

The Future at Stake: A Systematic Review of Curbing Early Age Incarceration and Its Psycho-Spiritual Effects

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Abstract

Mental health is a global problem that has taken a toll on individuals. This is prominent in the United States and particularly among minority groups. Research has it that African Americans have faced significant racial health disparities within the healthcare system (Wang et al., 2025a). These inequities have played a critical role in the severe outcomes associated with the war on drugs. It is not an exaggeration to state that African Americans have experienced higher mortality rates due to unjust treatment and disproportionately high incarceration rates, which can be partially linked to untreated mental health and substance use disorders. Research indicates that the American legal system currently treats drug use as a criminal issue rather than recognizing it as a public health crisis (Pedersen, 2025; Grahl Johnstad, 2025). This paper intends to appraise effective treatments for mental health issues, emphasizing rehabilitation, human recovery, and the decriminalization of drug use. As echoed by scholars, if there is increased use of illicit drugs, it may give rise to increased use of licit drugs, and if drug criminalization entails an increase in violent crime, the victimized population could be at risk (Pedersen, 2025; Grahl Johnstad, 2025). This study implies that implementing suitable mental health interventions could reduce juvenile incarceration rates. Thus, it is essential to investigate the implications of early incarceration and its psychological effects on adolescents. This report argues that spirituality can enhance self-awareness and foster self-discovery, ultimately supporting individual well-being. We will conduct a systematic review of the implications of addictive behaviors related to drug use and examine the potential role of personal responsibility in reducing early incarceration rates. Additionally, we will analyze the impacts of responsibility, spirituality, and psychosocial development on addictions. The key question is whether individuals can over-

come substance use through spiritual practices.

Keywords

Addictions, Anxiety, Depression, Delinquency, Deviant Behavior, Drug Overdose, Psychology, Psychosocial Maturity, Psychological Well-Being, Racial Disparities, Spirituality, Self-Discovery

1. Introduction

Substance use is a treatable brain disorder that can be effectively managed with appropriate care. Unfortunately, efforts to recognize substance use as a medical issue have been hindered by racial disparities. Despite substantial evidence supporting this perspective, individuals struggling with addiction often face criminalization. This investigative review examines strategies aimed at reducing youth incarceration, prioritizing intervention, and enhancing the well-being of young individuals. Our review underscores the necessity of lowering youth incarceration rates and establishing rehabilitation centers to effectively address underlying mental health issues. These issues are frequently hidden beneath factors such as substance abuse, impulsivity, unhealthy family dynamics, familial stress, strained relationships, feelings of isolation, attachment disorders, delinquent behavior, and various forms of abuse encountered by these individuals.

Scholarly research indicates that adolescence is a critical developmental stage marked by substantial physical, emotional, and social growth, alongside inherent vulnerabilities. Without appropriate intervention, many young individuals risk becoming entrenched in the juvenile justice system, facing ongoing threats of criminal behavior, reoffending, unemployment, trauma, and engagement in risky activities. Numerous studies consistently demonstrate that substance use during adolescence hinders normal development and limits opportunities for positive growth, particularly for those dealing with difficult life circumstances (Kempa et al., 2025; Tubex & Gately, 2025). Ensuring public safety and holding young offenders accountable is essential. However, it is important to consider the potential negative consequences, such as harm to mental health, increased illiteracy, the development of deviant behavior, the recurrence of offenses, and a loss of trust within the community.

Research shows that during the crack cocaine epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s, there was a significant push for the criminalization of crack-cocaine users, and these were predominantly black (De Graaff, 2025; Dogan-Dixon et al., 2025; Hamid, 1992; Heidrich et al., 2025; Okechukwu et al., 2024). According to findings, crack cocaine was often seen as easier and cheaper to obtain, leading to a higher prevalence of its use in many African American communities. Recently, many people have resorted to drug use to cope with the stresses and strains of life; hence,

cocaine use has risen significantly, increasing overdose deaths among Black Americans. Despite this alarming trend, there is still a lack of culturally tailored treatment options for those affected (Dogan-Dixon et al., 2025; Heidrich et al., 2025). It is important to recognize that African American substance users often face severe sentencing and more punitive measures compared to individuals from other racial backgrounds, which highlights the reality of racial health disparities in the United States.

