].

The theoretical foundation of elite theory was laid by Italian political philosophers Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923) and Gaetano Mosca (1858–1941). Mosca asserted, "The organized minority inevitably governs the disorganized majority." He noted that "a hundred united men acting with a common understanding can overcome a thousand individuals acting independently." Advocates of

this theory argue that masses are "at best inert," and when agitated, they become a dangerous force that resists significant innovations, destroys culture by striving for equality, and regresses society to a primitive state.

Generally, specialists acknowledge that deviance is generated by several key factors, among which social factors are paramount. The foremost socio-economic factor relates to family life and individual upbringing. Empirical evidence indicates that individuals from families with unresolved problems and insufficient care and supervision are more prone to undesirable phenomena such as drug addiction. Numerous perspectives exist on this issue, one of which states: "Parents who legally consume narcotics such as cigarettes and alcohol raise children who are more likely to use illegal narcotics" [Lansford, 2019]. In practice, family dysfunction drives youth into "risk groups," prompting them to experiment with harmful substances. Psychologists have demonstrated that incomplete families tend to produce developmental pathologies. Children from single-parent families often experience communication difficulties and require more attention and care. When adolescents are deprived of sufficient care, they experience feelings of "family deficiency" and "social hunger," which contribute to a propensity for deviant behavior [Najafov, 2025].

Even in intact families, lack of harmony is considered a risk factor. Children in families characterized by neglect, frequent conflicts, parental secrets, distrust, and low material and cultural standards often feel isolated and experience a duller home environment. Observations reveal that adolescents from such families tend to display jealousy, envy toward peers, depression, anxiety, and aggression. These individuals are prone to lying, irritability, and conflictiveness. Moreover, children exposed to frequent violence or abuse at home often develop destructive tendencies, weak self-control, reluctance to work, and lack of willpower, all of which diminish their resistance to narcotics when encountered [Najafov, 2025].

Research indicates that, as in many countries, deviance among youth in the Islamic Republic of Iran has increased. The primary causes are less associated with family issues or delinquency and more linked to inadequate planning of leisure time and affluent individuals channeling their entertainment through drug use and deviant behaviors [Le Bon, 2004]. Even in well-functioning families, parents often fail to provide adequate leisure activities for their children. It is essential for parents to understand that nutrition and education alone are insufficient; youth also require meaningful and engaging ways to spend their free time. While the responsibility for this often lies with families and relevant institutions, these issues are sometimes relegated to secondary importance.

Studies show that in culturally advanced families, children find home life more engaging, and the longer they remain influenced by their parents, the more they internalize life values and choose their life paths more consciously [Johnson, 2023]. However, some families exhibit "hypercare," which can provoke adolescents to seek immediate escape into society to assert independence, perceiving excessive control and supervision as constraints. Such tendencies may lead to familial conflict [44].

In many Eastern countries, including Iran, another family dynamic exists where a single child is treated as the "family idol," often granted privileges beyond others and developing feelings of arrogance, disrespect, and hostility toward peers. Such adolescents may seek attention through eccentric behaviors and become vulnerable to alcohol and drug use, ultimately falling victim to addiction [14].

Experts also caution that even well-cared-for, well-educated children from harmonious families may still experiment with narcotics, driven by a natural youthful curiosity and desire to assert their autonomy. Psychologists advise against harsh punishment for youthful experimentation, as rapid punitive measures may harm adolescent mental health and foster hostility toward family and society, possibly producing adverse outcomes [Carver, 1994]. Consequently, behavioral issues among adolescents require ongoing attention in all families [Tyson, 1982].

In Iran, efforts to foster moral education and spiritual development among youth emphasize self-discipline, self-assessment, and self-regard as critical components. Research highlights that strengthening youths' moral concepts is closely related to the social-psychological environment in which they live. Effective moral development demands adequate self-reflection and self-organization

skills, which can be cultivated through both formal education and extracurricular activities [Perry, 1993].

Religious factors also significantly influence personality development and deviant tendencies. World religions provide normative ideals for personality. For example, the Christian ideal centers on love for God and neighbor, with the unity of divine and human natures forming the basis of the Christian understanding of personality [Cloninger, 1987]. In Islam, the essential feature of personality is the absolute and flawless implementation of God's will. Muslims adhere strictly to monotheism and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Islam prohibits unjustified violence and advocates responding only to aggression. The Sharia law in Iran forbids anything harmful to the physical, intellectual, and spiritual development of personality, such as alcohol, drugs, impure meat, suicide, family betrayal, theft, fraud, exploitation, and gambling [130]. Unlike Christianity, Islam places a high value on earthly life.

Psychological factors also contribute to deviant behavior. Specialists identify emotional disturbances, depression, and mood imbalances as primary triggers for drug use among Iranian youth. Drugs are often used to alleviate tension, fatigue, and anxiety, but chronic use leads to self-destruction. Initially, drugs may be perceived as remedies for depression but eventually exacerbate depressive episodes, increasing their frequency and severity. The root causes of such behaviors often lie in dysfunctional family relationships [Fabreqa, 1991].

