PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE SELF

Volume 4

The Self in Social Perspective

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List of Contributors
The Socio-cultural Self
The Social Self

A social psychologist's perspective on the self begins with the assumption that

all women define themselves in terms of their gender (Cowan & Markus, 1988).

... (note: paragraph is cut off at the end.)
A perspective on the self is viewed as a multiaccessed and dynamic entity—active, focal, and rich in experience. This multiplicity of self-knowledge is seen as a community of self-conscious selves, each with its own perspective and understanding of the self. The self is not a single, fixed entity, but a complex and ever-changing construct that is shaped by the interactions between different selves.

A schema, or internal model, is a way of organizing knowledge and experiences. Schemas are like mental maps that help us make sense of the world and guide our actions. They are constructed by the mind and are based on the expectations and experiences we have had in the past. Schemas can be used to predict future events and to make decisions about how to behave in different situations.

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The Self as a Sociocultural Construction

The self is not a fixed, permanent entity, but rather a dynamic, ever-changing construct that is shaped by the social and cultural contexts in which we live. This perspective, known as the sociocultural construction of the self, suggests that our understanding of ourselves is not an innate, pre-existing feature, but rather is learned and shaped through our interactions with others and our participation in social groups and institutions.

In this view, the self is not a static, unchanging entity, but rather a product of ongoing, active processes. The self is not something that we simply possess or have, but rather is something that we construct and maintain through our daily interactions and experiences.

The sociocultural construction of the self is an important concept in understanding the complexity of human identity. It recognizes that our identities are not fixed or static, but rather are constantly being shaped and reshaped by the social and cultural context in which we find ourselves. This perspective highlights the importance of understanding the ways in which social and cultural factors shape our identities, and how these identities, in turn, shape our experiences and interactions with the world around us.
7. THE SOCIOSTRUCTURAL SELF

The diagram illustrates the flow of influence from the structural level to the psychological level, highlighting how societal norms and institutions shape individual identities and behaviors.

Key concepts include:
- Structural level: The social, economic, and political systems that determine the overall shape of society.
- Psychological level: Individual thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are influenced by societal norms.
- Intersections: The points where structural influences intersect with personal experiences, shaping individual identities.

The diagram uses concentric circles to represent different levels of influence, with the outer circles depicting broader, more systemic forces and the inner circles showing more personal, individual responses.

The text accompanying the diagram provides a detailed explanation of how these levels interact, showing the complex interplay between macrosocial conditions and microsocial experiences.

The intention is to convey how societal structures can both constrain and enable individual agency, shaping the way people think and act within their environments.

References to specific theoretical frameworks such as symbolic interactionism, structural functionalism, and conflict theory are integrated throughout the text to support the arguments presented.

The diagram is accompanied by a series of questions for further discussion, encouraging readers to consider how they might apply these concepts to real-world scenarios and personal experiences.
variation in content of the self
In a class where the students were asked to mention their help in their self-concept, the students of the school were shown to vary with the environment, so that the short-term self-concept of the school was measured. The students, who had been asked to describe themselves in a formal social environment, were found to be more likely to describe themselves in a more varied manner over time in terms of their environment than in a more formal and structured setting. These findings are consistent with the work of Markus and Nurius (1986), who suggest that the environment in which an individual is placed affects the way in which they perceive themselves.

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In some circumstances, we are made to feel certain things and internalize those feelings as if they were part of the self. This process is particularly evident in the context of social identity, where individuals are encouraged to adopt certain roles or behaviors as part of their self-concept.

For example, in some cultures, the concept of the "ideal" body type is highly emphasized, leading individuals to feel pressure to conform to these standards. This pressure can become so strong that it is internalized as a part of the self, even among those who do not strictly adhere to these ideals.

Similarly, in educational settings, students are often encouraged to perform well academically, and this performance can become a central component of their self-concept, influencing their sense of identity and self-worth.

