

Dynamics of Deviant Behavior of Adolescents in the Digital Era: A Qualitative Study in Tangga Village, Monta District, Bima Regency

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Abstract

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes to adolescent lifestyles, including social interactions and daily behavior. Ease of access to the internet and social media offers various benefits, but on the other hand, it also has the potential to lead to behavior that deviates from prevailing values and norms in society. This study aims to describe the forms of deviant behavior among adolescents in the digital era, identify the causal factors, and analyze efforts to overcome them in Tangga Village, Monta District, Bima Regency. The study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. Research informants were selected purposively and consisted of adolescents, parents, community leaders, religious leaders, youth leaders, and village officials. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data were analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion using triangulation of sources and methods to ensure data validity. The results showed that the forms of deviant behavior found included excessive use of social media, promiscuity, decreased obedience to parents, and reduced participation in social and religious activities. Factors influencing this behavior include lack of parental supervision, peer influence, easy access to digital technology, and weakened social control. Mitigation efforts include increased parental supervision, strengthening religious and character education, promoting youth activities, and collaboration between families, schools, communities, and village governments. This research emphasizes the importance of digital literacy and strengthening social values in shaping positive adolescent behavior in the digital age.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Developments in society flow like flowing water. Change is a constant phenomenon in life. The progress achieved today is a continuation of developments that occurred in previous periods. This is also true of the current digital era. In this digital era, technological advancements are increasingly developing, making all information easily accessible without limitations or filters. Technological developments in this digital era have created a transparency of information that has impacted all groups (Prihanto, 2021).

Technological advancements in this digital era have two sides: the good side and the bad side. The good side in life is the accessibility of knowledge from all over the world without the limits of time and space; the bad side is the deviation of values, norms, rules, and morals that

conflict with society. In other words, it all depends on who utilizes technological advancements in this digital era, then it will utilize it well (Frieswati, 2020). It is undeniable that the growth and development of technology in this digital era provide great benefits for the civilization of life. This digital era provides practicality, convenience, and happiness for humans; those who are far away become close, and it makes it easier for people to communicate and interact (Zhou, 2020).

The increasingly widespread advancement of technology has created a digital era full of sophistication. This ongoing digitalization is not only in terms of material areas of life, for example, economics, culture, and politics, but also processes that encompass non-material areas such as norms. One of the dark spots in the development of the current digital era is the moral degradation that is occurring. This is a current problem because norms of politeness, religious norms, and norms of hospitality are increasingly eroded. The current moral decline is occurring in all groups. What is feared is that when this is considered normal and used as an example by others, morals that deviate from prevailing norms will increasingly spread. Due to the influence of digitalization, there is a deviation in the boundaries of politeness and morality, such as what was previously considered taboo has now become commonplace, from what was once thought impossible to something that happens (Semarang, 2013).

Discussing deviant behavior does not mean inviting sociology students to become deviant, but rather aims to identify the causes of deviant behavior and how to resolve it. The root cause of deviant behavior lies in the individual's approach to achieving goals. Everyone has goals and desires to achieve self-satisfaction. However, not everyone bases their needs on existing values and norms. Some groups view these values and norms as a restriction on their freedom. The desire to achieve their goals in their own way, regardless of societal values and norms, is the driving force behind deviant behavior.

The nature of human methods to achieve the goal (satisfaction) is classified into two types, namely: (1) actions that are in accordance with norms accepted by society or general norms. The first action is considered to be the correct action. While the second action is called an action that deviates from the patterns of rules or deviant behavior or deviation (delinquency) (Setiadi, 2011).

Just by mentioning the name deviant behavior, researchers can already assume that what is meant by deviant behavior is the behavior of members of society that is considered not in accordance with the customs, rules, or prevailing social norms. Simply put, researchers can say that someone behaves deviantly if, according to the opinion of the majority of society (at least in a particular group or community), the behavior or action is outside the customs, rules, values, or prevailing social norms. Making a definition of deviant behavior based on group subjectivity is easy, but defining the right definition of deviance objectively and universally is not easy. The difficulty lies in the assumption that the benchmarks for the behavioral order of each social group are not the same, so finding a universal consensus on social deviance is key to untangling the tangled threads.

