Block 2
Youth and Identity

BLOCK 2 INTRODUCTION

Block 2 Youth and Identity focuses on the central concept of identity. A significant task of the stage of youth is the development of identity. In the absence of a successful identity development, the youth faces identity crisis that can negatively affect the various facets of development. *Block 2 consists of three Units*.

Unit 3 Social and Psychological Perspectives on Identity discusses the youth identity in terms of social psychological aspects. It highlights family as an important context for identity formation and development. Further, intergenerational relationships including parent-youth relationship, are discussed in the context of youth autonomy and identity development.

Unit 4 Education, Career and Peer Group focuses on educational institutions as contexts of identity development. It also discusses workplace identity and relationships. The peer group dynamics as important for social development is also highlighted.

Unit 5 Youth Culture: Influence of Media and Globalization explains the meaning of youth culture and the influence of media and globalization on the youth culture.

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UNIT 3 SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON IDENTITY*

Structure

3.1 Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Concept of Identity

- 3.3.1 Identity: A Paradox
- 3.3.2 Youth and Identity Development
- 3.3.3 Social Bases of Identity

3.4 Social Psychological Perspectives on Identity

- 3.4.1 Symbolic Interactionism
- 3.4.2 Social Identity Theory
- 3.4.3 Eriksonian Perspective

3.5 Family as a Context of Human Development

- 3.5.1 Functions of Family
- 3.5.2 Parenting Styles

3.6 Sibling Relationships

3.7 Intergenerational Relationships

- 3.7.1 Family Model of Interdependence
- 3.7.2 Family Model of Independence
- 3.7.3 Family Model of Psychological Interdependence

3.8 Patterns of Intergenerational Relationships – Solidarity or Conflict?

3.9 Youth, Autonomy and Relatedness

3.10 Let Us Sum Up

3.11 Key Words

3.12 Answers to Self Assessment Questions

3.13 Unit End Questions

3.14 References

3.15 Suggested Readings

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through the Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the concept of youth identity;
- Explain the theories of identity development;
- Describe the role of family, sibling and intergenerational relationships in identity development; and
- Understand the nature of parent-youth relationships.

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3.2 INTRODUCTION

An IIM graduate is offered the highest pay package of Rs.18 lakhs per annum by a U.S. based M.N.C. She tells a reporter, "Coming from a modest small town background, this is truly a dream come true for me and my family."

A theatre group of young people present an eye-opening play on the political situation in a northeastern state. They struggle for "justice" for the people in the state.

A young woman drifts from job to job, from one failed relationship to another, is given to smoking and drinking and spending her life in a somewhat dissociated state. A general sense of confusion and purposelessness pervades her being.

Two 18 year old boys were held by police for hacking the websites and email passwords. They confessed to be doing it because they were "bored of life and needed some thrill and excitement".

—— Adapted from Bansal (2012)

The above snippets introduce us to the kaleidoscope of youth. It is one of the most interesting and keenly observed phenomena the world over, impacting the progress and future of a nation in a significant way. Young people differ from each other in terms of their experiences, background, perspectives, hopes and aspirations. On the one hand, the youth are represented as reckless, irresponsible and uncommitted; on the other hand, as dedicated, deferential and conformist. Youth is lauded as a symbol of hope for the future while scorned as a threat to the existing society. They also come across as full of energy with lot of creative ideas. All these point at youth as a bundle of contradictions and a challenge. In this Unit, we will try to unravel this challenge and understand youth from various perspectives.

3.3 CONCEPT OF IDENTITY

If you have been asking yourself questions – Who you are? How should I live my life? Who do I want to become? - you are questioning your identity. Your identity is the sum total of the answers to these and similar questions. It has several paradoxical qualities. Is identity personal or social? Is it freely chosen or socially constructed? Is it momentary or continuous? Is it multiple or unitary? Let us understand the concept of identity.

3.3.1 Identity: A Paradox

i) *Identity is where self meets society*

The way you define yourself depends on you – that is, how you think you are or how you would like to be; your activities and preferences; hopes and fears. While reflecting on above questions, you have considerable freedom to compose your identities as you like it. Identity is your unique signature. Even twins do not have identical identities. As youth, you may be living in the same social world (e.g., college students), but you all are not similar. There are differences in some aspects as well as similarities in some other aspects. Your identities derive from your particular experiences in the world which are unlikely to completely overlap with that of others.

But it is important to know that identity is not entirely freely chosen. Your individual identities are given in part by others. A person's identity reflects his/her own list of who he/she is, but also society's ascriptions of who he/she is, making it a meeting place between self and society. When you define yourself in terms of a girl, an Indian, a student, you are referring to many of the important categories such as gender, nationality, age etc. that organize our societies and thus, ourselves. These social realities significantly affect our identities, implying the socially constructed nature of our identities. Thus, identity formation is both a personal and collective project.

Identities are social in a more fundamental way. We exist in the eyes of others. According to G.H. Mead (1934), we would not be aware that we "are" or that we exist, without other people responding to our actions. So the recognition and confirmation of the self in the eyes of others is the starting point of our self awareness and self definition. Sometimes others affirm our identity and see us in the way we would like to be seen, sometimes they ignore or deny the ways we would like to be seen and at other times they impose on us a set of labels that we like, resist or find irrelevant.

Identity can also be social in another way. Who you are at a given moment of time is dependent upon where you happen to be and who else is there in that place with you. So, in a foreign locale, our national identity may become strong. In a room full of women, a person's male identity may become salient. While dressing up to meet your lover, your girl/boy friend identity may become important.

ii) *Identity is contingent and dynamic*

'Who you are' captures only an aspect of identity that a person is conscious of at a given moment in a given context, like a snapshot. Thus, identity has a spatial and temporal context. It is constantly in flux. When the context around us changes, identity also changes. As a woman moves from her room in a slum to a shop in a mall, she transits from being a wife/mother to a worker identity of a saleswoman. The different social worlds that we are a part of shuffle the various aspects of our identity.

iii) *Identity implies continuity and coherence*

If identity is situation dependent and dynamic, why do we feel ourselves as "essentially the same person" in the midst of inner and outer changes? If different social worlds throw up different aspects of our identities, is there any organizing theme that runs across it? The questions raise concerns of continuity and coherence in identity. Undoubtedly, people see themselves as same and continuous as they move through life. They are able to see interrelationships between what they were (as a child) and what they have come to be (as a youth) and anticipations of what they will be like (as a middle aged person) in the midst of developmental changes. Further, despite specifying oneself differently in different situational contexts and roles, identity makes our existence into a whole by understanding it as an expression of a single unfolding and developing story. Even when we move in and out of various social roles, we identify ourselves as a single entity. There is an experience of integration of diverse involvements and multiplicity of identities. So identity is simultaneously cohesive and multiple.

To sum up, identity is a paradoxical experience. It is both personal and social, freely chosen and socially constructed, contingent and continuous, multiple and coherent. It serves the function of providing the structure for understanding who one is; provides meaning and direction through commitments, values and goals; gives a sense of personal control and free will; strives for consistency and harmony between diverse values, beliefs and commitments and enables the recognition of potential through a sense of future, possibilities, and alternative choices (Adams & Marshall, 1996).

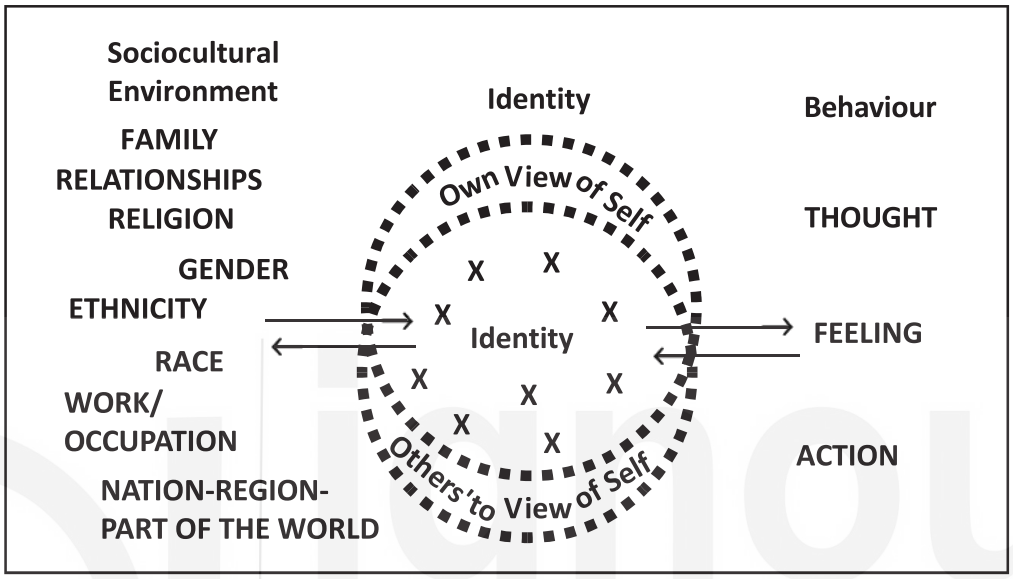


Figure 3aF. Inter-linkages between Society, Identity, Behaviour (Markus, 2010)

3.3.2 Youth and Identity Development

Youth as a biographical life stage is located between adolescence and adulthood. You have already learnt about the concept and meaning of youth in the Unit 1. Youth is conceptualized as beginning with the end of secondary education and ending in mid to late 20s for most people as the experimentation of this period is succeeded by more enduring life choices (Arnett, 1998). This phase was originally used by Keniston (1971). The more recent term for this phase of development is called emerging adulthood (Arnett and Taber, 1994). It is distinct demographically and subjectively from adolescence (roughly from ages 10 -17) and adulthood (beginning roughly since mid to late 20s). According to the WHO, youth comprises of 15 – 24 years of age group. The National Youth Policy of India (2014) defines the youth population as those in the age group of 15-29 years.