2. Methodology/Rationale

This paper will systematically extract information from evidence-based publications to review the implications of early incarceration and its psychological effects on adolescents. It will argue that spirituality can enhance self-awareness and promote self-discovery, ultimately improving individual well-being. Through a systematic review, this study will examine the connections between drug use and its associated behaviors. Additionally, it will discuss the impacts of responsibility, spirituality, and psychosocial maturation on addictions.

Given that drug use has become increasingly prevalent among young African Americans, leading to early incarceration and various psychological issues, this paper will select relevant journal sources and synthesize existing evidence to demonstrate how early incarceration contributes to trauma, anxiety, and depression.

3. Prisma-Style Methods

PRISMA is an evidence-based guideline used for systematic and transparent reporting of research. It outlines the phases of data collection and analysis (Carter-Templeton et al., 2025; Mishra & Mishra, 2023). PRISMA guidelines were utilized to select appropriate journals for reporting information about this study. Below are details of the databases searched, date limits, search strings and terms, along with the criteria for inclusion and exclusion (Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1. Search filters and selected databases.

Key terms searched	Date limits	Database	Quantity/numbers
Early incarceration and depression	2022-2025	Sage Journals	574
Spirituality and Self-discovery	2024-2025	Sage Journals	308
Psychological Well-being	2020-2025	ERIC	1512
Juvenile Delinquency	2021-2025	ProQuest, Psychology Collection	463
Effects of youth incarceration	2020-2025	INSPIRE -Psychology & Behavioral Science	1098
Alcoholic anonymous	2020-2025	INSPIRE -Psychology Collection	533
Distorted thinking and substance use	2024-2025	Sage Journals	505

Table 2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion	Exclusion
Only strong and relevant topics were selected	Any unrelated article was excluded
Research articles published from 2020-2025	Publications older than five years were excluded
Peer-reviewed journals were selected	letters, comments, conference papers, and notes were excluded
Only articles written in the English language	Non-peer-reviewed publications were excluded

4. Comprehensive Summary of the Key Discussion Areas

This review, in collaboration with the concepts presented by [Abrams et al. \(2014\)](#) and [Lebuda et al. \(2021\)](#), examines the rising rates of delinquency and other concerning behaviors among youth. It is essential for policymakers, legal systems, and future research initiatives to recognize and understand the various factors that contribute to risky behaviors. By fostering this understanding, we can collaboratively develop effective early intervention strategies aimed at reducing delinquency and deviant behavior among young individuals. To enhance this discussion, we have identified several important areas to explore. Our comprehensive summary investigates the potential role of spiritual interventions in combating drug use and fostering self-discovery. **Figure 1** highlights different areas that will help direct the focus of this discussion.