Historically, many global and ethnic-specific problems have troubled societies, occasionally escalating to worldwide concern. One such persistent contemporary issue is drug addiction, which exists to varying degrees across countries [De Groot, 2003]. Finding solutions to this problem remains a pressing concern for researchers and professionals alike. Current studies explain drug addiction through three principal causes: sociological factors (family and societal influence), biological predispositions, and psychological issues (mental health problems and deficiencies). The negative impact of addiction is widespread, contributing to increased congenital diseases, crime, and other social maladies, presenting a long-standing challenge [Fabreqa, 1991].

The emergence of deviant traits in individuals is not extraordinary; as such tendencies are not foreign to human nature. Examining individual characteristics reveals that deviance may manifest in various forms. Family remains a fundamental social context shaping an individual's worldview. It is a unique social system wherein members are connected by strong, bilateral, and long-term emotional bonds. Despite occasional weakening of these bonds, strengthening them remains essential [123].

Manifestation Features of Youth Behavioral Culture in the Contemporary Period and Key Influencing Factors

2.1 Social Dynamics of Behavioral Patterns in Youth and Deviant Behavior Models

Contemporary youth inevitably differ from their predecessors in one way or another, and this differentiation is essential. Social development, by its dialectical nature, simultaneously shapes the development strategy of youth. In any society, there exist social norms that define the life of that society. Deviance represents a violation of these stable standards. Deviance is one of the most significant problems of any social system. This issue is inherent in all eras and will persist as long as social life exists because deviance is intrinsic to human nature. Not all individuals can fully conform to social norms; inevitably, some will violate them. However, each society has its own specific forms of deviance and deviations from social norms. The question arises: how do these deviant forms emerge in society, and how can they be prevented?

Firstly, it is possible to identify social norms that are familiar and accepted by the society in question. Social norms encompass rules, demands, expectations (or social approval and sanctions), relevant behavioral regulations, and sometimes general principles. These general principles are often determined by systematic norms, including examples such as speech, thinking, and reactions to perceived needs [Tull, 2008]. The norms present in society vary by scale. For instance, in both Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, there are distinct age groups formed among people of various age levels [Fabreqa, 1991].

In both Azerbaijan and Iran, particularly among adolescents, these age groups primarily serve the purpose of meaningful leisure and entertainment for youth [Tull, 2008]. It is rare that youths use the power of their groups for altruistic purposes. These groups, as smaller components of the social system, possess unique rules that arise from "group habits" [Tull, 2008]. What are these group habits, and what underlies them? Importantly, these norms appear to the group members as prohibitions imposed on them by society, acting as social sanctions that restrict adolescents' "freedom of action." However, if adolescents perceive any social norm as a duty or obligation imposed upon them, the issue would be resolved naturally.

Currently, more than half of the students studying at universities in Iran and Azerbaijan struggle to organize their leisure time effectively. When productive leisure time organization becomes impossible, youths seek to expend their "excess" energy through various means and channels. Sometimes, these means do not guide adolescents in the right direction, and society bears the heavy consequences. Any emerging harmful habit is inherently a negative example for the society, as the individual exhibiting it inevitably "poisons" the social system to which they belong, regardless of its size. Occasionally, the social system, whether a family or a small group, behaves as if it accepts "obligations" outside society, which impedes timely identification and treatment of this "diseased organ" and its reintegration into the social system [Tull, 2008, p.94].

A prominent example observed in both Azerbaijan and Iran is the mutual defense among youth addicted to drug use, commonly referred to as "white death." Such irrational, spontaneous behaviors ultimately result in youths becoming victims of this dreadful scourge, destroying their young lives. Alarmingly, these cases are increasing annually in our societies, as combating them becomes progressively difficult. Consequently, the social network of such groups expands, and they not only contribute to drug addiction but also to corruption, prostitution, infectious diseases, moral and volitional weakness, and other societal maladies.

Surveys conducted among student communities in Azerbaijani and Iranian universities suggest that the primary responsibility for youth succumbing to these afflictions lies with the youths themselves, as no external force coerced them; they voluntarily chose these actions and pursued them. Nevertheless, it is natural to seek part of the societal causes within the society itself.

a) Family

The family is a highly complex system that is as interesting as it is multifaceted. When referring to the family, one primarily recalls problems, as it possesses unique characteristics as a social and real system. In such a system, strong and long-term emotional and social connections arise between individuals. Although the intensity of these connections may gradually diminish, familial bonds typically endure over time and even maintain their influence beyond death [Lansford, 2019].

Each family member is assigned a permanent role, system, and methods. The family's characteristics, rules, models, and values mostly derive from its history and lineage. Individuals planning to marry consider inherited family values, meaning that spouses often transfer the desires and traditions of past generations [Sanayi, 2008]. Each spouse maintains unstable emotions and loyalties toward their parents, and family members generally behave according to parental expectations. Such families tend to be long-lasting and sustainable.