Youth are often engaged in the task of identity formation. It was Erik H. Erikson, a lifespan psychologist, who popularized the notion of identity crisis as normative for youth. He said that youth is most vigorously involved in the attempts to find his/her place in the society through occupational, sexual and ideological choices (Erikson, 1968). Youth is physically, sexually and cognitively mature. They have to make decisive choices to chart out their "plan of life" which entail deciding about their values and goals, their future careers and sexual preferences. To enable them to make these choices, societies offer them opportunities to explore and experiment with the available options. This phase is placed in the schedule of human development between childhood and adulthood and is called as 'psychosocial moratorium'. This psychosocial moratorium is a permissive phase

granted by the society to the adolescent and youth to experiment with roles (such as student/worker/leader/friend/lover) and self images (such as nerdy/ obedient/rebel/nobody) without being confirmed as a certain 'type'. In modern societies, the period of moratorium coincides with secondary level schooling and college education. During this phase, the adolescents and youth engage in opportunities of learning, recreation, work, competing and cooperating with their peers, love and intimacy. Some youth choose to experiment freely with a variety of opportunities while others prefer to take the tried and tested path in response to multiplicity of choices. Many feel 'at home' in the kinds of roles offered by the times in which they are living while a few feel 'unease' with them and seek to make place for new ones. Identity amongst youth, thereby, represents multiple possibilities from exploration to foreclosure, delinquency to creative deviancy, rebellion to conformity, alienation to vigorous involvement in the spirit of the era, diffusion to consolidation.

According to Erikson (1968), identity is a process of defining self through which a meaningful connection between inner self and outer reality is forged. Youth fashion their identities through identifications with characteristics and roles of significant people in their lives (such as parents, peers and leader figures) which are often crudely imitated in childhood play. So, identity is psycho-social in nature. It provides a psychological sense of 'who one is' and this sense is derived from social identifications and the unique way in which they are organized within an individual. Identity is also social because youth require adult support and recognition of their potential and worth. They want their needs and capabilities to be matched by environmental opportunities. They seek affirmation of their self by the adult world. For example, the graduation ceremony in educational institutions is a practice by which the youth are confirmed as suitable to enter the world of work by the society.

A particular challenge for the youth living in current times, i.e. late modernity, is that they have more choice in identity matters. It could be argued that in previous generations we had identities waiting for us. Our class/caste, regional, occupational structures and contexts shaped our trajectories of life. Occupations used to run in families and it was expected that the child will follow the footsteps of his/her father or grandfather. Our caste and regional affiliations exerted a greater influence on choices such whom we married, where we lived, what food we ate etc. By contrast, late modern social worlds appear to offer mobility, fluidity and choice. We can move back and forth between 'worker' and 'learner' identity; we can be celebrating 'Eid' and 'Halloween' with equal fervor; marrying before one hits 30 years of age and marrying within one's caste is no longer a strong compulsion. There are more options today to define one's lifestyle for oneself based on one's needs, motives and interests and not just be encumbered by the traditions and conventions. This throws the young people more on their own powers to refine their identities.

3.3.3 Social Bases of Identity

We learnt before that identities are rooted in many systems of social stratification, such as race/ethnicity/caste, class, religion, sexuality, gender, age and (dis)ability. Let us look at each of them briefly.

i) *Race/ethnicity/caste* – It is a human group that is defined as being distinct by virtue of perceived and assumed immutable biological differences reflected in their physical appearance (skin colour, facial features etc.). Examples of racial groups are – Afro-Americans referred to as "Black" largely inhabiting Africa, Latin and South America and some parts of North America, Mongloids referred to as "Yellow" race inhabiting Central and East Asian, Caucasians referred to as "White" race found most specifically in Europe and North America. Ethnicity is a human group that is defined as being distinct by virtue of perceived and assumed cultural differences such as language and history. A Caucasian from United States may share certain racial characteristics with a Caucasian from France but the two will be different ethnically. They will speak different languages and have different traditions and practices. Caste is a social grouping divided on the basis of common ancestry and hereditary occupations. It is hierarchically organized and relations amongst castes are defined by the concept of purity and pollution. It is largely a South-Asian phenomena.

These social affiliations, imposed or self chosen, impact people's sense of self. Racial and ethnic minorities have to face negative societal stereotypes and discrimination. They also face the challenge of adapting to the dominant cultures. In recent years, attention is also paid to the racial and ethnic identity of whites, questioning what kind of racial consciousness they have – ethnocentrist or a relativist, morally responsible stance. Caste in India has been deeply divisive, yet a powerful organizing force. It regulates important areas of life such as food, dress, speech, customs, marriage and occupations of people.

ii) *Class* – Class as a meaningful identity is often overlooked in psychological literature. Class positions significantly impact access to and quality of health and educational opportunities, entry in occupations, treatment by police and legal institutions etc. The social, cultural and economic advantages and/or disadvantages of class belonging are related with each other. Bourdieu (1986) explained that cultural capital (such as qualifications, computer literacy, English proficiency) are acquired through the use of economic capital (money). If your parents are able to financially support you to acquire relevant skills and knowledge that boost your cultural capital, you will be able to get a well paying job that brings you power, status and higher salary i.e. increase in economic capital. Social capital refers to the network of relationships, such as those of kinship, workplace and neighbourhood which are acquired to provide security and benefits in short or long run. Social capital also helps in increasing one's cultural and economic capital. For example, a well networked person will gain crucial information and access to opportunities to learn and grow that will enhance one's economic standing.

iii) *Religion* – Religious context can provide a perspective from which to view the world and a set of basic principles to live the life. Children become aware of their religious contexts quite early in life. In today's world where inter-religious hostilities are strong, psychological study of formation of extremist religious identities has assumed importance.

iv) *Sexuality* – Sexual identity refers to awareness of one's self as a sexual being. One becomes aware of one's race, ethnicity, religion and other aspects earlier than about one's sexual identity. Especially awareness of one's

possible deviation from sexual norms, typically occurs later in one's life. Recognizing one's sexual identity, whether heterosexual or homosexual, is a process of negotiating and interpreting one's experiences in context of experiences of people with diverse sexual orientations.

v) *Gender* – Gender identity is sense of self around the perception that one is male or female and internalizing behaviours deemed culturally appropriate to these self perceptions. They are learnt through early socialization and enacted and reinforced throughout the lifespan.

vi) *Age* – The dynamics of age based identity are unique. Age can be defined in terms of chronological age as well as in terms of subjective experience. The subjective experience of 'age' is flexible, both personally as well as culturally. For instance, the roles and responsibilities ascribed to youth stage in modern, industrial societies are different from those in traditional, agrarian societies. The age categories are developmentally defined and have shifting membership. Human beings move through the categories of childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age.

vii) *Identities of (dis)ability* – Only within the past decade there has been an explicit recognition of a "disability culture". People with physical and mental disabilities have the desire to be perceived as normal while at the same time have to negotiate a disabled identity to deal with the various barriers to access and achievement in their lives.

Every individual is rooted in several such identities. You are a person of a specific gender and age, with certain caste/ethnic/race affiliation, class status, sexual orientation, religious membership, able bodied or disabled. It may be noted here that certain types of identities are more powerful and dominant than other forms of identities. For instance, the 'brahmin' caste is constructed as the socially powerful caste identity and the 'shudra' identity is constructed as the stigmatized and inferior identity. The same holds true for the unequal power equation between male and female, white and black, rich and poor, hindus and muslims, heterosexual and homosexual, able and disabled. Human beings are thus in a unique predicament with respect to their identities. Each of us may be powerful in some ways and disenfranchised in some ways. Standing at the intersection of multiple identities, does any one identity override other, such as class over caste? Also, how does one resist oppressive accounts of one's identity by others who hold power, such as male centric notions about appropriate feminine behaviours? This is the essence of identity politics one needs to be aware of and understand how does it shape our thoughts and behaviour.

Self Assessment Questions I

For each of the statement below, state whether it is **True** or **False**.

1) Identity is freely chosen.
2) Recognition by others is essential for development of our identity.
3) Identity is multiple and coherent.
4) Identity formation is the normative task of childhood.
5) Late modernity has shrunk our identity choices.
6) There is power difference amongst several identity positions that we hold.

3.4 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PESPECTIVES ON IDENTITY

There are various theoretical perspectives that explain identity. A few salient ones are reviewed below:

3.4.1 Symbolic Interactionism

The basic premise of symbolic interactionism, a sociological social psychological perspective, is that people behave towards objects not on the basis of their concrete properties but on the basis of the meanings these objects have for them. For example, an old table may be seen as a useless piece of furniture or a memorabilia. Since humans have the ability to reflect back on themselves, they take themselves as objects. They are able to take stock of themselves, assess themselves, and make decisions and plans for the future, and are self-aware or achieve consciousness with respect to their own existence. So self emerges as an object. Herein lies the concepts of social self/looking glass self, given by C.H. Cooley (1902). Simply put, he said that other people are the mirror in which we see ourselves. We are able to reflect on self as an object because we take the role of the other and see ourselves from others' perspectives. The process is like this – When we see our face, figure, and dress in the mirror, we are interested in them because they are ours. At times we feel pleased and sometimes mortified, according to whether we like what we see or not. This self-idea arises because: a) we imagine our appearance for the other person, b) we imagine his/her judgment of that appearance c) some sort of self-feeling such as pride or mortification arises. The comparison with a looking glass hardly suggests the second element, the imagined judgment, which is quite essential. The thing that moves us to pride or shame is not the mere mechanical reflection of ourselves, but an imputed sentiment, the imagined effect of this reflection upon another's mind. For example, we are ashamed to seem evasive in the presence of a straightforward man, cowardly in the presence of a brave one, gross in the eyes of a refined one, and so on. We always imagine and in imagining share the judgments of the other person.

Where does identity enter into self? As we learnt earlier, there are as many different identities as many different positions we hold in society. All of these multiple identities which constitute the overall self, are related to different aspects of social structure. One has an identity, an "internalized positional designation" (Stryker, 1980, p. 60), for each of the different positions or role relationships the person holds in society. Thus, self as a student is an identity; similarly, considering the myriad roles we play in life, we can have self as a spouse, self as colleague, self as friend, and self as a worker/employee. The identities refer to the 'meanings' one has as that role-holder or group member, or as a person, e.g., what does it *mean* to be a friend, or a colleague, or a worker? These meanings are the *content* of the identities.

