

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A.1 Background of the Research

Deviance can be understood as actions or behaviors that deviate from the established norms or accepted guidelines of a particular culture or social group. These deviations, influenced by social and cultural factors, are relative and vary across contexts and time periods (Adebanjo, 2014). Importantly, everyone may find themselves engaging in behaviors that are considered improper or socially unacceptable at some stage in their lives. These acts can range from minor infractions, like failing to adhere to traffic regulations, to more significant transgressions, such as dishonesty or openly defying authority figures. Exploring deviance requires examining both its social construction and its broader implications. Theories such as strain theory highlight how structural inequalities can push individuals to adopt deviation behaviors when legitimate means to achieve societal goals are inaccessible. Meanwhile, mechanisms of social control, both formal (e.g., laws) and informal (e.g., peer disapproval), regulate and respond to deviance, shaping societal perceptions of acceptable behavior (Ansar, 2024). By delving into the origins, contexts, and consequences of deviance, we can better understand its intricate nature and its dual role in challenging societal norms while reinforcing collective values through responses to norm violations.

It is essential to recognize that deviation behavior is not always negative or destructive. In some cases, it serves as a form of self-expression or a response to social injustice or pressure. For instance, marginalized individuals may engage in deviation acts to protest societal inequalities or highlight pressing issues. Deviance often results from personal experiences, such as trauma or environmental factors, that push individuals to challenge societal norms. As Lynn (2023) notes, deviation behavior significantly deviates from societal standards and is typically categorized as noncompliance or rule violation. These behaviors often elicit societal disapproval or legal consequences, emphasizing the role of social order in shaping responses to deviance. Such dynamics indicate a deeper connection between deviance, personal circumstances, and societal reactions.

Trauma is one of the personal circumstances that usually supports strange behavior. The American Psychological Association (2020) defines trauma as psychological, emotional, and occasionally physical responses to painful or life-threatening experiences. Such events can range from single instances, such as accidents or attacks, to long-term experiences, such as abuse, neglect, or continuous bullying. The impacts of trauma might emerge as anxiety, sadness, dissociation, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), all of which have a dramatic impact on a person's emotional state, cognitive processes, and behavioral patterns. Investigating the relationship between trauma and deviation conduct sheds light on how individuals may respond to unfavorable life situations in ways that violate societal expectations (van der Kolk, 2011).

Addressing trauma often requires structured interventions. Techniques such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) have been proven effective in helping individuals process and recover from traumatic experiences (Miller & Johnson, 2023). Additionally, mindfulness practices, such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), help survivors manage symptoms like anxiety and depression by promoting emotional regulation (Chen & Lee, 2024). These therapeutic methods reveal the importance of psychological and social support in mitigating the effects of trauma. However, not all coping mechanisms are constructive; some individuals resort to deviation behaviors as a means of dealing with their distress, underscoring the need to understand deviance as a response to trauma.

A coping mechanism is a strategy or behavior that individuals use to handle stress, challenges, or emotional difficulties. These mechanisms help people navigate tough situations and maintain their mental well-being, though their effectiveness can vary. Coping mechanisms are often categorized into problem-focused and emotion-focused coping. Problem-focused coping involves addressing the root cause of stress, such as making plans or taking actions to solve a problem. In contrast, emotion-focused coping aims to manage emotional distress, such as through relaxation, journaling, or seeking support from others. This type is especially helpful when the stressor cannot be changed, like the loss of a loved one. Another type, avoidant coping, involves ignoring the problem or feelings, which might offer short-term relief but is usually harmful in the long run.

Coping strategies can also be adaptive or maladaptive. Adaptive strategies, like exercising or seeking therapy, build resilience and support long-term well-being. Maladaptive strategies, like procrastination or substance abuse, may provide temporary comfort but often worsen stress over time. The choice of coping strategy depends on the situation, resources available, and how the individual perceives the stressor. According to the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), coping is a dynamic process shaped by the interaction between a person and their environment. The model highlights the importance of assessing the severity of the stress and the resources available to address it. Using effective coping mechanisms not only reduces stress in the moment but also fosters long-term resilience and personal growth. As Lazarus and Folkman emphasize, how individuals perceive and respond to stress significantly impacts their ability to overcome challenges.

This connection between trauma and deviance is powerfully illustrated in Aneesh Chaganty's psychological thriller *Run* (2020). The film portrays Diane Sherman, a single mother whose unresolved trauma from losing her biological child drives her to exhibit deviation behaviors toward her adopted daughter, Chloe. Diane's obsessive control over Chloe, including fabricating illnesses and limiting her autonomy, reflects her distorted coping mechanisms. This dynamic highlights how love and care can manifest in unhealthy and harmful ways when influenced by trauma. The film's depiction of Diane's actions offers a compelling case study for understanding deviance as a maladaptive coping strategy.