Conflicts between spouses are among the major problems worldwide. Almost all children have experienced some degree of parental conflict, which is recognized as a part of life [Dawe, 2004]. Marital conflicts are associated with shortened lifespan, impaired health balance, dissatisfaction with social relationships, deviation from social norms, and the decline of cultural and moral values among married couples. Researchers have varying perspectives on family conflicts. Generally, conflict involves misunderstanding, lack of communication, and contradictions.

Two principal views should be considered: the dominant classical theory regards conflict as destructive and a cause of crises, demanding immediate resolution; alternatively, the interactive view perceives conflict as a factor sustaining differences and contentious decisions [Baharistan, 2004]. Based on this, both positive and negative impacts of marital conflict are recognized. Turner [1982], Wikz and Tate [2001] explained that utilizing conflict constructively within dynamic processes helps

spouses benefit from conflict rather than merely seeking its resolution. Turner summarized eight positive functions of conflict in families as follows:

1. Utilizing energy constructively instead of suppressing it;
2. Revisiting past conflicts and expected relational changes;
3. Employing new methods and controls in marital conflicts;
4. Reevaluating power dynamics in relationships;
5. Rationally reassessing and applying solutions to problems;
6. Revealing hidden thoughts and feelings;
7. Utilizing creativity for developing new opinions and questions;
8. Creating spaces for cooperation and collaboration [152].

Conflict is linked to numerous issues, including depression in women, substance abuse in men, and sexual dysfunction and behavioral problems, especially in boys [Afarol, 1989]. These are factors stimulating deviance within families. Beyond psychological behaviors, conflict also significantly affects health. Marital conflicts lead to lower satisfaction and increased likelihood of divorce [Favrzoalson, 1992]. Divorce rates serve as a reliable indicator of family instability. In Western societies, approximately half of all marriages end in divorce [Halford, 2001]. In Iran, out of 1000 marriages, 174 end in divorce [Dawe, 2005].

Divorce is one of life's most stressful events, associated with various physical and psychological strains. While it adversely affects spouses, its impact on children is profound. The prevalence of problematic behavior in children is linked to both divorce and family conflict [Dawe, 1982]. Children's behavioral problems are often explained by parental divorce, as these children continue to face neglect and lack of supervision, fostering deviant behavior. Research has proven that children's cognitive and intellectual development is negatively affected by parental divorce. Divorce leaves indelible marks on children's lives, with family relationships playing a key role in the progression of suffering and depression.

Studies demonstrate a consistent relationship between depression and marital dissatisfaction. One spouse's depression often stems from a tense family environment. An incompatible marriage can become a significant factor in severe depression [Viesman, 1987; Musavi et al., 2007]. Marital satisfaction minimizes depression risk, whereas spouses in conflict tend to develop depressive symptoms and problematic behaviors.

Research also shows that family conflicts contribute to depression among youth [Loxton, 2001], with father-child conflicts playing a significant role. Children's depression within families is linked to exposure to parental conflicts, negatively influencing their social-psychological and physical health. Disrupted parent-child relationships correlate directly with spousal incompatibility, leading to weak familial bonds. Consequently, children in such families often exhibit negligence and dysfunction at work, reflecting their negative familial experiences such as lack of attention, emotional distance, and limited support.

Young people experiencing depression from early ages often continue to face family problems, including difficulties with spouses and children. Moreover, children's interventions in parental conflicts may later become the foundation of conflicts in their own marriages. Parents sometimes inadvertently exploit their children by involving them in conflicts and concealing disputes, which profoundly affects children's behavior and leaves deep psychological scars [Dawe, 2004]. These unresolved conflicts tend to carry over into their adult marital lives. For example, if a husband is sensitive about his wife's spending, the child may adopt similar unethical behavior in their own marriage, perpetuating the cycle of conflict [Sanayi Zakir, 2000].

Studies reveal that family conflicts and problems emerging during marriage often stem from parental interference. Halford and colleagues found that positive experiences and harmonious relationships in marriages are frequently modeled after parents' own positive relationships. Families with supportive parent relationships exhibit higher marital stability and satisfaction among couples. In contrast, families with harshness and conflict show higher levels of spousal discord and aggression in newlyweds [Halford, Senrz, Benz]. Children raised in strict or violent families are more likely to

experience similar problems and emotional difficulties [Mohammadian]. Rizayi's research indicates a significant relationship between family effectiveness and the quality of intergenerational spousal relationships. Rasulnejad's findings suggest that patterns between the first and second generations are entirely understandable.

