

# Study questions

[Sociology](#)



1. Define deviance. How does this definition differ from how sociologists define deviance? Deviance is behavior or characteristics that violate important social norms. The difference between how the dictionary defines deviance and how sociologists define deviance is what may be deviant in one place, at one particular time, may not be deviant in another place and time. Basically with times changing something may or may not be tolerated as acceptable behavior.

2. What is situational deviance? Are there different degrees of deviance? Explain. Situational deviance is relative to a particular setting as well as dependent upon who is doing the defining. There are different degrees of deviance, there's individual and system blame. The individual blame theory states that the normative social belief systems of society are functionally correct and contribute to a smooth and harmonious society. The theory of system blame states that deviant behavior is either a manifestation of inequality, or the attempts of the powerful to force their views of right and wrong on those with different views who are powerless to resist.

3. How do individuals choose group membership? Individuals choose group membership by looking for a group that seems to have the stability one needs as well as choosing a group that reflects who we are—our consciousness and religious convictions.

4. What is anomie and how does it affect our choices? Anomie is a state of normlessness characterized by the loss of sense of meaning and detachment from others in the society. Anomie affects our choices because an individual may choose a group that has altered values and is operating in a manner that society deems deviant.

5. Describe the process of groupthink. How does it happen and why? The process of groupthink is when one feels that membership in a particular group is important, the individual may allow the group to pressure them into pushing one's own values aside and rationalize or ignore feelings. This happens because it is possible for someone from a deviant group to adopt more normative behavior by joining a socially acceptable group. Sometimes deviant behavior is the result of society's reevaluation of the current norms to determine whether or not there is a need for change.

6. Explain each of the following perspectives on deviance: absolutist, normative, reactive  
Absolutist: Deviance resides in the very nature of the act itself. Therefore it is wrong at all times-past, present, and future-and in every situation. Normative: What is deviant in one place, at one particular time, may not be deviant in another place and time. Reactive: Something is not deviant until it is defined as deviant by society and sanctions are set in place.

7. Are the reactive and normative perspectives similar or different? How?  
Reactive and normative perspectives are similar. Reactive states that in order for something to be considered as deviant, society has to rule it as so. Although society does not have to rule for something to be deviant within the normative perspective, but just because something may be deviant in one place, does not mean it is deviant in another place.

8. Define and describe a moral panic. How does it compare to a moral crusade? What criteria are required to label a movement a moral panic? A moral panic is a response to exaggerated fears and concerns of a particular group in society. During a moral panic, the behavior of some of the members

of a society is thought to be so problematic to others, the evil they do, or are thought to do, is felt to be so wounding to society. In order to label a movement a moral panic the movement must be volatile, there is a heightened level of concern regarding the behavior in questions and consequences for the rest of society, society will define the group engaging in the deviant behavior as the enemy and exhibit an increased level of hostility toward them, there must be a wide spread consensus that the threat is real, and there is the perception that a disproportionate number of people are engaged in the behavior and a large number of innocent members of society are being harmed by the behavior in question.

9. Define and describe, in your own words, the deviance theories of individual blame and system blame. The individual blame theory states that the average beliefs of society are correct which creates balance and happiness in society. The theory of system blame states that more powerful individuals attempt to force their views of right and wrong to powerless individuals.

10. Note some criticisms attached to each theory? Some of the criticisms attached to each theory is biological, psychological, and sociological theories.

11. According to Freud, what causes deviance? Freud believed that deviant behavior is the result of an underdeveloped ego.

12. According to Banefield, what causes deviance? Banefield believed that deviant behavior was caused by lower socioeconomic groups in society developing a different value system.

13. Merton refers to innovation, ritualism, retreatists, and rebels. Explain each term, in your own words, and provide examples for each.

14. How does labeling affect an individual? Labeling will more likely cause an individual to become deviant when social groups label them as such.

15. Note the difference between, and give examples of, primary and secondary deviance? How does capitalist society promote an individual's tendency to be deviant? The difference between primary and secondary deviance is, primary is an act performed by an individual that was not excused nor discovered. Secondary is an individual that was caught and punished while displaying deviant behavior.

16. How does society benefit from deviance? List some positive consequences of deviance. What are the negative consequences of deviance? Society benefits from deviance because it can promote positive consequences; self evaluation and change.

17. What is the difference between statutory law and ethical or moral law? The difference between statutory law and ethical or moral law is, statutory law

18. What is UCR and is it effective? Explain. UCR is Uniform Crime Report. The UCR determines the level of criminal activity and consists of detailed information supplied by approximately 15, 000 law enforcement agencies throughout the U. S. Although the UCR is not accurate, it is still effective because it will give law enforcement agencies a idea of crime wave patterns and the manpower that is needed based on the amount of crime the report states.

19. Who are most likely to be the victims of crime? An individual that is vulnerable and easy to victimize as well as an individual whom situation happened in public are more likely to be victimized again.

20. How do early researchers explain the deviant/criminal behavior of women? How does this differ from the current view held by sociologists? Early researchers saw that women deviants were more susceptible to primitive urges and emotional instability. More current views state that it is males who instigate and manipulate women to engage in criminal activity, believing that if a woman is caught and charged, would be less likely to receive as harsh a punishment as a man.

21. Why are women committing more crimes than they used to? Women are committing more crimes than before because the woman is either manipulated or is releasing pent up anger or fear (such as seen in "battered wife syndrome")

22. Define self-fulfilling prophecy. How does it relate to the criminal behavior of women. Self-fulfilling prophecy is a concept identified by Robert Merton that suggests that behavior can result simply because it was predicted by others. This relates to the criminal behavior of women because if the woman was manipulated the manipulator can predict what behavior will be displayed.

23. What criteria are used to determine the ability of a juvenile to be reformed/rehabilitated? How has our view of juvenile crime changed? The criteria that is used to determine if a juvenile will be reformed/rehabilitated is whether the juvenile understands the seriousness of the act, whether the

crime was planned or premeditated, and the level of remorse demonstrated. The view has changed because now the justice system is concerned with rehabilitation and whether a child can be resocialized and returned to society as a responsible adult, in prior years, the juvenile was treated like an adult and was expected to behave as one.

24. What is recidivism and how does it effect society? Recidivism is the probability that those incarcerated and then released are likely to return to prison for the commission of new crimes. Recidivism affects society because the crime rate increased and younger children are being arrested for violent crimes.

25. What is white collar crime? Give examples. White collar crimes are crimes committed by professionals. Examples of white collar crimes are embezzlement, fraud, forgery/counterfeiting, and fencing stolen property.

26. How does criminal behavior by government officials affect society? When criminal behavior is displayed by government officials they are more likely than the average person to receive national attention.

27. Who determines what constitutes mentally aberrant behavior? Social pressures and medical advances determine what constitutes mentally aberrant behavior.

28. What is the difference between mental deviance and social deviance? Why is the distinction important? Mental deviance is a behavior that will lead to the concept that an individual is mentally ill and social deviance is a behavior that is bought on my disease.

29. How do structural functionalists and social conflict theorists differ when attempting to explain deviance? Structural functionalist focus on the individual and social conflict theorists believe that deviant behavior is only the symptom of the disease.