3.4.2 Social Identity Theory

The social identity theory (SIT) is developed by Henri Tajfel (1979). SIT assumes that a person's social identity is constituted by the vast number of social identifications that person has with various social categories like class, race,

gender and also more transient ones like educational institution, hobby class etc. Not all those identifications are primed, or activated, or salient, at any one time. Rather, social identity at any one time is made up of a few identifications selected to suit the particular social context. For example, being an Indian fan during a cricket match. A powerful and perhaps universal motive is the motive to think well of one's self, to have a positive evaluation of identity. There is as strong a motive to evaluate one's social identity positively as there is to evaluate one's personal identity positively. This motive for a positive social identity propels much social behaviour, and is expressed as a tendency to evaluate one's in-group memberships (the social groups one belongs to) positively. A positive social identity comes about only through social comparison between the in-group and some relevant out-group (groups one doesn't belong to). The value of being an Indian fan, or a psychology student can only be evaluated through comparison with other relevant out-group identities (such as being a Pakistani fan, or an engineering student, respectively). SIT proposes that there is a motive to evaluate group memberships positively so as to enhance social identity, and that this positive differentiation of in-group from out-group is achieved though comparison of the in-group to an out-group. Members of in-group are perceived as being different from each other (in-group differentiation) and members of the out group are perceived as being all the same (out-group homogeneity). These cognitive mechanisms of social categorization, social identification and social comparison are at the base of stereotypes of and prejudices towards out-groups.

3.4.3 Eriksonian Perspective

Erikson was one amongst a number of classic theorists to establish a tradition of identity theory (others include Blos, 1962; Cooley, 1902; James, 1892; G.H. Mead, 1934). Erikson's definition of identity included both internal (the intra-psychic forces in psychology) and social-contextual dimensions (environmental context of sociology). As Erikson has stated, "ego identity…. is the awareness of … self-sameness and continuity … [and] the style of one's individuality [which] coincides with the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others in the immediate community" (1968; p. 50). Adolescence and youth is the time when the individual begins to sense a feeling of his/her own identity, a feeling that one is a unique human being and yet prepared to fit into some meaningful role in society. Identity formation is the process of selecting and integrating talents, aptitudes and skills in identification with likeminded people and to suit the requirements of the social environment. It also involves strengthening the defenses against threats and anxiety, as it learns to decide what impulses, needs and roles are most effective and appropriate.

Erikson conceptualizes identity as a single bipolar dimension, ranging from identity synthesis to identity confusion. Identity synthesis represents a healthy reworking of childhood and contemporaneous identifications into a larger, self-determined set of ideals, whereas identity confusion represents an inability to develop a workable set of ideals on which to base an adult identity. Various facets, for instance, one's romantic preferences, religious ideology, career and political preferences, combine together to form the identity that represents who one is. This is shown to the outside world as well as to oneself. The more complete and consistent this integration (of various facets) is, the closer to identity synthesis one is. If the facets are disjointed and incomplete, there will be identity confusion. Identity confusion can represent conditions ranging from not knowing what next

to do after school to feeling as though one's life is completely lacking in purpose. To illustrate a more aggravated form of identity confusion, Erikson used the character of Biff Loman, from the Arthur Miller (1958) play 'Death of a Salesman', who complains that he "just can't take hold of some kind of a life" (1958, p. 54).

Besides identity confusion, another risk of youth stage can be consolidation of identity around negative elements. Erikson describes *negative identity* as "perversely based on all those identifications and roles which….had been presented to them as most undesirable or dangerous and yet also as most real" (1968, p.174). It is characterized by "scornful and snobbish hostility" of a person towards the roles offered as proper and desirable. It is often a reaction to the seemingly impossibility of positive identities. A young person's acute dislike for almost all aspects of his or her background is an example of negative identity. Such a person is then likely to base one's identity around those ideals which are unacceptable in his/her own environment. Yet another dangerous form of identity in youth is totalitarian identity seen amongst the youth who engage in religious fanaticism. It is the exclusive preoccupation with what seems to be unquestionably right or ideal.

With the resolution of identity crises, the virtue of fidelity develops. The youth shuttles back and forth between competing ways of life and values. When their search for worthwhile values to which they can be loyal to is stemmed, they attain fidelity. "Fidelity is the ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions of the value systems" (Erikson, 1964; p.125). Fidelity is the foundation upon which a continuous sense of identity is formed. Once, they know what values they stand for, they tend to become impatient towards all that which is different from their own customs, ideologies and rituals. This gives rise to the tendency to repudiate or reject the "other".

The Table below shows the various dimensions of the Eriksonian stage of identity.

Table 3aT: Erikson's Stage of Identity

Stage	Psychosexual stage	Psychosocial crises	Radius of significant relations	Basic strength	Core pathology/ basic antipathies
Adolescence/ Youth	Puberty	Identity vs. Identity confusion	Peer groups and out-groups; models of leaderships	Fidelity	Repudiation

Erikson's concept of identity has stimulated further research. Marcia (1966, 1980), one of the prominent neo-Eriksonian, focused on personal identity and developed a status typology. Marcia (1980, 1988) focused on the dimensions of exploration and commitment. Exploration is the sorting through of multiple alternatives in order to make a decision about an important life choice, whereas commitment is the act of choosing one or more alternatives and following through with them. Since commitment requires adopting a set of goals, values and beliefs, it generates a sense of fidelity, or purpose and continuity in the individual (Marcia, 1980). By bifurcating both exploration and commitment into high and low levels

and juxtaposing each level of one with each level of the other, Marcia (1966) derived four independent identity statuses. These are identity diffusion, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium, and identity achievement. Each status represents a combination of a level of exploration with a level of commitment. The identity statuses appear to be better characterized as character types than as developmental stages (Côté & Levine, 1988).

Table 3bT: Marcia's Model of Identity

Dimensions of Identity	High Commitment	Low Commitment
High Exploration	Identity achievement	Identity moratorium
Low Exploration	Identity foreclosure	Identity diffusion

a) *Identity achievement: The individual has experienced the identity crisis. S/ he has explored the things and made commitments, and finally has built a sense of identity*. Accordingly, such individuals have done the most identity work of all the statuses.

b) *Moratorium: Such individuals are currently experiencing the identity crisis. They are actively exploring alternative commitments, but they have not been able to take decisions. In the process, they seem to face uncertainty though they also progress gradually towards identity formation. They are open minded and risk taking types.*

c) *Identity foreclosure: These people have already made commitments before experiencing an identity crisis. Absence of prior exploration is due to their conforming to the expectations of others. They* have made commitments to the existing set of goals, values, and beliefs. Thus, foreclosure is generally associated with some degree of closed-mindedness, smug self-satisfaction, and rigidity.

d) *Identity diffusion:* This state represents the relative lack of both exploration and commitment. The individual has not made a commitment and does not appear to make an effort for commitment. Further, s/he may or may not have experienced identity crisis. Thus, diffusion is marked by a lack of any sort of basic identity structure that might hold the person together and afford him or her a solid basis for making choices and following a consistent life path. Such individuals are low-functioning and seem to just go on in life.

Self Assessment Questions II

Fill in the blanks.

1) The idea of 'looking glass' self was given by …… .
2) Other people are the …….. in which we see ourselves.
3) The …….. is developed by Henri Tajfel in the year …….
4) According to social identity theory, there is a tendency to evaluate one's in group memberships ……..
5) According to social identity theory ……is the tendency to perceive the members of in-group as being different from each other.

6) …… is the tendency to perceive the members of the out group as being all the same.

7) According to Erikson, identity is best conceptualized as a single bipolar dimension, ranging from the pole of identity synthesis to the pole of identity ……..

8) A young person's acute dislike for almost all aspects of his or her background is an example of …… identity.

9) …… is the exclusive preoccupation with what seems to be unquestionably right or ideal.

10) ……. is the ability to be loyal to certain values in life.

11) An identity achieved individual is ……. on commitment and ……. on exploration.

12) An identity diffused individual is …… on commitment and …….. on exploration.

3.5 FAMILY AS A CONTEXT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Family is the primary unit of socialization. As a social system, the family can be thought of as a constellation of subsystems defined in terms of generations, gender and role. Divisions of labour amongst family members define specific sub units and attachments define other sub units. Grandparents form one sub-unit with specific work responsibilities in the family. The affectionate bond between the grandson and grandmother define another sub-unit within the family. Some subsystems are dyadic, like the mother-father subsystem; others are polyadic, like the two parents and the adolescent offspring sub unit. While, the typical imagery of a family is that of a father, a mother and one/two children, the reality is that families are diverse in nature. There are joint families, single parent families, step families, adoptive families, families with gay/lesbian parents, ethnic minority families and poor families. Further, we also have long distance families where both the parents stay at different places because of employment and children are with one parent. Each of the above family context has an impact on the child's development.

It may be noted here that the development of the child in a family is dependent on a set of intra familial as well as external factors.

Intra familial factors refer to those aspects of familial functioning in which child is directly involved –

a) Marital satisfaction between parents

b) Relationships amongst different generations of a family

c) Parenting styles

External factors include settings in which their parents live their lives and to which children do not have much access.

a) Parents' world of work

b) Parents' support networks (e.g. friends, membership in voluntary organizations etc.)

Furthermore, family as an institution is impacted by larger socio-economic factors, such as poverty and economic downturns, wars and inter-group hostilities, laws and policies pertaining to work policies, divorce, child care, child abuse in families, child rearing ideals and norms etc. It is also important to recognize that developmental contexts of human development are linked. Events at school and day care are reciprocally related to the child's environment at home. For example, repeated reports of misbehavior in school by the teachers can lead the parents to modify their parenting style from permissive to authoritarian. Similarly, marital discord between parents or illiteracy of parents can affect the child's progress in school.

Families are dynamic and evolving social institutions. Its members are constantly changing. They grow in age and different members cross different developmental milestones. Children encounter puberty, enter the labour force, leave homes and marry. Parents experience the life transitions such as retirement, empty nest syndromes and aging. Some life transitions are non normative like winning a lottery, severe illness or death, relocations etc.

3.5.1 Functions of Family

The family into which a child is born places the child in a community and in a society: newborns begin their social lives by acquiring the status and cultural heritage of their families, which in turn influences their opportunities and developmental outcomes. The family performs certain basic functions enabling it to survive and adapt (Berns, 2016).

a) *Reproduction* – The family ensures that the society's population will be maintained; that is, a sufficient number of children will be born and cared for to replace the members who die.

b) *Socialization/education* – The family ensures the transmission of society's values, beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and skills to the young.

c) *Assignment of social roles* –The family provides an identity for its offspring (racial, ethnic, religious, socio-economic, gender roles). Identity defines roles/responsibilities and privileges. A family may socialize its boys to become bread earners and the girls to become homemakers.

d) *Economic support* – The family provides shelter, nourishment and protection. Families earn/produce in order to ensure economic security for all its members.

e) *Nurturance/emotional support* – The family provides the child's first experience in social interaction. The interaction is intimate, nurturing and enduring, thus providing emotional security for the child. The family cares for its members when they are ill, hurt, or aging.