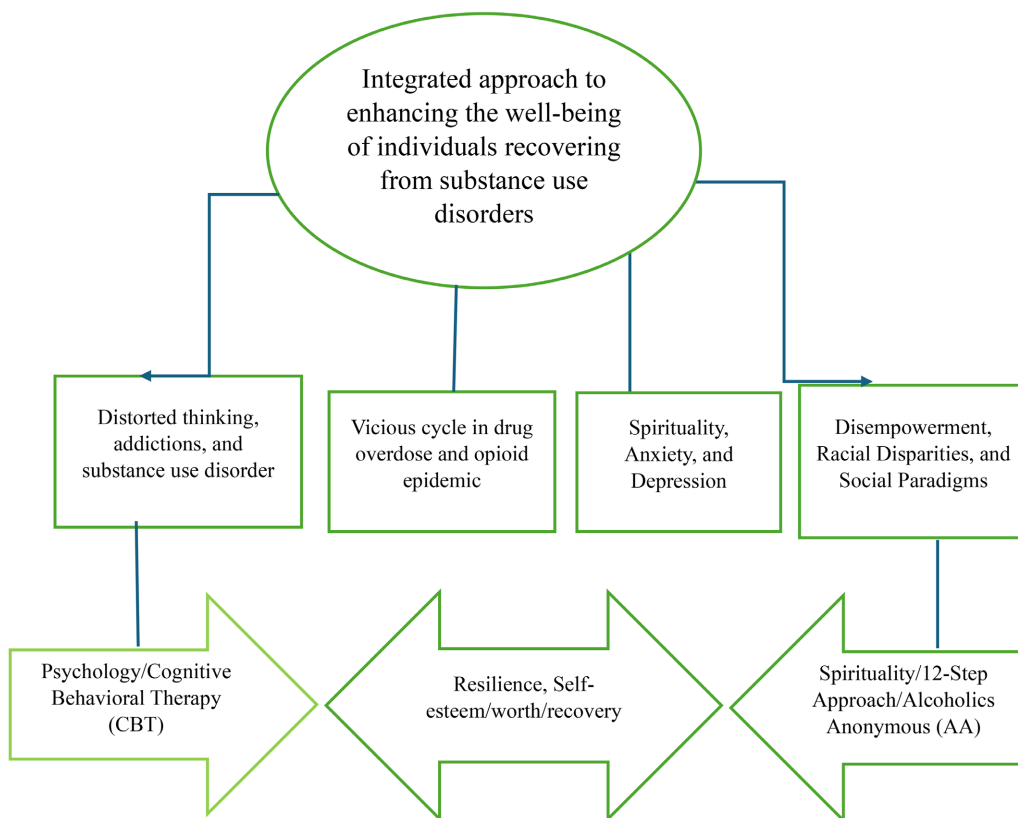


Figure 1. Comprehensive summary of the key discussion areas.

5. Distorted Thinking, Addictions, and Substance Use Disorder

Cognitive distortion refers to a pattern of thinking that lacks self-evaluation and is characterized by exaggerations and misperceptions. Scholarly research highlights that cognitive distortion is a cognitive error in information processing, leading to distorted self-evaluation. This phenomenon may be linked to addictions and compulsive behaviors (Jia et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2025b; Vettriselvan et al., 2025).

Substance addiction is a strong compulsion that prevents individuals from functioning effectively. According to Paquette et al. (2025), drug overdoses within the community can lead to adverse health outcomes if interventions are not implemented, which can potentially result in more complex issues. Study indicates that substance use disorders significantly contribute to preventable disabilities, and that young adults are at a higher risk for developing substance use issues as they age. The authors further emphasize that the most significant burden from these disorders stems from alcohol use disorder, followed by cannabis use disorder and opioid use disorder (Danpanichkul et al., 2025).

Substance use disorder originates from distorted thinking, a fact supported by research. Scholars suggest that substance use can begin at a young age and is often linked to poor judgment, decision-making, and uncontrollable behaviors (Danpanichkul et al., 2025; Earnshaw et al., 2025). Research affirms that continued substance use leads to arrests and criminal charges, as drug-related activities are frequently illegal. In a statistical study conducted by the National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics (NCDAS, 2025), it was estimated that 244,000 Americans are incarcerated each year for drug-related offenses. Additionally, nearly 1.16 million individuals face charges and convictions related to drug offenses. The study also revealed that approximately 80% of prison inmates struggle with issues related to drug or alcohol abuse. Other scholars argue that enhancing the effectiveness of drug treatment programs could result in significantly improved outcomes. They advocate for the creation of practical policies that treat substance use issues as health concerns affecting both individuals and society as a whole (Attari et al., 2025; Pridgen et al., 2025).

The minds of substance users are often misled, convincing them to blame others for their problems while irrationally seeking only comfort. This thinking leads to distorted perceptions and a loss of control over time. Reinforcing negative and maladaptive behaviors affects the individual and their family, community, and society as a whole. To effectively address these issues, Sripada (2022) emphasized the importance of critically observing these thought patterns and identified four key problems common among individuals with addictions: their inability to *regulate, revise, or reframe distorted automatic thoughts, as well as their struggle to take control of their thinking*. This inability to maintain long-term sobriety reflects spontaneous, irrational thoughts. Individuals seeking help and recovery can embark on journeys of self-discovery and psychological well-being. According to Brown (2015), self-discovery consists of two essential components: self-expression and self-awareness. This process enables individuals to gain profound insights into their thoughts, feel-

ings, and behaviors concerning substance use. With this understanding, they are better equipped to manage their triggers, cravings, and any distorted perceptions they may hold about themselves. [Yıldırım et al. \(2025\)](#) explore the relationship between health literacy, self-awareness, and overall well-being. They emphasize that effective self-discovery is crucial for individuals, as it enables them to empower themselves, recognize the harmful effects of drug use, and monitor their health status.