Kalmus's research demonstrated that physical violence between parents is significantly associated with marital irritability. In studies conducted by Schulman and Klein, it was shown that children's expectations arise from marriage and their relationship with parents. Individual expectations are considered one of the most determinative factors in couples' marital roles. Pavem's study focused on the relationships between husband and wife and their impact on children, revealing that in conflictual families, parent-child relationships are neither positive nor appropriate. Consequently, children raised in such families tend to become conflicted parents themselves, lacking adequate and appropriate relational skills. They tend to transfer the problems and conflicts experienced by their parents onto their own children [Bereczkei, 2018].

Wampler and colleagues identified patterns linking spouses' interests and effectiveness, showing that negative experiences—including neglect, limited expression, marital dissatisfaction, and emotional distance among family members—manifest similarly in their own families and close social circles.

Research indicates that family behaviors play a fundamental role in child development, personality formation, and behavioral organization. A healthy newborn child, possessing the highest developmental potential, receives optimal upbringing after passing through the most ideal developmental processes. This development occurs within the environment and family conditions available to the child. From birth, parents strive to provide the most comprehensive and ideal opportunities for their child's development. However, many children gradually acquire maladaptive traits during development, leading to behavioral problems due to a lack of trust and security [Ennett, et.al. 2006].

Long-term studies and numerous social surveys in Iran have identified family and educational problems as primary causes of academic failure. Mohammadiya argues that family success and high-quality interpersonal relationships significantly influence students' academic achievement. There is a close correlation between family conflicts, separation of family members, the reduction of safe psychological conditions at home, and students' educational difficulties and academic failures. Empirical evidence suggests that conflicts between parents substantially affect children's problems. Research has shown a meaningful association between parental conflicts and children's mental health problems (stress and tension) as well as behavioral issues (such as harshness and delinquency). Studies by Deius, Harold, Geg-Mori, and Kamigez highlight that children's adrenocortical responses are affected by parental conflict, leading to mental and behavioral problems.

From an evolutionary perspective, family encounters, psychological-biological system functions, and exposure to family characteristics can cause health problems and disorders in children. Basiaux, P., Streel, E., Tecco (2004) focused on the negative effects of marital conflict on children's health and character, demonstrating that violent conflicts between parents are linked to behavioral and health deterioration in children. Family conflicts are regarded as a critical risk factor and important predictor of child maladjustment and misunderstandings. Although children are influenced by family dynamics during development, they do not accept maladaptive parental behaviors.

According to family systems theory, parental conflicts threaten family integration. This concept defines the family as a system whose components are interdependent. Effective parental relationships and child-rearing methods within the family indicate that this structure operates as an integrated unit, where family experiences function collectively.

Research by Grik, Fincham, Ronald, and Richartman reveals that psychological pressure and conflicts in families are related to adolescents' morals and personalities. If conflicts in children's or adolescents' thinking are regarded as serious threats, symptoms such as depression, tension, or psychological reactions may occur. Such problems cause significant difficulties in belief, adaptation,

and even children's self-regulation within families. Kamigez, Korus, and Pap found that marital conflicts act as stressors reducing children's emotional security, potentially leading to conflict-related problems. Al-Sheikh, Buchalt, Clery, Kamigez, and Asbu demonstrated that emotional insecurity in children, along with family conflicts, affects sleep patterns and marital conflicts are a key determinant. Sleep disturbances in children contribute to tension, socio-emotional disturbances, and diminished functioning.

Qarabaği and colleagues emphasize that family environment security serves as a protective factor in reducing children's emotional problems amid parental conflicts. However, negative evaluations of parental conflicts become internal risk factors for children. Psychological, verbal, and emotional harshness between spouses directly influence children's aggressive behaviors. Many children react to parental conflicts with strong negative emotions and aggressiveness. When conflicts are unresolved, negative responses intensify substantially (Deius & Kamig, 1994). Studies by Nikolotti, Al-Sheikh, and Vitson link marital conflicts and child rejection contracts with mental and behavioral risks, indicating that children's role in negative relational assessments, parental conflict characteristics, and family anxiety about insecurity represent both personal and environmental risk factors for behavioral problems.

Amri believes that parental life satisfaction significantly affects children's personality development and psychological health. Empirical research shows that marital conflict negatively impacts individual qualities and relationships. Amativkit found that children living in families with high levels of conflict exhibit lower psychological and cognitive adjustment compared to those in less conflicted families. Their results highlight the negative effects of conflict on personal dignity. Blagor noted that conflicted marital relationships and paternal absence contribute to maternal overload and, ultimately, to excessive closeness between mother and child. Cinkinz observed that children from highly angry conflict environments demonstrate dominant angry emotional responses. Considering reciprocal effectiveness, family health or conflict, including spousal and parental problems, significantly affects children's compromise behaviors and their role in social learning.