3.5.2 Parenting Styles

Parenting style encompasses the emotional climate in which child rearing behaviours are expressed. Baumarind (1968) have specified three types of parenting styles – permissive, authoritarian and authoritative.

a) *Permissive parenting* – These parents allow children to regulate their own activities as much as possible, avoid the exercise of control, and do not encourage children to obey externally. They make few demands on them for household responsibility and orderly behavior. They do not present themselves as active agents responsible for shaping or altering children's ongoing or future behaviours.

b) *Authoritarian parenting* – These parents attempt to shape, control and evaluate the behavior and attitudes of the child in accordance with an absolute standard of conduct. They view obedience as a virtue and favour punitive, forceful measures to curb self will where child's actions or beliefs conflict with what the parents think is right conduct.

c) *Authoritative parenting* – These parents value both autonomous self will of the child and disciplined conformity. They encourage verbal give and take and share with the child the reasoning behind policies. They use reason as well as parental power to achieve their objectives.

Maccoby and Martin (1983) further expanded the above classification. They have classified parenting styles in terms of dimensions of acceptance/ responsiveness (warmth/sensitivity) and demandingness/control (permissiveness/ restrictiveness). This results in four types of parenting styles –

a) Authoritarian parenting
b) Authoritative parenting
c) Permissive parenting
d) Uninvolved parenting

Table 3cT: Typology of Parenting Styles (Maccoby and Martin, 1983)

Dimensions of parenting	**High acceptance/ responsiveness**	**Low acceptance/ responsiveness**
High demandingness/ control	Authoritative	Authoritarian
Low demandingness/ control	Permissive	Uninvolved

According to some psychologists (Marano, 2008) and sociologists (Nelson, 2010), a new parenting style has emerged, variously referred to as 'invasive', 'helicopter', 'hovercraft' and 'over-involved' parenting. This kind of parenting is characterized by anxious control and is a consequence of social stress experienced by middle class parents today about the ability of their children to succeed in competitive scenario. In lower class parents, the anxiety is about the potential harm that can fall on their children because of the violent neighbourhoods or the temptation to lead a life of crime.

We can see below some of the effects of particular parenting styles on children's behavior in the Table below.

Table 3dT: Parenting Behaviour and Resultant Children's Behaviour

Parenting styles	Children's behaviours
Authoritative/Democratic ("Do it because….")	Self reliant, self controlled, content, cooperative
Authoritarian/adult centered ("Do It!")	Distrustful, discontented, withdrawn, fearful
Permissive/child centered ("Do you want to do it?")	Poor self reliance, impulsive, poor self control, hardly explorative
Uninvolved/insensitive and indifferent ("Do what you want")	Poor self control, low self esteem, deficits in attachments, cognition and emotional and social skills.

3.6 SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

While the one child norm is gradually catching up in more modern sectors of society, many families still have two or more children. Sibling relationships are special because usually siblings are close in age to each other and thus, have greater generational similarity. The perception of siblings for a person is affected by birth order (whether one is older/middle/youngest child), number of siblings, age spacing of siblings (large vs. very small age difference) and sex of siblings.

Any one of us who has a sibling knows that conflict is a common interaction style of siblings. But, there is more to sibling relationship than conflict, rivalry, and fights. Adolescent sibling relationship includes helping, sharing, teaching and playing. Siblings can act as emotional supports, rivals and communication partners. They usually know each other really well and this intimacy can be used to provide support or tease and undermine each other, depending on the situation. In some instances, siblings are stronger socializing influences on the adolescent than parents and peers are. Someone closer in age to the adolescent – such as a sibling – might be able to understand the adolescent's problems and communicate more effectively than parents can. The more egalitarian nature of sibling relationship allows them to discuss peers, romantic feelings, sexual experiences, extra curricular activities, hobbies and media. The younger sibling models the behavior of the older siblings. Supportive sibling relationships can buffer the negative effects of stressful circumstances in an adolescent's life.

What happens when parents favour one sibling over other? One recent study of 384 adolescent sibling pairs revealed that 65 per cent of their mothers and 70 per cent of their fathers showed favouritism towards one sibling (Shebloski, Conger, and Widaman, 2005). Parental favouritism often creates deep seated feelings of sibling rivalry, lower self esteem and sadness in less favoured sibling. A combination of ineffective parenting (low supervision, poor problem solving skills, parent-adolescent conflict) and high sibling conflict (hitting, stealing, rivalry) can be detrimental to adolescent development.

What are sibling relationships like as adolescence extends into youth? Most siblings spend far less time with each other in youth than they did in adolescence. Mixed feelings about siblings are still present in this stage. However, as siblings move out of their homes for education/work purposes and sibling contact become

more optional, conflicted sibling relationships in youth become less emotionally intense.

3.7 INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

One of the central characteristics of families is its intergenerational character. All families have at least two generations living together – parents and children. With respect to intergenerational relationships, there are two important aspects to keep in mind:

a) The way intergenerational relationships in a family are structured depend on extra-familial factors such as ecological and cultural factors.

b) There are two cardinal dynamics of the relationship between parents and children. One is the parenting style characterized by varying degrees of parental control, structure, affection and responsiveness vis-à-vis children; other is the child's striving for attachment and autonomy vis-à-vis parents.

Kagistcibasi (1996) provides an influential analysis of self-family-society interface. It situates family within the macro systemic ecological context by examining its links with social-structural-economic factors. As these factors vary across time and societies, families and intergenerational relationships vary too. She has proposed three models of family that have implications for parent-child relationships.

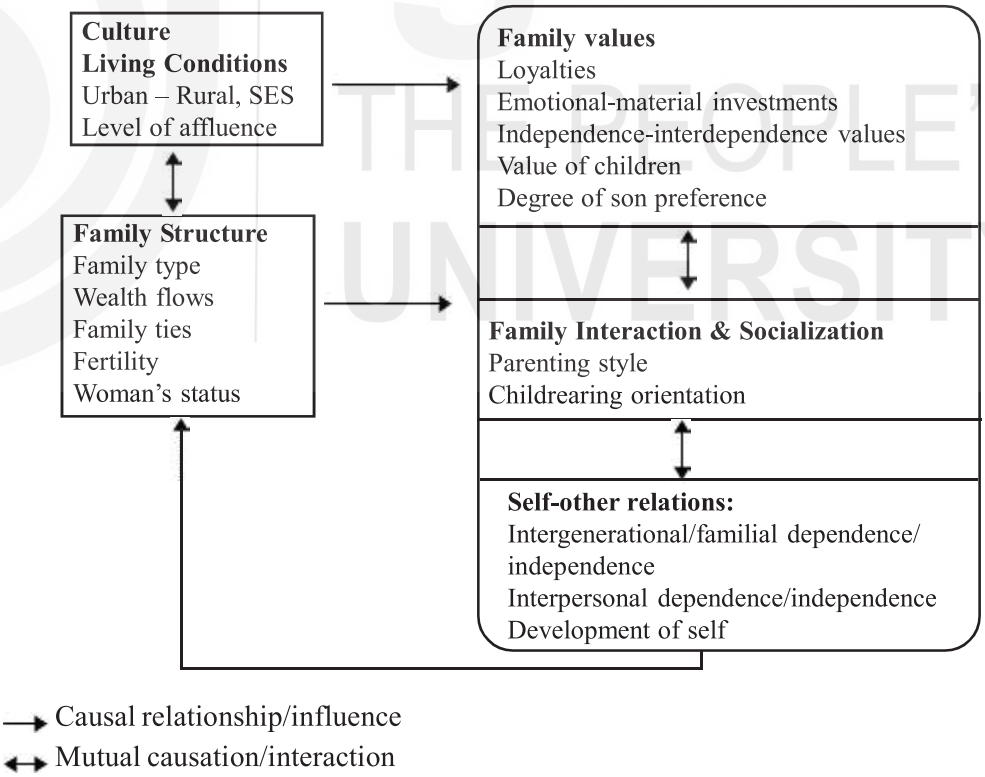


Figure 3bF: General Model of Family in Context (Kagitcibasi, 1996)

In the general theoretical framework, the context is construed mainly in terms of the culture and the living conditions of the family and is seen as an influencing component. Culture is constructed as mainly an individualistic or as collectivist. It refers to the existing culture base underlying the socioeconomic-structural factors and the family system. Living conditions include urban-rural residence,

socioeconomic development levels and subsistence/affluence characteristics of the family. Family structure comprises the structural-demographic variables, such as nuclear or joint families, fertility rates, woman's intra family status, which are important in affecting family functioning. The family system entails two interacting subsystems, socialization values and family interaction. They show variation along the dimension of emphasis put on the individual or the group and on the economic or psychological value of children for parents and the family. Family interaction is differentiated in terms of parenting orientations and the resultant self-other relations and the development of the self. Parenting orientations are akin to those used by Baumrind (1968): authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. The resultant relational/separate self can be considered to be the final product of the overall system. The general theory is not a linear one but is, rather, dynamic and interactive, involving mutual causal relations and feedback loops in addition to direct causal routes.

3.7.1 Family Model of Interdependence

An ideal type of such model is commonly found in rural/agrarian traditional societies characterized by patrilineal family structures. Patrilineal familial structure is one in which inheritance of property, rights, titles are passed on through the male relative i.e. from the grandfather to the father and then to the son. Families are structurally or functionally extended units. Functionally extended means that even though the families are nuclear, they function as if they were joint in tasks related to production, eating, celebrating festivals, rearing children. This is made possible by the close proximity of immediate kin spanning different generations. Given the low affluence levels and agricultural styles, such shared work is highly adaptive for survival. An economic/utilitarian value is attached to the children, which is a value derived from their material contributions. In the traditional societies of the past and present, the constant developmental emphasis for adolescent persons is to learn and become competent to share the burden of family maintenance as soon as possible. An adult offspring is the main sources of old age security for his elderly parents, in the absence of social security systems and old age pension. There is a high son preference in a patriarchal context because they are more reliable sources of old age security. Such a family structure also entails high female fertility which implies that women are required to bear more children so as to ensure the survival of enough children, and particularly sons, in the face of high infant mortality. Having sons also increases the woman's intra family status, which is initially quite low, because she is, by definition, an outsider to the patrilineage at the beginning of the marriage.

