

Early Detection of Deviant Behavior in Child-Rearing Within the Family and Taking Preventative Measures

Barno Sattarova

Acting Professor, Department of Pedagogy, University of Tashkent for Applied Sciences,
Gavhar Str. 1, Tashkent 100149, Uzbekistan

email: barnorasatti72@gmail.com;  orcid: 0009-0006-3725-732X

Abstract: This article explores the theoretical and practical foundations for the early detection of deviant behavioral signs that begin to manifest in young children, as well as effective methods for implementing preventative measures. The article analyzes the developmental characteristics of behavioral problems in children, psychodiagnostic methods for early detection, and systematic preventative efforts conducted through family-school collaboration. Research results indicate that timely intervention and a comprehensive approach are key factors in protecting children from behavioral deviations during their upbringing.

Keywords: deviant behavior, early detection, prevention, psychodiagnostics, family relations, pedagogical intervention, social adaptation.

Introduction

Globalization, the intensification of information flow, socio-economic challenges, and shifts within the family upbringing system are causing various negative deviations in children's behavior. Today, the issue of deviant behavior stands as one of the most pressing concerns in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, and social work. Failure to detect deviant behavior early can lead to future delinquency, impaired social adaptation, and severe disruptions in personal development. Deviant behavior is a spectrum of actions that diverge from the moral, legal, and social norms accepted within a society. Deviant behavior (Lat. *deviatio* – deviation) constitutes a set of actions that do not align with social norms and rules and remain unaccepted by society. During childhood, this phenomenon typically manifests as behavioral disorders and can escalate into criminal or antisocial behavior in later life stages. In modern society, the prevalence of deviant behavior among children is an increasingly urgent issue. The preliminary signs of deviant behavior frequently emerge within the family circle, making timely identification by parents crucial for prevention. This article is dedicated to scientifically grounded methods for identifying behavioral deviations in children within a family setting. Scientific research demonstrates that early detection and preventative measures are vital not only for the child's personal development but also for their subsequent social adaptation. The objective of this article is to scientifically substantiate the psychological and pedagogical mechanisms of deviant behavior and the avenues for their resolution.

Methods and Materials

The formation of deviant behavior is a multifactorial process, primarily categorized by the following causes:

1. Socio-psychological factors:

- Family problems: dysfunctional family relationships, addictions, strictly authoritarian or overly permissive upbringing methods, and a lack of supervision.
- Contradictions and conflicts: strained relationships with parents, peers, or educators.
- Distorted value systems: an imbalance between material and spiritual values.

2. Individual-psychological factors:

- Temperamental traits: impulsivity, emotional instability, and aggressive tendencies.
- Emotional sphere issues: weak self-perception, feelings of insecurity, and persistently low mood.
- Cognitive aspects: weak leadership capabilities and a fear of failure.

3. Pedagogical factors:

- An unfavorable psychological environment within the educational institution.
- Incompatibility between the educator's approach and the child's personality.
- Increased academic workloads coupled with insufficient rest periods.

The early detection of deviant behavior facilitates the implementation of preventative measures before the problem exacerbates. In this context, it is effective for educators to apply the following methods:

- Observation: identifying distinct behavioral traits in the child's daily activities, during play, and within group interactions.
- Survey methods: evaluating the child's emotional state and self-perception via questionnaires and tests (e.g., the Phillips School Anxiety Test, the "Family Upbringing Methods" technique, and the "Self-Assessment" method).
- Projective methods: uncovering the child's inner world and latent fears through drawing exercises such as "Family," "My Scary Animal," and "Person."
- Interviews with parents and teachers: gathering their perspectives to assess the child's behavior across various situations.

Results and their discussion

The ultimate goal of any diagnostic process is not merely to examine the child but to discover viable ways to assist them. Upon the early detection of a child's condition, the following represent effective directions for preventative measures; furthermore, the prevention system must be comprehensive and encompass the following stages:

1. General prevention (for all children):

- Cultivating a healthy psychological environment at school and home.
- Modeling socially acceptable behaviors for children.
- Regularly integrating physical education and sports activities.
- Implementing supplementary educational programs designed to foster children's creative abilities.

2. Special prevention (for at-risk children):

- Psychocorrectional work: stabilizing the emotional sphere through group and individual sessions, enhancing communication skills, and teaching self-regulation.
- Collaboration with educators and psychologists: applying an individualized approach to the student, encouraging their achievements, and ensuring active participation.
- Family counseling: providing guidance to parents on child-rearing and teaching them effective communication strategies.
- Organizing socio-cultural activities: engaging the child in community life, offering them the opportunity to develop a sense of social responsibility.

3. Individual prevention (for children displaying distinct signs of deviant behavior):

- Formulating an individualized plan involving the psychologist, educator, family, and school administration.
- Conducting continuous monitoring and dynamically adjusting intervention methods.
- Providing specialized assistance in dedicated educational institutions or psychological centers, if necessary.