Children interpret and respond to abilities, temperament, personality, and previous experiences. In other words, children's interpretations and conceptual frameworks regarding conflicts and events within family structures—including parental subsystems, agreement forms, and agreement behaviors—determine their responses. Numerous studies emphasize parental roles in children's agreement problems. Garbarino and Sherman regard harsh families with abnormal behaviors as dangerous for children's relational development. Additionally, Egolf (1983) and Beshardust (2005) noted that families continue to live together despite frequent conflicts and disputes. Such environments foster child conflicts and behavioral problems, and family relationships and conflicts are regarded as sources of children's behavioral problems.

Therefore, family background, security, and parental conflicts are primary sources of psychological stress. Truly problematic families experience rapid and frequent conflict zones. Anders and Kapldi's (2000) research concluded that parental conflicts influence societal behaviors and adolescent depression, which also affect elder relationships. Homen highlighted that constant parental conflicts and fights cause family disruption and deterioration, negatively impacting adolescents' behavioral qualities.

The primary and most fundamental social relationship in children's lives is the parent-child relationship. Dignity factors and quality parent-child relationships are crucial for individuals' well-being and talent development. Children's and adolescents' behavior and psychological health are widely recognized as influenced by family roles. The family's role in children's criminal and psychological behaviors is significant and includes four main factors: family disintegration, family conflicts, family ignorance, and family deviations. The four effective factors of parent-child conflict are critical in forming adolescent behavioral problems.

Numerous factors contribute to the emergence of parent-child conflicts, including friendships, interactions with the opposite sex, clothing styles and patterns, hair and makeup, driving, adherence to social values, smoking, alcohol use, and religious commitments. However, when parent-child

conflicts become severe, they cause behavioral and psychological damage in adolescents. For example, studies show that mother-child conflict during adolescence is associated with depression, behavioral problems at school, reduced educational functioning, nonconforming behaviors, and issues with dignity. Hershon and Rosenbaum's studies indicated that children exposed to family conflict and hostility display emotional disorders, behavioral problems, and social conflicts [Sigel & Sena, 1997]. Mother-adolescent conflicts combined with harshness lead to feelings of antisocial hopelessness in individuals, resulting in antisocial deviant behaviors.

The environment plays a substantial role in the emergence of deviance. The environment is the social space with which adolescents are constantly in contact. The environment continually follows adolescents outside the family and influences their behaviors. Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize the role of the environment in shaping adolescents' behaviors. There exist such social ills in the environment that not only induce deviance in adolescents' lives but also hinder their development into honorable, patriotic, and intellectual individuals. These social problems effectively corrode society from within, as a social system.

One of the gravest social problems is drug addiction, known colloquially as "white death." Drug addiction exerts severely detrimental effects on society. Individuals afflicted by this disease isolate themselves from society, which alters their attitude toward others, often making them more aggressive. Likewise, societal attitudes toward such individuals change. These individuals are found across all social strata and cause problems both in their workplaces and in facing problems themselves. Addicted individuals gather others like themselves, fostering numerous social problems as mentioned above. Because addicted persons resort to any means to satisfy their needs—including theft, murder, and various crimes—their families endure material, moral, and physical trauma. While their closest relatives suffer most, society as a whole bears greater harm.

Children born into such families differ from their peers; the negative effects of drug addiction manifest clearly in their lives.

Drug Addiction and Alcoholism:

Research indicates that drug addiction has become one of the most serious problems facing the younger generation today. Recently, the increasing number of youths addicted to drugs, even in secondary schools, highlights the alarming severity of this issue worldwide. The rising prevalence among girls, in particular, signals the advancing scope of this social malady. While some unemployed or idle individuals lacking stable life conditions succumb to addiction due to their vulnerability and tendency toward reckless behavior, children from affluent families may fall into drug use as a form of entertainment, ultimately leading to addiction. Regardless of the cause, drug addiction inflicts significant harm on the youth.

According to online sources, approximately 190 million drug addicts are registered worldwide today. It should be noted that experts agree official statistics often underestimate the real figures, sometimes by a factor of seven to ten, indicating that the actual number of drug addicts is much higher [Johnson, 2003].

The use of drugs and alcohol is a global issue affecting entire societies and the world at large. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct direct educational programs in schools targeting students, teachers, and parents, focusing on the early symptoms of addiction, initial assessments, and behavioral patterns associated with substance abuse. The emergence of youths experimenting with drugs under peer or neighborhood influence underscores the importance of preventive measures and early interventions. Psychological and, when necessary, medical support should be considered for these adolescents and young adults.

Unfortunately, rehabilitation programs and worldview-changing interventions remain scarce or nonexistent in many countries, including on a global scale. Specialists attribute this primarily to deficiencies in both material-technical resources and highly qualified personnel. Regarding the consequences of drug addiction, experts report that substance abuse often leads to promiscuity, thereby facilitating the spread of incurable sexually transmitted diseases. Moreover, viruses causing

immunodeficiency, such as HIV/AIDS, and hepatitis B and C are prevalent among drug users, representing some of the most severe complications of addiction [Johnson, 2003].