However, researchers seem to agree that the actions of groups of people who indulge in alcohol, drug use, rape, promiscuity, sexual orientation, theft, violence, gambling, and murder can be considered forms of deviance. These deviant acts are not always major crimes like robbery, corruption, assault, or murder. Instead, they involve minor offenses such as fighting with friends, dating late at night, and eating with the left hand.

Discussing deviant behavior is a simple act, because there are many limitations on deviant behavior, but basically, deviant behavior remains focused on members of society who are not in line with the behavior carried out by most of the behavior of society in general. James Vander

Zander makes the definition of deviant behavior include all actions that are considered reprehensible and beyond the limits of tolerance by a large number of people.

Meanwhile, Robert M. Z. Lawang limits deviant behavior to include all actions that deviate from the norms that apply in a social system and give rise to efforts from those in authority in the system to correct the behavior. Bruce J. Cohen limits deviant behavior as any behavior that fails to adapt to the wishes of society or certain groups in society. Paul B. Horton, deviation is any behavior that is stated as a violation of norms or society. From these various limitations, it can be concluded that deviant behavior is basically all human behavior that is carried out both individually and in groups that is not in accordance with the values and norms that apply in the group.

So, deviations from a principle of descent or from customs and personality. Group procedures and deviations-

Deviations in the cultural patterns of society seem to occur constantly in the life of society. Some personality deviations are symbols or social beginnings. In addition, they have limited importance at a later time and are intended to exert pressure on society. Most members of society consider it or classify it as negative behavior or behavior that leads to criminal acts and moral decline. These deviations are behaviors or actions of people that can cause complex problems, which are caused by the person concerned not systematically adapting to the norms of life that apply in society or deviating in their actions from what is used as a benchmark for the survival of society.

Sutherland's theory is specifically used to analyze crime and deviant behavior that leads to crime, but this theory can also be used to analyze other forms of deviant behavior, such as prostitution, drug addiction, alcoholism, and homosexual behavior (Yudirik, 2010). Socially deviant behavior is also called social differentiation, because there is a clear differentiation or difference in behavior, which is different from general characteristics, and is against the law, or violates formal regulations (Kartinikartono, 2010).

During this period, adolescents also experience typical problems such as: sexual urges, work relationships with parents, social interactions, and so on. The problems of the younger generation (adolescents) are generally characterized by two opposing characteristics, namely the desire to resist (for example in the form of radicalism, delinquency, and so on) and an apathetic attitude (for example, blind adjustment to the moral standards of the older generation). This resistance attitude is accompanied by a fear that society will be destroyed because of deviant actions/deviant behavior (Soekanto, 1999).

Based on the results of observations by researchers in Tangga Village, Monta District, researchers found that deviant behavior really occurs because it is seen from very free association and there are no prohibitions from parents, which most cause deviant behavior, namely the lack of supervision from parents and association between peers. As a result of this, children are getting worse without seeing the consequences that arise.

As for deviant behavior in adolescents that researchers often observe in Tangga Village, Monta District, Bima Regency, namely many adolescents are outside the home who hang out with their peers so that children behave deviantly and there is a lack of parental attention, in this study, the family plays a less important role in educating and supervising children so that parents do not care who the children hang out with.

Based on an interview with one of the residents in Tangga Village, Monta District, Bima Regency, there are quite a lot of teenagers who behave deviantly, and the biggest cause of teenagers behaving deviantly is due to a lack of parental supervision, for example, parents do not see who

their children are hanging out with and when they go out of the house, parents do not limit the child's return time, sometimes the child does not come home all night and parents do not give punishment to the child, then the child does whatever he wants.