6. Vicious cycle in Drug Overdose and Opioid Epidemic

Drug overdose refers to the accidental, intentional, or unintentional misuse of any medication. Scholarly research highlights that most overdoses are intentional ([Chiloff et al., 2025](#); [Onigu-Otite et al., 2025](#)). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as reported by [Spencer et al. \(2021\)](#), there has been a significant rise in drug overdose fatalities. Notably, as the authors continued, fentanyl overdoses have tripled between 2016 and 2021, increasing it from 5.7 to 21.6 deaths per 100,000 standard population. This study also shows a 55.0% increase in fentanyl-related deaths from 2019 (11.2) to 2020 (17.4), followed by a 24.1% increase from 2020 to 2021 ([Spencer et al., 2021](#)). Other scholars added that substance use disorders in adolescents and young adults have increased, with the recorded opioid use disorder (4.27 million) increasing from 2010 to 2019 ([Danpanichkul et al., 2025](#)). Surprisingly, research has revealed that painkiller medication is one of the most abused drugs, as 9.7 million people have been recorded as abusers. Other prescription medications are recorded as 16.3 million abusers ([National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics, NCDAS, 2025](#)).

Since 1999, approximately one million people have died from drug overdoses, with deaths from drug overdoses increasing by 30% each year. This study found that over 96,700 individuals die annually from drug overdoses ([NCDAS, 2025](#)). Addressing drug overdose requires a focus on the opioid epidemic, as NCDAS emphasized that 72% of people died from opioid overdose deaths. Although heroin has been the preferred drug for many users, other opioids and opiates are also widely used. This trend has significantly worsened in the United States, affecting every city, including the affluent communities.

To effectively address the reasons behind the rising drug use, it is crucial to examine the underlying causes of addiction and its cyclical nature in various communities. Children who grow up with addicted parents in an environment where opioids and other drugs are misused are likely to be exposed to drug use from an early age. In such families, substance use may become normalized, leading to a diminished perception of the risks associated with maladaptive behaviors and an increased vulnerability to addiction. Research has shown that early exposure to substances can affect not only an individual's health but also family dynamics, community safety, and public health systems ([Papalamprakopoulou et al., 2025](#); [Watts et al., 2023](#)). Unfortunately, many families may be unaware of the need for therapeutic interventions or may delay seeking help. In addressing the relationship between poverty and

mental illness (Reupert, 2025) emphasizes that social and economic factors, such as poverty, low parental education, maltreatment, and unhealthy attachment styles, may increase the risk of addiction; thereby causing a family to become caught in this vicious circle of violence, drug use, incarceration, and untreated mental health issues.

7. Spirituality, Anxiety, and Depression

Managing addiction in conjunction with depression and anxiety can be pretty challenging. Anxiety, which includes various types such as generalized, social, and panic disorders, can affect individuals to different extents. Various emotional experiences, such as feelings of sadness, hopelessness, or loneliness, can trigger anxiety and depressive disorders. Research confirms that mental health issues often coexist with drug addictions in individuals who suffer from depression and anxiety, as well as in those with substance use disorders (Grahil Johnstad, 2025; Mohamed et al., 2020; Pearson et al., 2024; Valyear et al., 2023). Individuals with depression and anxiety often face significant illness, disability, and inadequate medical treatment. Also, many young individuals with stress, trauma, conflicts, and prior arrests often live in fear of rearrest, which adds to their stress and anxiety. Spata et al. (2024) and Singh (2024) highlight the presence of stigma and shame related to substance use. They found that individuals with substance use disorders frequently experience shame and stigma, along with fear of judgment or rejection from their community. While drinking a little bit of shame, as expressed by Douglass et al. (2024), many of the substance use victims may decide to seek intervention through spirituality as it increases resilience, self-esteem, and spirituality and accountability.