Drug addiction is not only a problem in Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran but is a worldwide issue. The increasing number of addicted individuals calls for more comprehensive research and awareness efforts. The spread of drug addiction anywhere in the world reveals societal helplessness in confronting this problem. Being a universal issue, drug addiction is particularly widespread among youth, with the global number of users exceeding 190 million. The predominance of young people among this population threatens the future of societies worldwide.

Thus, educational and research activities should be expanded, emphasizing to young people that even occasional drug use can lead to dependency. Addicted individuals become captives of narcotics, socially isolated, and experience gradual physical weakening and loss of strength. Drug dependence manifests in two main forms: physical and psychological. Physical dependence is characterized by altered physiological functioning, causing the body to require continuous drug intake. Psychological dependence involves the desire to relieve certain feelings or elevate mood. Drug users often seek temporary escape from their realities and attempt to forget their difficulties, even momentarily.

Addiction also brings about significant behavioral and personality changes. Addicted individuals often exhibit mood swings, unpredictable behaviors, persistent depression and drowsiness, and cognitive clouding. Physically, they may display a gaunt appearance, red eyes, weight loss, signs of fatigue, and diminished willpower.

As previously mentioned, drug addiction contributes to the spread of harmful viruses such as HIV/AIDS, and also leads to various crimes including theft, robbery, and homicide. Despite ongoing awareness campaigns worldwide, including in the Islamic Republic of Iran, challenges persist in this field. Observations indicate that drug users are predominantly youths who lack adequate parental care and attention [Johnson, 2003].

Furthermore, societal attempts to isolate drug users often backfire, leading to further marginalization. Therefore, communities should avoid alienating these individuals and instead invite them into collective environments to provide the necessary support. Hospital treatment alone does not yield satisfactory results. Society must work to reintegrate addicts and prevent their social isolation. A young person who has tried drugs once may relapse, so community members should offer support and assist in alleviating their social, economic, and psychological stresses. Globally, there is a need for unified action declaring the end of drug addiction. Mass awareness campaigns, educational materials in secondary schools and universities, and media engagement involving youth can foster positive change regarding drug addiction.

Research also identifies several key factors contributing to drug addiction in Azerbaijan and Iran. One primary factor is social voids within society, particularly family-related issues. Empirical evidence shows that individuals from dysfunctional families or those lacking sufficient parental care are more susceptible to addiction. It is often said: "Parents who use legal drugs such as cigarettes and alcohol tend to raise children who will use illegal drugs." Family problems tend to push adolescents into "risk groups," leading them toward drug use. Psychologists have demonstrated that incomplete families often develop developmental pathologies, with single-parent children frequently experiencing communication difficulties and requiring additional care and attention. When adolescents lack this care, feelings of "family deficiency" and "social hunger" arise, predisposing them to alcohol and drug use [Brendgen, 1998].

Even in intact families, the absence of harmony is considered a risk factor. Indifference toward the child, frequent conflicts, parental secrecy, mutual distrust, and low socioeconomic status make such families unpleasant for adolescents. These young people often feel lonely and develop jealousy toward peers, depression, fear or aggression, dishonesty, and quarrelsome behavior. Frequently abused children may exhibit destructiveness, rebellion, poor self-control, and tendencies to shirk responsibility—factors that weaken their resistance to drugs. Such youths, unable to express

dissatisfaction with their treatment or attempt to resolve their problems, easily turn to alcohol and drugs.

Studies reveal that, as noted, the main causes of drug use in Iran are not solely family problems or reckless lifestyles, but also poorly planned leisure time and the tendency of financially privileged individuals to "realize" their entertainment through drug use. Even in normal families, parents often fail to provide adequate entertainment for their children. Parents must recognize that meeting basic needs like food and education is insufficient; adolescents also require meaningful and engaging ways to spend their free time [Brendgen, 1998]. In families with higher cultural levels, children find family life more interesting, and the longer they remain under parental influence, the more they internalize their parents' life values [Goffman, 2009].

Many parents pay close attention to their children's interests, often surrounding adolescents with overprotection. However, such hyper-care is not always beneficial. Overprotected children may strive to escape their parents' supervision "on the street." Excessive care, constant monitoring, and restrictions on freedom provoke adolescents to seek autonomy, which can trigger family conflicts.

Similar to other Eastern countries, Iran also experiences the phenomenon of the "family idol," especially in single-child families, where the only child is overly indulged and considered superior among relatives. This situation fosters feelings of disrespect and resentment in the adolescent. Accustomed to admiration, these youths tend to view even unusual or inappropriate behavior as acceptable, including early use of alcohol and drugs, eventually becoming victims of addiction fueled by desires to outdo others.

Researchers emphasize that even in harmonious families where children receive proper care, education, and extracurricular activities, the risk of drug use remains. I.N. Pyatnitskaya, a researcher in addiction studies, concluded that adolescents' constant quest for novelty and exploration is characteristic of certain developmental stages [American Psychiatric Association, 2000]. The desire to demonstrate knowledge and skills and to experience life freely motivates youths constantly.