Previous studies have examined Diane's character through various psychological frameworks, but none have specifically analyzed her deviation behaviors as a coping mechanism for trauma. Anggraini and Ariyani (2024) explored Diane's symptoms of Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, focusing on her manipulative tendencies and maladaptive coping behaviors. Similarly, Aulia (2024) analyzed Diane's psychopathy, emphasizing her lack of remorse and obsessive need to control Chloe. While these studies provide valuable insights into Diane's psychological traits, they primarily address her individual disorders without examining the underlying trauma that drives her deviation behaviors. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how Diane's unresolved trauma influences her deviation behaviors, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological complexities behind her actions.

Thus, this study aims to examine Diane's deviation behavior in *Run* (2020) as a coping mechanism for her unresolved trauma. Using Judith Herman's trauma theory as the primary framework and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of the id, ego, and superego as a supporting lens, the research investigates how Diane's actions reflect deeper psychological conflicts. By focusing on the intersection of trauma and deviance, this study contributes to a broader understanding of how individuals navigate the aftermath of traumatic experiences through behaviors that challenge societal norms. While existing literature has explored trauma and deviance independently, the relationship between these two

concepts, particularly as seen in Diane's character, remains underexplored, highlighting a significant gap that this research seeks to address.

## **A.2 Problems of the Research**

Based on the explanation background of the research, researchers formulated two questions:

1. What kinds of deviation behaviors does Diane Sherman's act to cope with her past trauma in the film?
2. How does Diane Sherman's deviation behaviors function as coping mechanism?

## **A.3 Objectives of the Research**

Based on the research background that has been explained, the researcher aims to examine the kind and function of Diane's character deviation behaviors as her coping mechanism due to her past trauma. This includes observing her behavior, motivation, and the emotional and psychological aspects of her role as a mother.

## **A.4 Significance of the Research**

Theoretically, the aim of this study is to provide readers with information about exploring the intersection of psychological trauma and deviation behaviors. By examining Diane's deviation behaviors as coping mechanisms, the study

highlights how trauma can influence behavioral patterns, aligning with psychological theories. The readers can use this study for inspiration and reference as they undertake further research on the character analysis, trauma studies, and deviation behavior, offering a fresh perspective on how trauma impacts identity and behavior.

Practically, this study can provide valuable insight into how, anyone with friends or family who have experienced trauma, and especially those who have experienced trauma themselves, develop coping mechanisms. By better understanding the relationship between trauma and deviation, more effective therapeutic interventions can be developed to help individuals adopt healthier coping mechanism, thereby avoiding negative consequences or harm to themselves and others.

#### **A.5 Limitation of the Problem Research**

The researcher focused this study exclusively on the character of Diane Sherman, whose deviation behaviors serve as a central aspect of the narrative in the film *Run* (2020). The analysis centers on identifying and examining the kinds and causes of Diane's deviation behaviors, as depicted through her actions, dialogues, and psychological conflicts in the film. These behaviors are analyzed using Judith Herman's trauma theory to explore the impact of unresolved trauma and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to understand the role of unconscious drives, including the interplay of the id, ego, and superego. By

employing these theories, the study provides a detailed exploration of how Diane's behaviors function as a coping mechanism for her past trauma.

#### A.6 Definition of Key Terms

- *Run:*

An American psychological thriller film released in 2020, this film is directed by Aneesh Chaganty.

- Diane Sherman:

The main character in the *Run* movie, Diana is Chloe's mother.

- Deviation Behaviors:

Deviation behaviors refer to actions or patterns of behavior that deviate from what is considered normal or acceptable within a society or group. These behaviors can range from minor violations to more serious violations of social norms. Psychology and sociology often study deviation behavior to understand what causes a person to act differently from what society expects, which can include psychological disorders, environmental influences, or coping mechanisms of past trauma (Matsueda & McCarthy 2020)

- Trauma:

Trauma is defined as a psychological and emotional response to an event or experience that is extremely distressing or disturbing. Trauma can come from a variety of experiences, such as the loss of a loved one, physical or emotional abuse, an accident, a natural disaster, or witnessing violence.

Trauma can have severe and long-lasting consequences, often leading to symptoms such as anxiety, depression, flashbacks, and difficulty with daily life.

Trauma can also disrupt a person's sense of safety and well-being, impacting their ability to cope with stress and form healthy relationships (Schnyder & Cloitre, 2021).