High school students in the USA are experiencing greater risks of substance use, as noted by Wang et al. (2025a). The study revealed that students who engage in religious school activities tend to exhibit lower rates of substance use. Hence, the conclusion that involvement in religious groups helps reduce negative behaviors, such as conflict, and actively discourages substance use, as it is seen as harmful to their spiritual well-being. It is therefore established that faith-based programs can offer spiritual guidance and encourage behavioral changes that enhance overall well-being. Research indicates that religious traditions and their interpretations significantly influence health and individual well-being (Faries et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2025a). Faries et al. emphasize that when traditional religious beliefs, such as virtue ethics, personal morality, healthy lifestyles, and tobacco cessation, are incorporated into patient care, improvements in patient outcomes are often observed. Other authors argue that religion plays a vital role in both physical and mental health interventions. They agreed that by integrating religious aspects into healthcare, individuals may experience a greater sense of purpose and meaning in life and an increased focus on forgiveness and accountability (Taylor, 2023; Ranz & Moshe, 2022; Cornelio & Dagle, 2024).

Research shows that intrinsic spirituality offers substantial benefits, including enhanced resilience, a greater sense of meaning, and improved emotional well-being.

It can also alleviate feelings of hopelessness and provide spiritual healing for those experiencing moderate depression. As a result, spirituality is often regarded as a means of channeling energy toward achieving desired outcomes (Başak et al., 2025; Singh, 2024; Stub et al., 2025; Tan & Teo, 2025). What, then, is spirituality? This is a question that many might ask.

Spirituality is the pursuit of meaning and purpose in life. Spiritual individuals believe in a higher power and acknowledge the existence of something greater than themselves. Scholars suggest that spirituality involves a quest for discovery and a connection with the transcendent (Cornelio & Dagle, 2024; Faries et al., 2025; Taylor, 2023; Ranz & Moshe, 2022). Faries et al. (2025) describe two types of spirituality: *being spiritual and secular spirituality*. Being spiritual can be further divided into two categories. The first, spelled with a lowercase *s*, refers to a connection with evil spirits, demonic entities, deceitful spirits, and their negative influences. The second category, spelled with a capital *S*, involves communion with the one true God, which fosters peace and healing for both the soul and body. On the other hand, secular spirituality represents a spiritual philosophy that operates without a religious framework. It emphasizes personal development and subjective well-being.

Religiously speaking, individuals often identify with a sacred group where they come together in a designated space to observe rituals, ceremonies, and various religious practices. They engage in communal prayers, provide support to one another, and foster a sense of belonging among group members. It is important to note that religion and spirituality are not synonymous. One can be religious without being spiritual; conversely, one can possess a philosophical sense of spirituality without adhering to a specific religion. Scholars define religion as a system of beliefs, practices, and rituals rooted in established traditions that involve transcendent beings such as God, Allah, higher powers, and other supernatural entities (Faries et al., 2025; Sneha & Gowri, 2025; Sonbol et al., 2025).

In a religious context, individuals often hold unique worldviews that may differ from the broader society. One way to gauge their level of religiosity is through their participation in religious activities, such as attending services at a mosque or church, as well as making donations to religious organizations. While advocating for the integration of religious and spiritual approaches into healthcare and addiction treatment models to provide comprehensive care and foster recovery, it is important to be cautious when identifying individuals with extreme worldviews, as they may pose a risk to those who hold different beliefs.