Psychologists caution against harsh punishment and aggressive reactions toward youths with deviant behaviors, as these can damage their psyche and worsen outcomes. Statistical data shows only a small portion of such youths continue drug use, underscoring the importance of ongoing attention to adolescent behavioral issues [American Psychiatric Association, 2000, 4,7,9; Dishion, 2002].

Drug use as a form of deviance also strongly correlates with psychological factors. Experts identify emotional disturbances, depression, and mood regulation difficulties as primary motivators for drug use. Many users initially consume drugs to alleviate anxiety, fatigue, or tension. However, this relief is temporary; over time, drug use becomes the source of worsening depression and other mental health issues.

Psychologists and medical professionals have profiled typical addicts as highly sensitive individuals struggling to adapt emotionally to society, lacking stable social interests, future plans, and confidence in tomorrow. Another type often includes artists and creative individuals who seek to expand their sensory perceptions and reinterpret their environments. Unfortunately, drug use often leads to premature death among artists, musicians, and painters [Perry, 1993].

Psychiatrists specializing in deviance have identified additional characteristics in youth involved in drug addiction—a form of deviant behavior—including poor self-regulation, inability to anticipate events, a sense of entitlement to everything, and aversion to traditional norms.

Consequently, research on the social and public causes of drug addiction concludes that individuals who consume narcotic substances generally create numerous intractable problems for society. Therefore, considering the aforementioned traits, parents must have a thorough understanding of their children's character and provide timely, appropriate guidance. However, addressing this issue should not be solely the parents' responsibility; society and the state must also approach the problem with serious concern and accountability.

The proliferation of deviant behaviors represents a significant societal challenge. It is inappropriate to overlook the disruption of youths' healthy lifestyles. Exploiters gain substantial

profits from the deterioration of young people's lives—for example, drug traffickers earn approximately 400 billion USD annually from narcotics sales. Official statistics indicate that approximately 1,200,000 individuals are drug addicts in the Islamic Republic of Iran, of whom 5% are adolescents, victims of deviance in various forms. According to Mohammadi's research, in 2002, 13.7% of inmates in Iranian prisons were drug addicts [McGloin, 2019], with 36.6% imprisoned for crimes related to narcotic substances.

Unstable and maladaptive behaviors severely impact occupational functioning as well as social, psychological, and domestic life. For example, drug users often suffer from various diseases including liver, heart, lung, kidney, and skin disorders, cancer, premature aging, and mortality. Moreover, narcotics degrade personal qualities, altering behavior and temperament. Substance abuse negatively affects employability and social participation: drug users often lose their jobs, face hardship, and material needs may push them toward criminality. At this point, adolescents may resort to crimes as they attempt to manage their lives at their understanding level. As criminal acts repeat and youths derive a dangerous "pleasure" from these misguided successes, it becomes increasingly difficult to dissuade them.

The initial problems of such youths usually stem from the family. The family is a unit where members are connected through feelings, morals, behaviors, and conduct; they share these experiences. Psychologists argue that personality formation begins in family life, where moral values are first instilled and become the individual's spiritual foundation. If the mother is addicted to drugs, respect among family members diminishes, resulting in conflicts that disrupt family upbringing and prevent members from integrating into society. Their behavior then deviates from normal patterns. Children, instead of receiving proper guidance from their mothers, experience harshness and suffer due to such behavior [Perry, 1993].

Thus, benevolent relationships between mother and children deteriorate, increasing tendencies toward drug addiction. A mother's addiction automatically influences children, exposing them to her harmful impact, which contradicts societal laws and norms. The family is the primary social institution that introduces adolescents to societal values and lifestyles; it is the foundation for personality development. Children emulate their parents' behavior, learning conduct, worldview, communication styles, and, if dysfunctional, also adopt deviant and immoral behaviors. Parental smoking or drug addiction is often mirrored in children's conduct, who may themselves become addicted. Conversely, children's resilience or aversion to drugs can vary, but parental influence remains significant. Sometimes, family unemployment gradually fosters drug tendencies [Bandzeladze, 2003].

Family members share genetic traits influencing health. For example, siblings inherit approximately 50% of genetic traits from parents, which are absent among non-family members. Therefore, genetic factors are significant in family life. Many researchers have extensively studied family life [over 100 studies exist]. Observations indicate that the majority of those interested in alcohol consumption are influenced by family behavior [Kolinez & Dofber, 1990; Kerb et al., 1385]. About 25% of boys show a tendency toward alcohol, with 33% of alcohol users coming from single-child families. Among married and unmarried alcoholics, many began drinking during youth and continue thereafter [Bayir Amali, 1383].

