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Running head: DEVIANCE Deviance Educational DEVIANCE 2 Deviance “

Deviance is the recognized violation of cultural norms,” which “ guide virtually all human activities... one category of deviance is crime the violation of a society’s formally enacted criminal law” (Macionis, 2011). While deviance exists in every society, the types of deviance they have depends upon the moral issues they intend to clarify. According to Merton, the strain between our culture’s emphasis on success and the lack of the means of some to attain it may encourage some people—especially the poor—to do drugs and to steal. “ Virtually every society in the world tries to control the behaviour of women more than of men” (ibid.). In Nigeria bearing a child out of wedlock is a religiously based crime punishable by being stoned to death an occurrence that is not a crime in North America. It must, however, be said that although it was not considered a crime, nevertheless, having an illegitimate child before approximately 1980, carried a stigma for both mother and child and was considered somewhat deviant as it violated the sanctity of family life. Nowadays, North American society does not seem to be threatened by such behaviour. In fact, in the USA, 40% of its children are born out of wedlock “ because unmarried couples’ relationships don’t tend to last long” (Jayson, 2009). Also, “ out-of-wedlock birth is on the rise worldwide,” with Iceland having the highest rate at 66% (ibid.). Two factors that have contributed to Nigeria’s perspectives of considering out-of-wedlock births deviant are that Nigeria’s male-dominated society still feels threatened by such behaviour, fearing that they might be losing control of their women and that they find substantiation for this in their religion.

More and more upper class people are charged—mostly for white collar

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crime—, convicted, and sent to jail: Examples: Martha Stewart, Conrad Black and Bernard Madoff. They were not exempt because of their powerful status in society.

DEVIANCE3

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