Based on the matters described above, the researcher intends to conduct research with the title: Dynamics of Deviant Behavior of Adolescents in the Digital Era: A Qualitative Study in Tangga Village, Monta District, Bima Regency.

2. METHOD

This research method uses a qualitative approach with a qualitative descriptive research type to understand in depth the dynamics of deviant behavior of adolescents in the digital era in Tangga Village. This approach focuses on revealing the meaning, experiences, and social processes experienced by adolescents through observations of real conditions in the field. The research data consists of primary data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation, as well as secondary data sourced from books, journals, articles, theses, and relevant village documents. Research informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, including adolescents as the main informants and parents, community leaders, religious leaders, youth leaders, and village officials as supporting informants.

The primary research instrument was the researcher (human instrument), supported by observation guidelines, interviews, and documentation. Data collection was conducted through observations of adolescent behavior and social interactions, in-depth interviews with informants, and documentation in the form of archives, photographs, and other supporting data. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively through the stages of data review, data reduction, categorization, data presentation, and conclusion to obtain a comprehensive picture of the forms of deviant behavior, their causes, impacts, and efforts to address them.

To ensure data validity, the study employed diligent observation and triangulation of sources and methods. Triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation from various informants to ensure the data obtained was more valid, accurate, and accountable. Thus, the research results are expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of adolescent deviant behavior in the digital era in Tangga Village.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. General Description of Deviant Behavior of Adolescents in Tangga Village

Based on observations and interviews conducted in Tangga Village, Monta District, Bima Regency, it was found that the development of digital technology has brought significant changes to adolescent social interaction patterns. Most adolescents now have access to smartphones and the internet, which they use for various purposes, such as communication, entertainment, social media, and online gaming. This ease of access has had a positive impact, making it easier to obtain information and expand their social networks. However, this development has also given rise to various forms of deviant behavior among adolescents.

The research results showed that the most frequently encountered deviant behaviors included staying out late at night, excessive social media use, inappropriate language in digital media and in everyday life, decreased obedience to parents, and a tendency to neglect religious activities. Several informants also revealed that promiscuity is influenced by digital content and peer groups.

A community leader explained that teenagers today spend more time on their cell phones than interacting with their families and communities. This situation has led to a decline in the social control that was previously quite strong in village life.

B. Forms of Deviant Behavior among Adolescents in the Digital Era

Based on the research results, the forms of deviant behavior found can be classified into several categories.

1. Misuse of Social Media

Some teenagers use social media excessively, spending most of their time on apps like TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. This high level of use leads to decreased academic productivity and reduced in-person social interaction.

Interview results showed that some teenagers often access social media until late at night, which has an impact on their school activities and health.

2. Free association

Free association is a frequently encountered form of deviant behavior. Teenagers tend to gather late at night without parental supervision. Some informants even revealed friendships that lead to behavior that goes against prevailing social and religious norms.

3. Decreased Compliance with Parents

Technological advances have led some teenagers to be more influenced by their digital environment than by their families. This situation has led to behavior that contradicts parents, ignores family advice, and disrespects home rules.

4. Reduced Participation in Social and Religious Activities

Observations show that some teenagers are starting to participate less frequently in community and religious activities. They prefer to spend their time playing online games or browsing social media rather than participating in activities that involve direct social interaction.

C. Factors Causing Deviant Behavior in Adolescents

The research results show that there are several main factors that cause the emergence of deviant behavior among adolescents in the digital era.

1. Lack of Parental Supervision

The most dominant factor is a lack of parental supervision of children's activities. Many parents give their children complete freedom to use their smartphones without controlling the content they access or the duration of their use.

An informant stated that some parents do not know their children's digital activities because they are busy working, so supervision of social media use is very limited.