Historically, science, religion, and spirituality have often been viewed as conflicting domains. However, recent decades have underscored the significant role that religion and culture play in shaping individuals' understandings of existence and knowledge, as scholars noted (Cucchi & Qoronfleh, 2025, Burton & Kaufman, 2024). The authors highlight the connection between cultural, religious, and spiritual beliefs and their influence on clients' mental health. They argue that incorporating a holistic approach, which considers patients' spiritual and religious beliefs, is essential for enhancing their overall well-being. For example, Alcoholics Anony-

mous (AA) and the 12-step approach are integral to the healing process in addiction treatment, as they embody the spiritual concept of surrendering to a higher power. Research has demonstrated that Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) effectively assists individuals in achieving sobriety while promoting a spiritual experience. By exploring the nature of spiritual experiences and acknowledging how shame, trauma, and mental health disorders can obstruct these experiences, therapists can enhance this process through techniques such as meditation and self-compassion (Wishart, 2025; Hai & Ryan, 2025). Although the 12 Steps of AA face criticism regarding their effectiveness and relevance, ongoing research reviews aim to adapt these steps to better address the diverse cultural needs of individuals in recovery.

8. Disempowerment, Racial Disparities, and Social Paradigms

The American society is made up of different ethnic groups, and these variations have their challenges of racial inequality and racist criminalization. According to scholarly research, criminalizing the behavior of people of color has been persistent and indicates that the integrity of the state's law enforcement institutions is at stake as citizens continue to demonstrate mistrust of the legal systems (Piston et al., 2025). How did we get here should be the question, as Milton et al. (2025) show that racism can elicit feelings of invalidation, disempowerment, and humiliation; so why are we not questioning the reasons why black men are often disconnected in relationships and in their families? The fact of the matter is that arrests and criminalization have negative effects on their victims, and many young victims who perceive their psychological environment as more disempowering are less likely to make positive efforts.

Racial disparity refers to the unequal treatment and outcomes experienced by different racial groups. Studies indicate that this disparity manifests as an imbalance in the treatment of various racial communities, affecting areas such as healthcare, education, and law enforcement. It highlights the discrimination individuals from these groups often face (Cancelmo et al., 2025; Do Bú et al., 2025; Willits et al., 2025). Conversely, social paradigms are often described as models that shape how people view and interact with others. It comprises a collection of norms, beliefs, values, habits, and other ways through which we view the world within a cultural context (Hodgson & Watts, 2025; Maslova et al., 2025). Scholarly research highlights that sociological paradigms are a broad school of thought with three key components of *functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism*, as illustrated in **Figure 2** (Khan, 2025; Sapkota, 2025; Tarlow & Spencer, 2025).

Paradigms are interpretive with many facets and have the potential to revolutionize our understanding of our social behavior (Hodgson & Watts, 2025; Maslova et al., 2025). The imbalances in American society have created devastation emanating from the opioid crisis, and the changing views of American society have begun to shift towards embracing substance use disorder, which may hinder the full potential of the youth.

Perceiving addiction as a condition, rather than as a crime, is a way of curbing youth incarceration. Research indicates that individuals with substance use disorders benefit more from treatment rather than punitive measures. It is essential to approach these disorders with a demand for high-quality care and compassion for those affected. Research highlights that achieving racial equity in compassionate addiction treatment is possible with scientific guidance (Drew, 2022; Simon, 2016; Laksana et al., 2025). This suggests that by analyzing society's paradigms in light of new developments, we can more effectively identify both the positive and negative aspects that may improve the overall societal outcomes as projected in **Figure 2**. To effectively tackle the numerous shortcomings, conflicts, and behavioral challenges faced by young individuals, it is imperative for the government to adopt a more constructive approach to conflict resolution. In addressing the racial disparities experienced by minority groups, the government should recognize that deviant behavior often stems from a lack of social skills, mood swings, difficulties in maintaining stable relationships, maladaptive behaviors, and environmental challenges, rather than resorting to incarceration.