A collectivist ethos is present at the societal and familial levels. The child's obligation to the parent is ensured through an obedience-oriented socialization and authoritarian parenting. This socialization orientation stresses on family loyalties, control and dependence/obedience of the child. When socialized this way, a child grows up to be a "loyal" adult offspring who would uphold family needs and would invest in his/her elderly parents, whereas an "independent" child might be more likely to look after his/her own individual interests. The resultant familial and interpersonal relations in the family model of interdependence are characterized by interdependence along both material and emotional dimensions. The relational self typically develops in this type of family system. People high on this kind of self agree with these statements:

1) My family is my top priority.
2) I feel very closely attached to my family.
3) My relationship with my family makes me feel peaceful and secure.

(Related Self-in-Family scale; Kagitscibasi, 2017)

3.7.2 Family Model of Independence

An ideal type of such model is commonly found in the western, industrial, urban/ suburban middle class society characterized by an individualistic ethos. In this model, there is independence of the family from other families and of its members from one another. It is distinguished by the separateness of the generations and both emotional and material investments channeled towards the child, rather than to the older generation. The unit is the individuated nuclear family. There is affluence providing old age security, woman's higher intra family status, low son preference and low fertility. In this context, especially with mass education, having children entails economic costs, not assets. In the absence of children's economic value, their psychological value comes to the fore. Children are valued for the pleasures and satisfactions that parents get by bring them up.

There is less control in childrearing; it entails a relatively permissive parenting compared with the authoritarian parenting of the model of interdependence. Autonomy orientation is stressed in accordance with the prevalent individualistic ideology. Independence and self reliance are valued in socio-cultural-economic context where intergenerational material dependencies are minimal. Elderly parents don't depend on their adult offspring for their livelihood; they have other sources of income and services in old age. This type of socialization is conducive to both intergenerational and interpersonal independence. It engenders the development of the independent, separate self. People high on this kind of self tend to agree with such statements:

1) I feel independent of my family.
2) I do not have to think the way my family does.

(Autonomous Self-in Family Scale, Kagitscibasi, 2017)

3.7.3 Family Model of Psychological Interdependence

This model differs from, but nevertheless overlaps in some characteristics with the other two prototypical models. The distinguishing mark of the first model of total interdependence (section 2.7.1) is familial and individual interdependence in both material and emotional dimensions. The prototype of independence (section 2.7.2) is distinguished by independence in both familial and individual levels in both material and emotional dimensions. The third model, however, manifests interdependence in the emotional realm in both family and individual levels but entails independence in both levels in the material realm.

This model is more typical of the developed/urban areas of the world with collectivist cultural base. What is being witnessed here is structural and economic change alongside cultural continuity. There is decreased importance of patrilineage and the corresponding increased woman's status, lower fertility and lower son preference. The material value of children is low, i.e., they are not seen important assets but as costs. But there are sustained psychological/

emotional interdependencies between generations. Emotional investments of young adults go both towards their elderly parents and towards their children. Socialization values continue to emphasize family/group loyalties; however, individual loyalties are emerging as well. This has implications for child rearing practices. Alongside parental control, reflecting the continued importance of closely knit family/human bonds, there is room in this family system for individual loyalties and autonomy as well. Autonomy emerges in the family system of interdependence for two reasons. First, given the decreased material dependencies of the parents on the adult offspring, the child's autonomy is no longer seen as a threat to family livelihood. Second, with changing lifestyles autonomy becomes an asset for success in school and urban employment that require active decision making, agency, and innovation rather than obedience. Parents feel unsure of their ability to guide and mentor their children in the new economy and young are thrown more on their own powers to develop their roadmap of life. The self that emerges out of such a matrix of factors is – autonomous-related self. It integrates the two basic human needs of agency and communion. People who are high on this self agree with these statements:

1) One should not hesitate to express his/her own ideas, even if he/she values his/her family.
2) A person may be very close to his/her family and at the same time can make his/her decisions.
3) A person can feel both independent and emotionally connected to his/her family.

(Autonomous-Related Self-in-Family scale; Kagitscibasi, 2017)

Urban India is going through such a phase of progressive modernization. Bansal (2012), in her research with Indian youth found that there is a mix of family environments in the urban middle class Indian homes. Few are traditional and orthodox, more demanding of achievement and controlling of sociability, while others have a distinct trend of liberal home atmosphere with greater freedom to children to take decisions in matters that concern them. The majority of young men and women experienced considerable freedom in their families to explore their attributes and capacities and decide on the course of their lives. The family relationships were stretching to allow for greater consideration of the child's and particularly the adolescents' specific wishes, abilities and inclinations in the educational, occupational and social sphere. There was a greater recognition amongst the parents that the child may function in a more independent way, thus the personal identity of the growing child was responded to much more. Research also highlighted that where there were demands of subservience to parental expectations for achievement and conduct beyond personal capacity and preference of the child, little open dialogue between parents and child and control through emotional means, the psychological well being of the young person was compromised. A heavy emphasis on conformity to parental values and expectations of specific kinds of achievements and conduct often led to lack of initiative, suppression of desires and depressive feelings. The Indian youth's strivings for a measure of autonomy and individuation lead not so much to "rebellion" against the parental authority and separation from parents, but to continuous inner search to reconcile in some way autonomy and relatedness.

In a changing world, the adult authority is under unprecedented challenge. The adults are caught between the urge to become peers of their children; alternatively

to take on an authority position and impose their own ways of living on their children. Both are dangerous trends because both prevent the youth from coming into their own. The youth cannot test their own worth, their own strength when all they can push against is an adult society more than ready to give way, to act more youthful than even befits youth. Similarly, when the older generation refuses to make place for the coming generation and doesn't allow it freedom to make their own mistakes, the youth feels caught in a matrix of control and obedience. What youth probably resents the most is the paternalistic withholding of a freedom of experimentation through which they can find their own combination of what to retain from traditions and what to take from the new spheres. It is the responsibility of the older generation to meet the questions and concerns of the younger generation with clarity and conviction gained from the dignity of one's life. The young will always, covertly and overtly, mock and flout the traditions of the previous generation; at the same time, secretly and unwittingly repeat elements of it in their own times. The old will be secretly aware of the limited relevance of their lifestyle but also wish to offer something more lasting to the coming generations. The old are also envious of the opportunities, freedoms and potentials available to the young. This inbuilt ambivalence between generations cannot be wished away and must be borne.

3.8 PATTERNS OF INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS – SOLIDARITY OR CONFLICT?

What characterizes relationships between parents and children? Agreement, positive feelings, support and reciprocity or arguments, negative sentiments and conflicts?

A theory of intergenerational solidarity was developed by Bengston and colleagues (Bengston, Olander and Haddad, 1976). This model tends to emphasize on consensus, goals of togetherness and belongingness and preservation of family norms and tradition. It has five dimensions –

a) *Structural solidarity* – Reflected in the physical proximity between parents and children. Do they live in the same house, same city, same country?

b) *Associational solidarity* – Indicated by the frequency of contact between parents and children through email/telephone/facetiming or video calls.

c) *Affectual solidarity* – Reflected in emotional closeness and bonding between the two generations.

d) *Normative solidarity* – Assessed by agreement on familial values.

e) *Functional solidarity* – It has two aspects. One, giving financial/instrumental/emotional support to and second, receiving the same from parents.

Critics, such as Luscher and Pillemer (1998), have argued against the "positive bias" of the intergenerational solidarity model. Their objection is that if solidarity is the main feature of family, then there is no space for conflict and change in the family. They highlight another pole of spectrum of intergenerational relationship which is ambivalence, conflict and hostility.

Giarrusso, Feng, & Bengtson (2005) have used two dimensions to assess the quality of intergenerational relationships – intimacy and conflict. Intimacy is assessed by questions such as: How often do you tell your mother/father everything that is on your mind?, How often do you share your secrets and private feelings with your mother/father?, How often do you talk to your mother/father about things that you don't want others to know? Conflict is assessed by questions such as: How often do you and your mother/father disagree and quarrel?, How often do you and your mother/father argue with each other?, How often do you and your mother/father get upset with and mad with each other? Cross classifying these two dichotomous indices generated four types of relationships: amicable, civil, ambivalent, disharmonious. A relationship is ambivalent if the person reports a great amount of both intimacy and conflict. An amicable relationship exists if only intimacy is high and conflict is low. Disharmonious is a relationship with a high measure of conflict and low level of intimacy. And a civil relation is low on both sub-scales of intimacy and conflict.

Table 3eT: Patterns of Intergenerational Relationships (Giarrusso etal. 2005)

Dimensions	High on conflict	Low on conflict
High on intimacy	Ambivalence	Amicable
Low on intimacy	Disharmonious	Civil

A study done by Clarke, Preston, Raksin, & Bengtson (1999) identified most common themes of conflict between aging parents and their adult offsprings (who have children of their own). Six common types of conflicts emerged:

a) *Communication and interaction style* – Examples include: he is always yelling", "she is critical", "she jumps to the conclusion", "the way my father treats my mother".

b) *Habits and lifestyles* – Examples includes disagreements over dressing, hair style, educational/occupational choices, use of alcohol or drugs, quality of life.

c) *Child rearing practices and values* – Examples include conflicts over methods/philosophy of parenting such as number and spacing of children, dimensions of permissiveness/control, rules/expectations, loving/unloving, forgiving/resenting, support/involvement.

d) *Politics, Religion and Ideology* – Refers to disagreements about religious, moral, ethical, and political attitudes.

e) *Work orientation* – Differences concerning priority to and investment in work/performance, advancement or status (too much or too less).

f) *Household maintenance* – Conflict over maintaining and improving family living environment.

The two most frequently cited intergenerational conflicts were – problems in communication and interaction style and disagreements over habits and lifestyles, each reported by 32% of all respondents, combining responses of parent and adult child generations. There were some contrasts between generations in the frequency distribution of conflicts. Parents most frequently reported differences over habits and lifestyles from their adult offspring (38%). On the other hand,

adult children reported issues of communication and interaction (34%) as the most frequently occurring conflict with their parents.