2. Peer Influence

Peers play a significant role in shaping adolescent behavior. Teenagers tend to follow group behavior to be accepted within their social circle. If their peer group tends to engage in deviant behavior, the adolescent's chances of imitating that behavior are greater.

3. Ease of Access to Digital Technology

Easy, unlimited internet access allows teenagers to consume a wide variety of information, including content inappropriate for their age. Continuous exposure to negative content has the potential to influence adolescents' thinking and behavior.

4. Weak Social Control in Society

Changes in lifestyle patterns in the digital age have led to a decline in social oversight, which previously served as a control mechanism for adolescent behavior. Society tends to be less active in monitoring the activities of the younger generation.

D. The Impact of Deviant Behavior on the Lives of Adolescents

Deviant behavior among adolescents has various impacts on their social lives. These impacts include decreased academic achievement, reduced discipline, increased family conflict, and decreased concern for the social and religious environment.

Furthermore, uncontrolled digital media use can also lead some teenagers to become addicted to social media, making it difficult to manage their time and daily activities. This situation has the potential to impact their character development and future.

E. Efforts to Address Deviant Behavior in Adolescents

Based on the results of interviews with various informants, there are several efforts made to reduce deviant behavior among adolescents in Tangga Village.

First, increase parental supervision and guidance regarding children's digital media use. Second, strengthen religious and moral education within the family and community. Third, revitalize youth and social activities involving teenagers. Fourth, increase collaboration between families, schools, village governments, and community leaders in providing guidance to the younger generation.

The results of the study indicate that the development of digital technology has brought significant changes to the social lives of adolescents in Tangga Village, Monta District, Bima Regency. These changes are evident in the increasing intensity of smartphone, social media, and internet use in adolescents' daily activities. Digitalization has created a new social space that allows adolescents to interact without the limitations of space and time. However, behind these various conveniences, this study found that uncontrolled use of digital technology contributes to the emergence of various forms of deviant behavior, such as excessive use of social media, promiscuity, decreased obedience to parents, reduced participation in social and religious activities, and an increased tendency to imitate negative behaviors acquired from the digital environment.

These findings demonstrate that adolescent deviant behavior in the digital era cannot be separated from the social interaction process that occurs both in the real world and online. This phenomenon aligns with the Differential Association Theory proposed by Edwin H. Sutherland. According to this theory, deviant behavior is learned through interactions with others who have previously engaged in the behavior. Sutherland explains that a person will tend to engage in deviance if they receive more definitions that support norm violations than definitions that oppose them. In the context of this research, social media functions as an interactive space that allows adolescents to adopt various values, attitudes, and behaviors from the friendship groups and public figures they follow. As a result, behaviors previously considered deviant can be viewed as something normal because they frequently appear in their digital lives.

The findings of this study also support the Social Learning Theory developed by Albert Bandura. Bandura explains that individuals learn through the process of observing, imitating, and modeling the behavior of others who are considered attractive or have high social status. In the digital era, influencers, social media celebrities, content creators, and peers are role models often imitated by adolescents. When certain behaviors gain a lot of attention, popularity, and social recognition on digital media, they tend to be imitated even if they conflict with prevailing social norms. Interview results showed that some adolescents admitted to frequently following trends they see on social media without considering the impact on themselves or their social environment.

In addition to the influence of digital media, this study found that family factors are an important determinant in shaping adolescent behavior. Most informants stated that a lack of parental supervision is one of the main causes of deviant behavior. Parents generally provide full access to smartphones without providing guidance or control over the content accessed by children. This condition can be explained through the Social Control Theory proposed by Travis Hirschi.

According to Hirschi, a person will tend to comply with norms if they have strong social ties with family, school, and community. These social ties include attachment (emotional closeness), commitment (commitment to social goals), involvement (involvement in positive activities), and belief (belief in values and norms). When the emotional bond between parents and children weakens due to minimal communication and supervision, social control over adolescent behavior will also decrease, increasing the opportunity for deviant behavior.