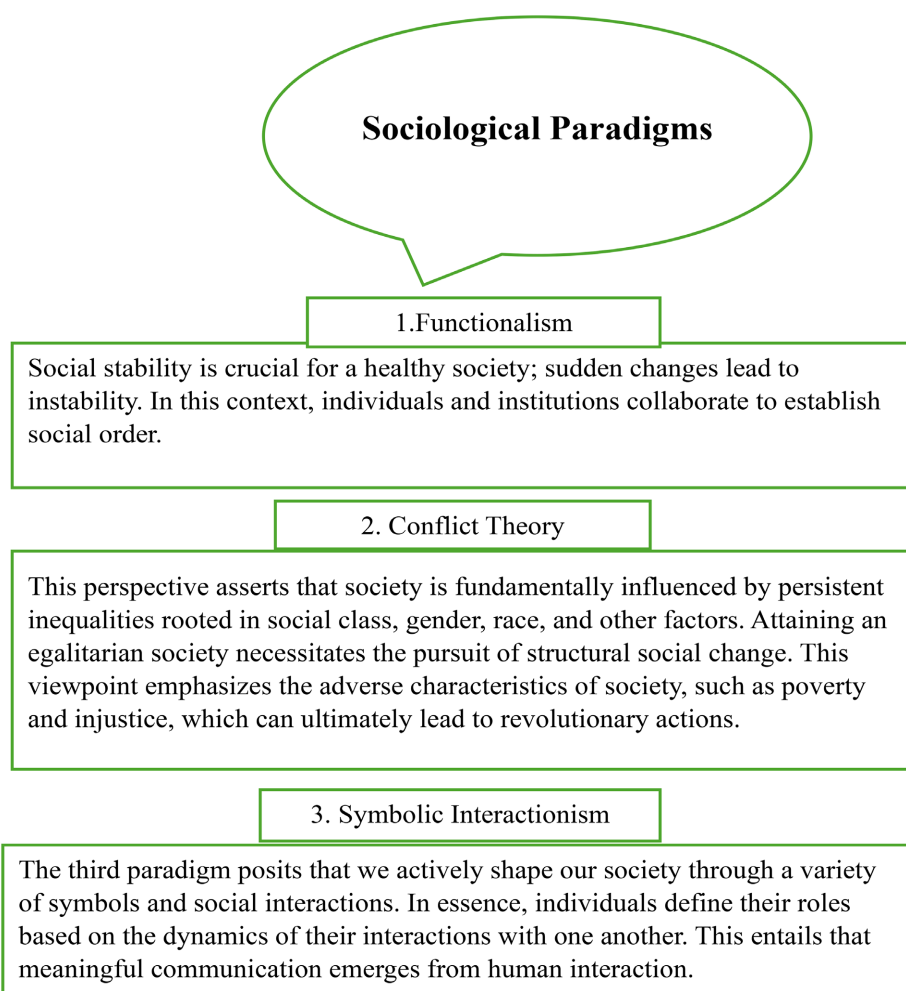


Figure 2. Review of sociological paradigms.

Some scholars advocate for the application of personological and social cognitive perspectives when discussing deviant traits. They emphasize the importance of recognizing the potential dangers associated with such behaviors, which can sometimes lead to abuse or self-harm. Additionally, it is crucial to differentiate between mental illness and deviant behavior to foster a better understanding of these complex issues (Crego, 2022). According to Barra et al. (2022), deviant behavior is expressed through delinquency, which has become a common factor among young people who are consistently involved in crime-related activities. It is assumed that the American legal system can effectively address inequality, poverty, discrimination, and racial disparities within society, ensuring fair outcomes for everyone. Accordingly, if the different conflict adaptation styles of young individuals are not properly managed as shown in **Figure 2** (conflict theory), they may lead to increased conflict, cognitive and behavioral issues, and ultimately result in more oppositional defiance (Campion-Barr et al., 2025; Mounts, 2025).

9. Collaborations of Positive Deviance Behavior

For specific behavior, thoughts, actions, or emotions to be deviant, abnormal, or deemed unacceptable, it must be situated from the cultural perspective of those individuals (Lebuda et al., 2021; Gomis-Pomares et al., 2022). Deviant people often find an optimal level of arousal through risky and impulsive behaviors; research has it that deviant behavior has to be defined in the context of that individual's culture. Deviant behavior is defined as any behavior that significantly differs from what is considered appropriate or typical within a social group. Additionally, the group's reaction to deviant behavior can vary based on its severity and the perceived positive contributions it may have to the group (Abrams et al., 2014; Gomis-Pomares et al., 2022). Deviant behavior is displayed through a lack of social skills, mood swings, unable to maintain stable relationships, and other maladaptive behaviors.