Self Assessment Questions III Match the following:	
a. Parents who avoid exercising control and placing demands on children	Autonomous-relational self
b. Parents who use reason as well as parental power to achieve their objectives	Authoritarian parenting
c. Parents who attempt to shape, control and evaluate the behavior and attitudes of the child in accordance with an absolute standard of conduct	Over-involved parenting
d. Parents who are anxiously control their children	Permissive parenting
e. Economic value of children, son preference, obedience-oriented socialization and authoritarian parenting	Ambivalence
f. Psychological value of children, low son preference, permissive parenting	Disharmonious
g. Family model where independence and interdependence co-exist	Relational self
h. Self that develops in family model of interdependence	Amicable
i. Self that develops in family model of independence	Family model of psychological interdependence
j. Self that develops in family model of psychological interdependence	Autonomous self
k. High intimacy low conflict pattern of intergenerational relationships	Civil
l. High conflict high intimacy pattern of intergenerational relationship	Authoritative parenting
m. Low intimacy low conflict pattern of intergenerational relationship	Family model of independence
n. High conflict low intimacy pattern of intergenerational relationship	Family model of interdependence

3.9 YOUTH, AUTONOMY AND RELATEDNESS

Youth is often a period characterized by conflict, rebellion and resistance against the older generation. Youth is embroiled in the struggle of becoming more independent and self directed. Blos (1967) posits a second individuation-

separation phase in adolescence. He stated, "Individuation implies that the growing person takes greater responsibility for what he does and who he is rather than depositing this responsibility on the shoulders of those under whose influence and tutelage he has grown up" (p.168). They often judge their similarity and difference from their families by how much they carry on parents' expectations of achievement and success, whether they follow the family's religious traditions, whom they choose as friends, to date, to marry, what sexual values they adopt, what are their attitudes towards saving vs. spending, what is appropriate feminine/masculine behaviour, how do they relate to the larger world. The watershed issues of identity around which an adolescent tests his/her sameness and difference from the parental images can be many: vocational plans, leisure and pastimes, religious beliefs, political values, caste/class orientation, sexuality related attitudes, friendship, dating, marriage, parenting, gender roles, and work/life balance. These become the negotiation points for separation-individuation during adolescence and youth which leads towards a sense of adult identity.

Even when the adolescent is becoming different from the internalized parental images, he/she is relating with the parent. A young college woman who gets involved with a man from a different religion or a young man who decides to drop out of college are quite likely to imagine what their parents will think of this? Should they tell them about their activities? How will they handle parental disapproval? This is an internal debate, a discussion with parents who are inside the self, who seem to be insisting that one may not change, may not be different (Josselson, 1980).

Individuation, autonomy and identity formation are interlinked. Much of the early theory conceptualized adolescence as a period in which psychological independence was won by detachment from parents and replacement of parents with peers and romantic involvements (Freud, 1958; Fountain, 1961; Blos, 1962). Therefore autonomy or individuation is viewed as the opposite of, or a move away from, connectedness or relatedness to parents. Mounting research evidence, however, led to a revision in this theory. It has become clear that adolescents do not abandon or disown their parents as a necessary condition for growth (Douvan and Adelson, 1966; Offer, Ostrov, and Howard, 1981). Separation-individuation in adolescence requires a revision of relationships with parents, a revision that nevertheless preserves connection. While many times, it's the fear of loss of love or the guilt of disappointing parents which keeps the youth away from possible transgressions, on other occasions it's the feeling of anxiety of trying something new. Becoming like parents and excluding exploration of alternative models and relationships help them feel right and secure. The challenge of this developmental phase is to gain a feeling of individuality in the context of an ongoing relationship to parents. What is critical is that the young person has some choice in the creation of a self, he/she is able to function autonomously but in relation to the parents. A view on autonomy that differs from the perspective of 'autonomy as separation' is 'autonomy as agency'. Adherents of this view (Kagitcibasi, 1996; Ryan, 1993; Ryan and Deci, 2000) use notions like internal locus of control, self determination, strong sense of confidence, ability to function independently, and competence to describe autonomy. In fact, the paradoxical needs for individuation and intimacy, with their accompanying fears of isolation and fusion, continue throughout the life cycle.

3.10 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit, we discussed the concept of identity which refers to a personal sense of who one is. Identity is socially constructed. Social categories like gender, class, caste, nationality, ethnicity etc. significantly impact our identities.

Identity requires recognition and affirmation by the significant other. This idea is encapsulated in the "looking glass self" notion given by sociologist T.H. Cooley. Identity also has a spatial and temporal context. It is dependent on the situation, time and place. Even though identity is situational in nature, it gives a person a sense of being the same over time and across various roles.

According to Erik H. Erikson, a lifespan psychologist, identity formation is the normative developmental task of the adolescence and youth stage. Identity formation relies on the psychic mechanism of integrating identifications with roles and characteristics of significant people in our lives (parents, peers and leader figures). The healthy outcome of the stage of identity formation is integrated identity and the unhealthy outcomes are identity confusion, negative identity and totalistic identity.

The social identity theory (SIT) posits that one tends to evaluate one's social identity more positively by comparing between the in group and the out group.

Marcia extended Erikson's ideas on identity and formulated four identity statuses: identity achievement, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium and identity diffusion, based on the two dimensions of exploration and commitment.

Family serves several functions for the growing child in a society. Parenting styles influence the psychological functioning of the child. Sibling relationships constitute an important part of child's life. They are characterized by both conflict and support and change over time.

Kagitscibasi provides three models of family functioning – Family model of psychological independence, interdependence and psychological interdependence. Each of these family models is found in different kinds of ecological-cultural contexts and gives rise to different kinds of self identities in members of these families.

There has been a debate over the nature of intergenerational relationships. Is it solidarity or is it conflict that characterizes such relationships? Evidence is available for both. Youth needs strong, yet flexible, parental authority to test its worth. It tests itself in terms of how similar or different they are from parental generation. Separation-individuation in adolescence requires a revision of relationships with parents, a revision that nevertheless preserves connection.

3.11 KEY WORDS

Youth : is defined by the WHO as comprising of 15 – 24 years of age group. The National Youth Policy of India (2014) defines the youth population as those in the age group of 15-29 years.

Psychosocial moratorium : is a permissive phase granted by the society to the adolescent and youth to experiment with roles (such as student/worker/leader/friend/lover) and self images (such as nerdy/obedient/rebel/nobody) without being confirmed as a certain 'type'. In modern societies, the period of moratorium coincides with secondary level schooling and college education.

Symbolic interactionism : a sociological social psychological perspective, states that people behave towards objects not on the basis of their concrete properties but on the basis of the meanings these objects have for them.

Identity foreclosure : refers to the status where people have already made commitments before experiencing an identity crisis.

Permissive parenting : is characterized by parental behaviours which allow children to regulate their own activities as much as possible, avoid the exercise of control, and do not encourage children to obey externally.

Authoritarian parenting : is characterized by parental behaviours which attempt to shape, control and evaluate the behavior and attitudes of the child in accordance with an absolute standard of conduct.

Authoritative parenting : refers to the parenting style that value both autonomous self will of the child and disciplined conformity.

Individuation : implies that the growing person takes greater responsibility for what he does and who he is rather than depositing this responsibility on the shoulders of those under whose influence and tutelage he has grown up (Blos, 1967, p.168).

3.12 ANSWERS TO SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Self Assessment Questions I

Answers: 1) False; 2) True; 3) True; 4) False; 5) False; 6) True

Self Assessment Questions II

Answers: 1) T.H.Cooley, 2) Mirror, 3) Social Identity Theory, 1979, 4) Positively, 5) In-Group Differentiation, 6) Out Group Homogeneity, 7) Confusion, 8. Negative, 9) Totalitarianism, 10) Fidelity, 11) High, High, 12) Low, Low.

Self Assessment Questions III

Answers: a) permissive parenting; b) authoritarian parenting; c) authoritative parenting; d) over-involved parenting; e) family model of interdependence; f) family model of independence; g) family model of psychological interdependence; h) relational self; i) autonomous self; j) autonomous-relational self; k) amicable; l) ambivalence; m) civil; n) disharmonious

3.13 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1) Reflect on the following statement "Identity is a paradoxical experience".
2) Discuss how identity is a psycho-social construct.
3) Why does identity become a salient issue for youth?
4) What is the role of society in identity formation in youth stage?
5) How do power dynamics operate in identity formation?
6) Explain the self-family-society interface.
7) According to you, what kind of family model is applicable to the urban Indian scenario?
8) Is it solidarity or conflict that characterizes intergenerational relationships between parents and children?
9) "Youth don't need parents". Evaluate this statement in the light of separation-individuation theory of adolescent development.

Reflective Exercise

Watch the Hindi film 'Tamasha' released in 2015. Reflect on the depictions of the following notions that you have studied in the context of the life of the male protagonist Ved –

a) Psychosocial moratorium
b) Identity crisis
c) Social influences on identity
d) Role of parents

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UNIT 4 EDUCATION, CAREER AND PEER GROUP*

Structure

4.1 Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Education and Youth Identity

4.4 Macro Influences on Educational Institutions

4.5 Educational Institutions as Contexts of Identity Development

4.5.1 Impact of education on Identity Development

4.6 Work and Career

4.6.1 Career Choice and Orientations

4.6.2 Workplace Identity and Relationships

4.7 Peers

4.7.1 Socializing Mechanisms in Peer Group

4.7.2 Peer Dynamics

4.8 Significance of Peers to Social Development

4.8.1 Social Competence

4.9 Cross Sex Friendships: Can Boys and Girls be Friends?

4.10 Transition to Adulthood

4.11 Let Us Sum Up

4.12 Key Words

4.13 Answers to Self Assessment Questions

4.14 Unit End Questions

4.15 References

4.16 Suggested Readings

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through the Unit, you will be able to,

- Learn the role of educational institutions of school and college in the formation of youth identity;
- Explain the process of career decision making and work identity; and
- Explain the role of peer group as the context of socialization for youth.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions and peer groups are two important socialization settings for the youth. They provide social experiences, knowledge, skills and attitudes that shape the individual's personalities and prepare them for the adult roles of

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work and marriage. Most societies initiate their young ones in some form of formal educational system once they develop the abilities to learn. Peer groups and friendships contribute to the social, cognitive and emotional development of the individuals, beyond schools and families. All these – schooling and education, peer group, work have an impact on the identity development of the youth.