The results of this study can also be analyzed using Robert K. Merton's Anomie Theory. Merton explained that deviance occurs when there is a mismatch between the desired cultural goals and the means available to achieve them. Social media often displays ideal living standards of wealth, popularity, modern lifestyles, and high social recognition. However, not all teenagers have the ability and resources to achieve these standards. This condition can create social pressure that encourages teenagers to seek certain ways to gain recognition, including engaging in actions that conflict with social norms. This study found that some teenagers showed a tendency to follow the digital lifestyles they saw on social media even though they did not align with their family's socioeconomic status.

From an adolescent development perspective, the findings of this study also align with Erik Erikson's perspective on identity versus role confusion. During adolescence, individuals are in a phase of self-discovery and desperately need recognition from their social environment. Digital media provides ample space for adolescents to express themselves, but at the same time, it also opens up the opportunity for identity confusion to arise when adolescents are unable to filter the various information and values they receive. Therefore, adolescents are a group that is highly vulnerable to the negative influences of the digital environment.

The results of this study are supported by various previous studies over the past three years. Research conducted by Mawaddah and Kau (2025) shows that the development of digital technology has a strong influence on changes in the social behavior of the younger generation, particularly in aspects of social interaction and character development. The study found that uncontrolled digital media use can increase the tendency for deviant behavior and reduce adolescents' social sensitivity to their surroundings.

Research by Salmila, Deswita, and Sari (2025) also revealed that high levels of social media use correlate with a decline in the quality of adolescents' interpersonal communication within the family environment. The results showed that adolescents who spend more time in the digital world tend to have less harmonious relationships with their parents and experience decreased self-control in technology use.

The findings of this study also align with research by Sartika and Kau (2025), which found that the digital era has significantly changed the behavior patterns of the younger generation. This study explains that constant exposure to digital content can influence adolescents' mindsets, lifestyles, and social behavior, especially when not accompanied by adequate support from family and educational settings.

Furthermore, Prihanto's (2024) research on adolescent behavior in the digital era shows that social media has become a new agent of socialization that has a significant influence on the formation of adolescent identity. The study found that behavior frequently displayed on social media tends to be perceived as normal by adolescents, even though it actually conflicts with societal values and norms.

Based on these findings, it is clear that deviant behavior among adolescents in Tangga Village is the result of a complex interaction between internal and external factors. Internal factors include self-control, emotional maturity, and the ability to filter information, while external factors include the influence of digital media, peer groups, family, school, and community. Therefore, efforts to prevent deviant behavior cannot be achieved simply by limiting technology

use but must be implemented holistically through strengthening family functions, improving digital literacy, character education in schools, religious guidance, and strengthening social control in the community.

Thus, this study confirms that the development of digital technology has become a factor influencing the dynamics of adolescent behavior in Tangga Village. However, the negative impacts of technology can be minimized if all elements of society are able to build a system of supervision, mentoring, and education that adapts to current developments. Collaboration between families, schools, religious leaders, community leaders, and the village government is key to developing a young generation capable of utilizing digital technology wisely, productively, and responsibly.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the development of digital technology has had a significant influence on the dynamics of adolescent behavior in Tangga Village, Monta District, Bima Regency. Forms of deviant behavior found include excessive use of social media, decreased compliance with parents, reduced participation in social and religious activities, and a tendency to follow negative behaviors acquired from the digital environment and peer groups. The emergence of these behaviors is influenced by various factors, especially the lack of parental supervision, the influence of peer groups, easy access to digital technology, and weakened social control in society. The research findings indicate that deviant behavior among adolescents in the digital era is a complex phenomenon and is influenced by the interaction between family factors, the social environment, and technological developments. Therefore, synergy is needed between families, schools, religious leaders, community leaders, and village governments in strengthening character education, improving digital literacy, and creating a conducive social environment so that adolescents are able to use technology wisely, responsibly, and in accordance with the values and norms prevailing in society.

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