Another source states boys are more susceptible than girls to family influences leading to alcohol use [Ahmadi, 1387]. Families where parents consume alcohol often show a strong tendency toward drug abuse. Psychologists emphasize the critical role of parental behavior in child upbringing and its potential to either contribute to or prevent drug addiction [Ateshpur & Gulparvar, 1382]. Havkinez et al. assert that family conditions significantly affect individuals' susceptibility to drug addiction; children may adopt drug use either from parents or other adults [Teyson, Hall, Dicenhald, 1384].

Godvin [1985] noted in Danish studies that approximately one in four boys develops alcohol use tendencies. Similar findings were reported by American researchers Kadrot and Kat [1978]. Having one or both parents addicted to drugs or alcohol instills in children the notion that substance use is normal and not a societal calamity. Children from such families are more likely to experiment with

these substances, marking the first step toward addiction. Thus, parental behavior and attitudes serve as a critical model for children, initiating drug dependency within the family context [Jozdani].

Statistical data on drug-addicted families show high prevalence in Ireland, where drug use is normalized, with 10% of youths aged 15–20 being addicts. In northern regions, two million drug users mainly consume heroin [Korrian, 19876]. In India, the number of drug addicts ranges from one to one and a half million, with families normalizing drug use [Mohan, 1985].

Various medications have been developed and used in medical treatment to address diseases caused by drug use. Sullivan and colleagues [1983] suggest that drug addiction arises from familial sorrow and despair. Other researchers claim that poor family relationships and behavior foster addiction spread [Ateshpur & Gulparvar, 1382].

Parental discord and frequent conflicts seriously affect children's upbringing, pushing them away from familial love and care, leading to deviant paths. Such children turn to drugs to escape family tensions; studies show 82% of addicts chose this path due to family conflicts. They use substances to forget family troubles and distance themselves from their environment, increasing drug tendencies [ibid].

Measures against illegal circulation of narcotics and psychotropic substances prioritize prevention of drug addiction, and the prophylaxis of related legal violations; all illicit trafficking routes and methods must be identified, with enhanced administrative and educational efforts to combat them. Comprehensive large-scale initiatives are needed for addiction prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and elimination of factors driving drug proliferation. Mass media should regularly disseminate information on anti-narcotics measures and the harmful consequences of substance abuse. International cooperation and special programs must be promoted for combating illegal trafficking.

Drug use seriously affects physical, mental, and social processes, leading to various abnormal conditions and disorders. Statistical classifications indicate narcotics cause four main types of disorders:

- Disorders due to excessive use;
- Addiction-related disorders;
- Intoxication by narcotic substances;
- Withdrawal syndromes.

Consumption of narcotics and alcohol induces syndromes involving mood changes, irritability, aggression, and difficulties in occupational and social settings. Withdrawal produces distressing symptoms, including anxiety and social/occupational impairments.

Addicted individuals suffer multiple anxieties and adopt abnormal lifestyles, facing physical and psychological disorders as well as social difficulties. Approximately 50% of young heavy users develop psychiatric illnesses; 50–90% require medication and struggle to keep pace with their generation.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) predisposes many youths to drug addiction, with 35–40% showing Conduct Disorder (CD) symptoms and 90% demonstrating Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) traits. Depression affects 25–50% of addicted youths, often triggered by substance use, which itself can lead to multiple psychiatric, social, and genetic problems [Goodwin, 2004]. Compared to peers, addicted youths exhibit higher suicide risk and tendencies.

Depression among addicts is associated with substance intake; excessive use correlates with suicidal tendencies, possibly exacerbated by alcohol and other drugs increasing despair and impulsivity. Kranzel et al. [1997] found that alcohol consumption among addicts elevates depression rates.

The relationship between addicts' suffering and drug use is complex. Many youths consume substances to enhance mood and escape social pain or traumatic memories. Long-term use increases anxiety and distress. Studies show 10–40% of drug users engage in deviant behaviors and suffer moral anguish.

Sinha and Catapano [1999], Tull [2008] demonstrated that excessive drug use leads to PTSD development.

Recent studies on society's leading forces clarify mental illness symptoms among youths, who often waste their youth on what they consider meaningless entertainment, resulting in psychological disorders such as anxiety, suspicion, and delusions. Consequently, many develop schizophrenia during adolescence, which is accelerated by substance abuse [Wies, 2008, trans. Mohammadi Forod, 1389].

Conclusion

The multifaceted nature of drug addiction among youth reveals that it is deeply rooted in social, familial, psychological, and biological factors. Dysfunctional family environments, parental substance abuse, and genetic predispositions significantly contribute to the vulnerability of adolescents to narcotic addiction and deviant behaviors. These conditions not only compromise the physical and mental health of individuals but also disrupt their social integration and occupational functioning. Addressing drug addiction requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach involving parents, society, healthcare professionals, and governmental institutions. Preventive measures, early intervention, education, and robust rehabilitation programs are essential to mitigate the adverse impacts of narcotic use on individuals and society at large. Furthermore, sustained international cooperation and awareness campaigns are crucial to effectively combat the illicit drug trade and its far-reaching consequences.

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