4.3 EDUCATION AND YOUTH IDENTITY

The word 'Education' comes from the Latin word e-ducere, mean to "lead out". According to Wikipedia Encyclopedia, education in the broadest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense education is a process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another. This happens through the process of education at schools, colleges and other educational institutions.

According to Erik Erikson (1963), the identity theorist, the individual is initiated in the learning of knowledge, values and skills required for one's livelihood by the elders in one's social environment in the childhood stage. In this stage the child applies himself to the tasks of the society in order to become its productive member. So, a child in the agrarian/ pastoral/ industrial society will learn the trades of his own milieu. The elders and older peers around the child provide rewards for his hardwork and skill and punishments and ridicule for failures. Erikson posits that the child may develop feelings of inferiority if he feels he does not meet upto the requirement of the job that is expected of him/her because of emotional, physical or intellectual lack. The sense of *competence* emerges from the balance of hardwork and inferiority. Competence is the ability to feel ready to complete tasks well and to apply one's intelligence, skill and energy to some undertaking. Ahead in life, the sense of competence becomes a basis for a firm sense of identity.

According to the Ashram theory in Hinduism, the human life is divided into four periods. The brahmacharya stage is the first stage of life and focuses on attaining education. The Upanayan ceremony is considered to be the start of the educational phase during which the Guru (teacher) gave his/her mantra (advice) to the student and marks the beginning of the educational journey. In the Gurukul system, the student would leave his/her house and live with the guru, acquiring knowledge of the world, practicing self discipline, working to earn dakshina (alms) to be paid to the guru and living a life of Dharma (righteousness, morals and duties). It lays down the foundation of the subsequent growth of the individual.

Education serves various ends and purposes in different societies in line with their own visions of how the growing individual should contribute to society. For instance, a few nations make military training compulsory for all its youth above a specific age in order to instill in them values of nationalism and national service. Likewise, there is an ongoing debate on - Is education about preparing the youth for social leadership, civic engagement and political critique or is it to prepare them for job? The focus of education has vacillated between 'employability' to 'employment', from 'knowledge' to 'information' and from 'general learning and awareness' to 'job oriented skills and technology'.

Unfortunately, education has become synonymous with literacy and qualifications/degrees. However, it is much more than that. It entails a holistic growth of an individual involving development of body, enrichment of mind, sublimation of emotions and the illumination of the spirit.

4.4 MACRO INFLUENCES ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

In most civilized societies of the world, school is the first formal institution of learning. It is an important part of the context within which an individual's identity is shaped. The enormously high educational demands of the technological society have resulted in prolongation of education beyond school. Large number of adolescents undergoes higher educational studies in colleges and universities after completing school education. The nature of educational experience that a child receives in an institution is contingent upon a number of factors such as ease of access to quality education, diversity of peers, teacher-student ratio, nature of curriculum, use of pedagogical tools, infrastructural facilities etc. These factors are influenced by myriad political, economic and social aspects of a particular society.

a) **Political Ideology –** The nature of state and its ideology impacts the educational policies and the functioning of educational institutions. A military state like Israel imparts militarized education in schools. Many teachers and especially principals in such schools are often retired military officers. Schools glorify military heroes and conflicts. There are practices such as asking young children to send gift packages to soldiers, especially on holidays, expressing their gratitude in personal letters. Preparing youth for military service is a core educational goal. Another example of the way political ideology affects educational curriculum is the political interference in India in writing of history textbooks. In order to gain legitimacy for a certain brand of nationalism, the past is twisted, distorted and presented in a way that is bent in a particular ideological direction. Much contest has happened over the ressurection of a historical figure, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, popularly known as Veer Savarkar, as a patriot and hero of Indian history in recent times in the textbooks. Savarkar wrote the hugely controversial monograph "Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?" Attempts to see Savarkar in black and white terms as either heroic or monstrous depend on an ideological reading of his life from a vantage point within or, conversely, in opposition to Hindu nationalism.

   Democratic states committed to building an educated and aware citizenry have policies like the Right to Education Act in India according to which free and compulsory education is to be given to all children of India between the age group of 6 and 14 years ensuring access to education to all children.

b) **Economics –** The budgetary allocation of funds for education by the state is influenced by values of equality of opportunity, concepts of knowledge and skills required for the future and the affordability of programs and curricula. In India, there are government aided schools and privately funded schools. There is little governmental control over private schools which often result in high fees creating barriers in access for children from

disadvantaged sections to such schools. However, there is a provision for children of economically weak section to gain admission in private schools in the EWS (economically weaker section) category and for the children belonging to Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes, non-creamy layer Other Backward Classes, differently abled and transgender in the Disadvantaged Group category. The government has various kinds of schemes and projects in the school sector like the mid day meal scheme, special schools for tribal children, schools of excellence like the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas aimed at providing quality education to all sections of children. In the higher education space, the thrust is increasingly towards setting up more universities and centres of excellence with an initial government funding and thereafter, making them self sustainable. There is a move towards privatization of higher education which involves allowing the universities and institutions to raise their own money, cutting down on government grant money and encouraging setting up of private universities. Moves towards privatization of education are witnessing resistance from teachers' and students' associations because it is likely to lead to vocationalization of education, thereby, eroding its critical- reflective edge and also make education unaffordable for large masses due to high fees.

c) **Diversity –** Educational settings are microcosms of the societies in which they are embedded. Highly competitive societies create elite educational institutions which are relatively fewer in number and offer admission to selected ones based on merit defined narrowly in terms of academic scores. Societies that promote multiculturalism and inclusive policies have diverse educational settings where people of different religions, physical abilities, linguistic resources, genders, sexualities and ethnicities create a heterogeneous and dynamic academic community enriched with variety of experiences and outlooks.

4.5 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AS CONTEXTS OF IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

School, college and university provides the intellectual and social experiences and inputs from which young persons develop the skills, knowledge, values, interests and attitudes that shape their personality and their ability to perform adult roles. The educational curriculum, authority structure, opportunities for exploration and decision making, social experiences with peers exerts decisive influences on identity formation. Few critical features of the educational environments that affect identity development are discussed below:

a) **Pedagogy and learning tasks –** The educational curriculum, pedagogy and learning outcomes are important influences on identity development. Their focus should be on preparing learners for 21st century competencies and skills which include creativity, innovative problem solving, critical thinking and negotiation skills. Research about how individuals learn provides valuable insights into the ways different pedagogies support learners in mastering twenty-first century skills and competencies, and how best to engage and prepare them for a complex and everchanging future. Saavedra and Opfer (2012) suggest nine principles for teaching these skills: (1) make learning relevant to the 'big picture'; (2) teach across the

disciplines; (3) encourage understanding in different real-life contexts; (4) encourage transfer of learning; (5) teach how to 'learn to learn' or metacognition; (6) address misunderstandings directly; (7) promote teamwork; (8) use technology to support learning; and (9) foster students' creativity.

New ways of learning and knowing are sought by youth: ways that combine action with reflection, ways that fuse engagement in the world with understanding of it. It is commonly observed that students enthusiastically involve themselves in non-academic assignments and field placements because more than classroom teaching, these real life concrete experiences fulfill their needs of the joyful learning, relevance, applicability and personal meaningfulness of knowledge. New perspectives, latest trends and infrastructural facilities when made accessible allow the students to explore new options and find their own kind of work interests. For instance, many engineering and management institutions across country are nurturing the entrepreneurial interests of many young people by providing them funding to do innovative research. Such infrastructural supports channelize youthful energy towards paths that defy the safety of time worn vocations and secure income.

b) **Opportunities of exploration** – A crucial experience involved in identity formation during adolescence is psychosocial moratorium. Psychosocial moratorium is a period "during which the individual through free role experimentation may find a niche in some section of his society" (Erikson, 1995, pp. 224–225). During adolescence, individuals are faced with the urgency of making choices and decisions that lead them to life-long commitments. Educational institutions offer several experiences that support or inhibit the adolescents' and youth's needs of exploration. The curriculum driven, information dissemination approach and examination oriented nature of Indian educational system doesn't encourage the students to select and combine courses of their choices, get excited about ideas and challenge their taken-for granted assumptions. Instead it only further strengthens the vocational outlook towards education which is ingrained through family (Bansal, 2012). When education becomes a training ground for future work role which is chosen too early in one's life and is narrowly defined, it poses certain dangers to the identity development. For one, the budding identity of an individual can prematurely get fixed on being nothing but a 'good little worker', which by no means is all what he/she can become. Secondly, quite early, the person is sucked into a specialized field which may not be in line with his/her true interests and abilities. It doesn't allow the individual to find out what one likes to do through exploration. Hence, for young people studies became a ritual to be 'performed' without any inherent meaning and beauty. A culture of "craft idiocy" develops which makes a person a slave of one's work role with little scope for innovation and imagination. Thirdly, excessive emphasis to prove oneself better than one's peers on the narrowly defined scale of success and achievement often preoccupies the individual to such an extent that (s)he might lose his/her right or capacity to take risks and try the unconventional paths (Bansal, 2012). Education doesn't assist youth in broadening one's life experiences and relating one's life to the community or to humanity. Rather, one is encouraged to work for oneself.