What behavioral changes occur in a child within the family setting, and how can family members detect these changes? We will address these questions in detail and examine several methods, which include the following observational techniques:

1. Systematic observation

- Daily activity monitoring: It is essential to document regular behaviors manifesting in the child's routine life—such as completing homework, eating, and sleeping habits.
- Observation of play activity: Assessing the level of aggression during play, interactions with toys, and violent motifs within their fantasy world.
- Social interaction: Monitoring behaviors during family discussions, in the presence of guests, and while interacting with relatives.

2. Observation in specific situations

- Reactions to restrictions and rules: Observing responses to prohibitions and demands, whether they exhibit balanced restraint or excessive resistance.
- Reactions to success and failure: Noting intolerance to defeat, envy regarding the success of others, or a heightened sense of injustice.
- Attitude toward property: Identifying tendencies toward theft or the unpermitted use of others' belongings.

If behavioral deviations are observed, the situation can be clarified by engaging in communication on various topics. Such communicative approaches include:

1. Structured interviews

- Assessing emotional states: Posing open-ended questions such as "What happened to you, how are you feeling?" or "What is upsetting you?"
- Exploring value systems: Asking questions like "Who do you respect?" and "When and why do you feel guilty?"
- Attitudes toward the future: Inquiring, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" or "What are your dreams?"

2. Situational conversations

- Based on specific events: Discussing a particular incident (e.g., "Why did you hit your younger sister today?").
- Moral dilemmas: Asking questions such as "What would you do if no one was watching you?"

Additionally, projective diagnostic methods are highly effective in revealing a child's emotional state, future aspirations, and subconscious feelings. These methods include:

1. Diagnostics through drawing

- "Family" drawing: Illustrating family dynamics, analyzing the size and spatial arrangement of figures, and noting the exclusion of any members.
- "Scary entity" drawing: Expressing fears and anxieties, and checking for the presence of aggressive imagery.
- "My favorite and least favorite things" drawing: Ascertaining the child's value system.

2. Storytelling and fantasy techniques

- Story continuation: Providing a narrative prompt and asking the child to complete the story.
- The "If I were..." game: Encouraging the child to imagine their behavior in various hypothetical scenarios.

Analyzing the child's daily structure and routine also yields positive results in assessing their psychological condition. Solutions to complex issues can be discovered by evaluating the child's daily activities and self-regulation capacities, using methods such as:

1. Analysis of daily activities

- Adherence to routine: Noting disruptions in sleep, nutrition, and rest schedules.
- Fulfillment of obligations: Observing resistance to completing minor household chores.
- Time management: Identifying an inability to organize leisure time rationally.

2. Capacity for self-regulation

- Emotional control: Tracking the frequency and duration of anger, irritability, and depressive episodes.
- Level of impulsivity: Assessing the demand for immediate gratification of desires.

Furthermore, the examination of family relationships is an effective method for analyzing a child's behavior and condition; these methods encompass:

1. Observation of family dynamics

- Role distribution: Identifying the role the child assumes within the family unit (e.g., victim, controller, "the sick one").
- Boundaries and rules: Evaluating the clarity or absence of established family rules.
- Emotional connection: Gauging the presence of warmth and acceptance versus coldness and rejection.

2. Analysis of family history

- Similar historical events: Determining if comparable situations have occurred in the family's past.

- Continuity of upbringing methods: Ensuring consistency in the educational approaches utilized by the parents.

When employing each of these methods, it is imperative to focus on the primary indicators observed in assessing the child's condition.

Behavioral indicators:

- Pathological lying.
- Petty theft.
- Cruelty toward animals.
- An overwhelming prioritization of material values.

Emotional indicators:

- Frequent mood fluctuations.
- Diminished self-esteem.
- Persistent states of dissatisfaction and resentment.
- Apathy toward the feelings of others.

Social indicators:

- Isolation from peer groups.
- Insolence in interactions with adults.
- Intentional violation of established rules.
- Evasion of responsibility for personal errors.

It is equally important to address the mistakes commonly made by parents when dealing with a child's behavioral deviations, which include failing to recognize the aforementioned signs promptly, dismissing the problem as temporary, attempting to rationalize the child's actions, and harboring a fear of seeking professional intervention. When raising a child, such errors must be avoided by adhering to proper pedagogical principles: maintaining objectivity and consistency, documenting and monitoring behavioral signs, regulating personal emotions, and consulting specialists in a timely manner.

The identification of deviant behavior within family upbringing necessitates a systematic and comprehensive approach. The knowledge and perceptiveness of parents, coupled with their ability to accurately interpret the child's behavior on time, not only enhance the efficacy of preventative measures but also contribute to the child's holistic development as a healthy individual. The critical aspect is not solely identification, but the timely execution of subsequent steps (e.g., psychological support, family counseling, and school collaboration).

Conclusion

The prevention and early detection of deviant behavior during childhood is not merely an urgent objective of pedagogy and psychology but a fundamental prerequisite for the well-being of society as a whole. An effective preventative framework demands an intrinsic synergy between the family, the school, and the child's self-awareness. Scientific investigations underscore that timely psychological and pedagogical interventions, paired with a supportive environment, can safeguard many children from severe behavioral disorders. Moving forward, it is imperative to deepen research in this domain and to develop pragmatic programs targeted at elevating the effectiveness of psychological services within both familial and educational contexts.

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