These examples illustrate how external factors can shape our internal understanding of ourselves, emphasizing certain aspects of our identity and devaluing others. This process of internalization is critical in understanding how social factors can influence our self-perception and behavior.
Yip, narrative intersectionality is my favorite part of sociology - the complexity of our experiences! When we talk about the various identities and roles that shape our lives, we’re not just looking at the surface level. We’re diving deep into the interactions between race, gender, class, and other identities that all overlap and influence each other. It’s like trying to paint a picture with multiple colors, each one affecting the way the others look. Just like that, our experiences are woven together in a complex tapestry of who we are and how we live.

Similarly, when we talk about power and the dynamics of dominance and subordination, we’re not just looking at the obvious advantages and disadvantages. We’re seeing how these power structures are embedded in our everyday lives, shaping everything from our relationships to our work environments. It’s not just about who has the power and who doesn’t - it’s about how that power is used and the impact it has on those who are on the receiving end.

Understanding these concepts helps us to see the complexity of the world around us and the ways in which we’re all interconnected. It’s like looking at a puzzle and realizing that each piece has its own unique place, but also plays a role in how the whole picture comes together. Sociology helps us to see the world in this way - as a complex, interconnected system where everything matters.
Despite various obstacles, individuals find ways to construct a positive self-concept. "Failing as in life or activity, for the truly successful, the key is that we believe in the possibilities of the self." (Tolstoy, 1969) One powerful strategy seems to involve a strong sense of self-esteem (Pine, 1998). The consequences of a positive self-concept and self-esteem can be profound. In contrast, a sense of inferiority can lead to despair and a lack of self-confidence. In schools, factors such as the quality of instruction, the attitudes of teachers, and the support of peers can significantly influence a student's self-concept. For example, a student who feels supported and encouraged by their teachers and peers is more likely to develop a positive self-concept. Conversely, a student who feels neglected or discriminated against is more likely to develop a negative self-concept. Therefore, schools must strive to create environments that foster positive self-concept and self-esteem among all students.
THE SOCIO-CULTURAL SELF

Variation in the Meaning of Self

PHOTOGRAPHS

In this section we focus on the role of variation and the process of self-definition as a dialectic element in the construction and re-creation of the socio-cultural self. Self-definition is not a static process; it is dynamic and influenced by a variety of factors, including cultural, social, and personal experiences. Self-definition is also influenced by the ways in which individuals interact with their environment, including their social networks, cultural norms, and personal values. The process of self-definition is a complex and multi-faceted one, and it is influenced by a variety of factors, including cultural, social, and personal experiences. The process of self-definition is a dialectic element in the construction and re-creation of the socio-cultural self.

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The social structure of the society, and the role of communication in a sense of one's place in the social structure, has been a topic of much discussion. In sociology, communication is often studied in terms of "social institutions," which are organized sets of norms and practices that are shared and enforced within a group. In the context of this document, the emphasis is on the role of communication in shaping individual and group identities, and how these identities are maintained through ongoing social interactions.

The nature of communication is often analyzed through the concept of "self-communication," which refers to the internal dialogue and self-reflection that individuals engage in to understand themselves. This process is central to the construction of identity and the maintenance of social order.

In the context of the document, there is a discussion about the role of communication in the process of socialization, and how it shapes the way individuals perceive themselves and others. The document also touches on the importance of communication in the development of social norms and the maintenance of social order.

Throughout the document, there are references to the work of various sociologists and psychologists, including the concept of "the social construction of reality," which suggests that our understanding of the world is shaped by the ways in which we communicate and interact with others. The document emphasizes the importance of understanding these processes in order to better understand the complex interactions that underlie social life.
REFERENCES

Sociocultural contexts and the workings of the self are interwoven. The self is understood within a sociocultural context, and this is reflected in our own experiences of self. Within these contexts, the self is understood as a product of social and cultural forces. These contexts shape our experiences of self and influence our perceptions of ourselves and our place in the world.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the development of the self is a complex and multifaceted process. It involves interactions between the individual and their sociocultural environment, and is shaped by a range of factors, including experiences, relationships, and societal expectations. The self is not a fixed entity, but rather a dynamic and evolving construct that is continually shaped by our experiences and the contexts in which we find ourselves. This understanding of the self is crucial for our ability to navigate the complexities of our world and to develop a sense of self that is meaningful and authentic.