To reduce tendencies towards deviant behavior, it is advisable to collaborate with individuals who demonstrate positive deviance. Research suggests that positive deviance refers to social connections formed with peers or individuals who achieve favorable outcomes even when facing challenging circumstances (Tursunboyev, 2025). With the support of local communities, it is possible to identify young people who demonstrate positive deviance and use them as role models for others to follow. These individuals have the capacity to show kindness and empathy toward others without expecting anything in return.

The capacity for positive deviance is rooted in self-regulation, which Wright et al. (2025) define as a means of effectively addressing life's challenges and making thoughtful decisions. This approach not only makes life more manageable and fosters personal growth but also assists individuals in achieving success while managing their emotional expressions and impulses. The terms deviant and delinquency seem related, but delinquency, as described by some authors,

is described from a criminological perspective, and it is attributed to all offenses committed by individuals who are between the ages of 12 and 20 years (Acheampong et al., 2022). Reducing risky behavior among young people has been a question many authors have explored. How can criminal activities be decreased among youth? How can self-regulation be emphasized in today's younger generation? In discussions of workplace spirituality, some scholars emphasize the significance of positive deviance or attitude to boost performance, resulting in increased satisfaction and personal fulfillment. For these authors, spirituality acts as a means to align individual and organizational goals, ultimately encouraging better relationships among colleagues and within the workplace (Koul, 2025; Kuhn et al., 2025). Learning from positive deviants suggests that more young people will become aware of the consequences of incarceration and addictive behaviors. They will develop a sense of personal responsibility, find motivation to improve themselves, and learn to act appropriately within their social norms.

10. Results and Reviewed Evidence (Table 3)

This research conducted a systematic review using various search engines and filters during the database selection process. Table 3 presents an analysis of the documents, highlighting the key themes of the review, the publication year, and the number of related databases.

Table 3. Results, Themes, from reviewed evidence.

Created Themes from the review	Related numbers from databases	Year of publication
Distorted thinking, addictions, and substance use disorder	Google Scholar (n = 461)	2025 Only
Vicious cycle in drug overdose and opioid epidemic	INSPIRE (n = 7)	2020-2025
Spirituality, Anxiety, and Depression	SAGE Social science and humanities (n = 75)	2024-2025
Disempowerment, Racial Disparities, and Social Paradigms	INSPIRE Academic Journal (n = 282)	2020-2025
Collaborations of positive deviance behavior	SAGE Social science and humanities (n = 59)	2024-2025
Resilience and Self-esteem	ERIC (n = 111)	2020-2025

11. Conclusion

This report emphasizes the significance of spirituality, self-discovery, and psychological well-being. It proposes that spirituality can act as a guiding light for self-reflection, helping to reduce delinquency, impulsiveness, and deviant behavior among young people. By critically analyzing societal disparities and social paradigms, we believe that our youth can become more responsible, spiritually aware, and exhibit greater psychosocial maturity as they navigate their journey of self-discovery. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that healthcare institutions and systems can complicate the mental health of vulnerable individuals. This situation could improve if the government were to provide affordable, high-quality healthcare that is

cost-effective. Such measures would benefit everyone and help reduce ongoing healthcare expenditures (Eibner, 2025). It is also essential to develop culturally tailored treatment pathways for all Americans. This approach would empower minority groups to effectively address their mental health challenges, access preventive care, and make informed decisions for their families. In the field of education, research demonstrates that educators must exercise caution to ensure their instruction remains free from indoctrination when teaching young individuals. This vigilance is crucial, as teachers can inadvertently transition from rational methods of persuasion to non-rational ones in the classroom (Hand, 2025; Armstrong, 2025). This report emphasizes the necessity for enhanced social services for families. It is vital to tackle the root causes of homelessness and to recognize the factors that have misled young people. While it is necessary to reevaluate the practice of incarcerating youth, the criminal justice system also has a duty to ensure public safety and promote cooperation among all racial and ethnic groups. This review advocates for a thorough evaluation of the criminal justice system to tackle and lessen racial and ethnic discrimination. It also encourages policymakers to prioritize their education and remain well-informed, as their decisions profoundly affect all areas of society.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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