Youth like choices in courses of study and extra curricular activities. They also want to learn by designing and constructing actual solutions to real life problems. Educational environments which expose students to a greater range of different ideological viewpoints and belief systems facilitate exploration of alternatives and making commitments (Roker and Banks, 1993). Adams and Fitch (1983) studied possible psychological environment effects on identity status and ego stage development of university students. They found that educational institutions offering critical and analytic awareness of societal issues facilitate identity development through creating conditions for "exploring and broadening one's perspective." Collaborative learning opportunities prepare learners for real-life social and employment situations and is learner-centred. Learners benefit from group interactions through exposure to differing points of view and diverse backgrounds. In such situations, learners must defend their ideas and articulate their positions. They learn to assimilate, process and synthesize ideas and to engage one other by supplementing and revising existing knowledge. Interaction with diversity of peers in terms of region, religion, socio-economic status, language, ability, nationality, sexual orientation help the young to develop a holistic identity. Especially during higher education, youth confronts the diversity of cultural behaviours, beliefs and attitudes at close quarters. These differences are till now at the periphery of one's existence because the family and/or the school peers are more homogenous groups. But in college, the contradictions in values, living patterns and attitudes with peers are experienced more closely. Higher education, then, is a potential opportunity to explore reality outside home and deal with self-other differences. All this promotes social awareness, psychological sensibilities together with occupational competence.

c) **Environment of support and relationality** – Adams, Ryan, & Keating (2000) examined the impact of family and educational environments on university students' identity formation and ego strength. Their findings suggested that supportive educational environments and democratic families positively correlate with ego strength and facilitate identity formation during the college or university experience. In other words, support systems embodied in democratic family environments and supportive educational environments help "adolescents feel comfortable to more fully explore their identity options" without being "pressured to adhere to certain values by the school or from their parents" (Adams & Palijan, 2004, p. 240). Students also feel supported if education is organized around their own journey. Personalized learning opportunities where individuals feel a sense of wonder, approach problems in their own way and grasp ideas at their own pace helps individuals to invest in their learning and make it a habit, rather than viewing it as an activity forced upon them (Leadbeater and Wong, 2010). Effective twenty-first century teaching requires creation of regular opportunities for learners to select the types of experiences they want to further their own learning. A supportive environment inspires individuals to take control of their learning (Hampson, Patton and Shanks, 2011). Teachers can foster involvement and interest of learners by encouraging their confidence in their abilities in specific tasks. Giving individual attention to students and recognizing and praising their achievements go a long way in building competence in them.

The quality of peer relationships is also very crucial for formation of identity amongst adolescents and youth. The extent to which they feel accepted, liked by and integrated in the peer group affects their self esteem.

d) **Authority structure and decision making –** The organizational structure of educational institutions often upholds tradition and stifles imagination and initiative. There is a strong pull towards maintaining status quo around prescriptive roles and hierarchies. It is important to obey as, to obey is to respect; to question is to err. Positive youth development happens when students' associations, initiative groups and self government are encouraged in institutions as they promote personal responsiveness and responsibility of the individual in choice and action. Thinking on one's own should not be seen as unproductive deviationism but the beginning of the voyage of creation and discovery. The relationship between teachers and students in educational institutions should be characterized by equality and mutual respect.

4.5.1 Impact of Education on Identity Development

Attending school and college, learning and performing, interacting with teachers and peers and getting evaluated for one's performance and behavior affects the growing individual.

a) **Competence –** A typical feature of educational scenarios is that they provide the young with feedback on their abilities. Based on the feedback received from them about one's abilities, a self representation about oneself as competent or incompetent is developed. Competencies refer to personal characteristics such as knowledge, aptitudes and skills which lead to high performance (McClelland, 1973). Someone with high competence level will take initiative, understand and control new situations well, be responsible for decisions and perform above expectations. People with low self competence have lower levels of self efficacy and thus, have lower aspirations and productivity.

b) **Work ethics and strategies –** The educational environment also prepares the growing individuals to perform on set tasks and develop work habits and ethics like regularity, punctuality, excellence, originality and honesty. In response to the demands of the learning tasks, the students develop various kinds of responses to cope with them. One such reaction is that of discouragement and loss of motivation. The individual does not feel upto the challenge of the task and hence gives up. Second reaction is avoidance and denial of importance of learning tasks. The behaviours shown by the person are procrastination, giving up of personal responsibility, failure to appraise the situation and make contingency plans, relaxing and denying negative consequences of not completing the task. Third reaction involves active efforts to succeed at the tasks and looking at difficulties as stepping stones to achievement.

c) **Interpersonal skills –** The social environment of the educational institution provides various opportunities for the growing individual to develop interpersonal skills and abilities such as listening, communication, negotiation with peers and authority, conflict resolution, emotional

expression, dealing with differences etc. The individual develops the ability to develop close emotional relationships with peers. Acceptance of self and adjustment in the peer group contributes to the emotional and social development of the individual.

4.6 WORK AND CAREER

Individuals are prepared to take on culturally sanctioned work roles from their childhoods. All children are told that they will have to work when they grow up. Work identity, thus, is a significant element of one's self. There are interconnections between work roles and other dimensions of life. Thus, income, stress, social identity, meaning of life, clothes, hobbies, interests, friends, lifestyle, place of residence, and even personality characteristics are tied to one's occupation. It gives an individual social standing and recognition. Often people are referred to by their professions when people introduce themselves, they mention the work they do, or professions they are a part of. It is also a means of earning one's livelihood and meeting the needs of one's own and one's family. Increasingly, it has been recognized that work fulfills a variety of individual needs other than financial needs. Through the work role people have the opportunity to express their strengths. More recent studies (Chalofsky, 2003) have consistently demonstrated that people rate purpose, fulfillment, autonomy, satisfaction, close working relationships and learning as more important than money.

Redman and Wilkinson (2001) defines career as the application of a person's cognition and capabilities, providing command over profession, timely work expertise and a basis of developing and bettering business networks. Career planning is the process whereby the individual or his/her organization helps in pursuing his/her growth objectives in conformity with his/her expertise in the area, capabilities and aims.

4.6.1 Career Choice and Orientations

Let us consider the following two scenarios:

Smita wanted to be a doctor like her father and to help the poor people. But her mother, a high school teacher pointed out that medical education takes too long and since she is a girl, her marriage and other things would get delayed, so she should not aspire to be a doctor.

Rahul wanted to be a musician but he scored very high and got good grades. So his parents wanted him to study engineering and got his admission done in engineering.

From the above scenarios it is clear that factors such as gender, exam grades, parents, peer pressure and career status are by and large the first to be considered during career decision making process rather than aptitude, passion and interest.

Choice of career depends on two conditions:

1) Availability of alternative career options which is affected by labour market, state of economy, education and skill set of the individual, structural barriers such as gender discrimination

2) An individual's preference between these career options which is affected by attitudes, aptitude, interest, personality, peer pressure, family background, gender etc.

The most widely used classification of factors in career choice studies is the three dimensional framework by Carpenter and Foster (1977) and Beyon, Toohey, & Kishor (1998). The three factors are:

1) Intrinsic (interest in job, work satisfaction)
2) Extrinsic (availability of job, salary, career status)
3) Interpersonal (peer pressure, family relationships)

Holland's theory of vocational personality and work environment suggests that people make career choices that are compatible with their personality type. Holland (1959) stated that people resemble a combination of six personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional (RIASEC). Personality types differ according to the activities that are related to abilities and competencies of an individual. Realistic personality types have practical, productive, and concrete values. These behaviours lead to competencies in the use of machines, tools, and materials. Investigative personality types are associated with analytical or intellectual activities aimed at the documentation of new knowledge and understanding solutions of common problems. Artistic personality type is associated with the acquisition of innovative and creative competencies such as language, art and music. Social types have a preference for activities involving working with people to train or help them. These result in competencies in areas such as teaching and counselling. Enterprising types are often attracted to pursuits that require influencing other. These behaviours results in the development of competencies in leadership and entrepreneurship. Lastly, Conventional types are attracted to activities such as data manipulation which result in clerical and business competencies.

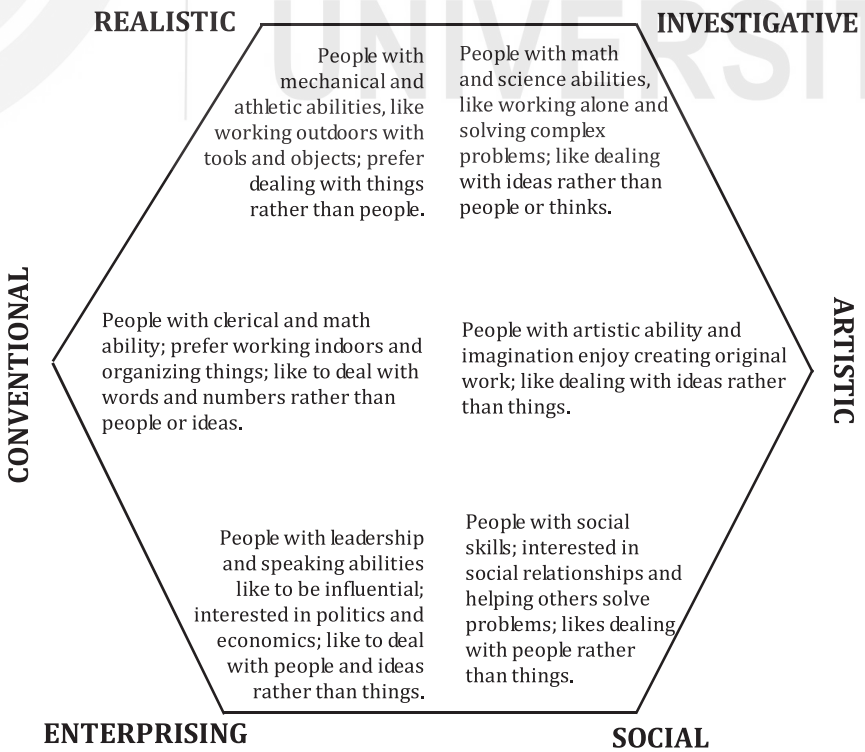


Figure 4aF: Theory of Vocational Choice (Holland, 1959)

In traditional Asian cultures, an individual's occupation is viewed as more of a family's accomplishment rather than personal achievement and social status (Leong and Gupta, 2007). A person's career choice should fulfill family expectations and should bring honor to the family. It is considered selfish if one puts his or her own needs ahead of family needs. In contrast to Western culture, traditional Asian cultural orientation is collectivist rather than individualistic (Kim and Atkinson, 2002). The concept of self is focused on oneself in relation to others and on harmonious interdependence among others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Therefore, one's career choice is hardly an individual choice but a choice evolved from family needs and expectations. Chinese culture values family accord, deference to senior people in the family, and interdependence of each other (Moy, 1992); consequently, parents play a critical role in the career–decision making process. Leong and Chou (1994) have argued that Asian Americans tend to choose a career that would satisfy their parents; therefore, a young person's occupational choice may not necessarily be a choice of their own will but a compromise between parents' expectations and their own interests.

There are two types of career orientations:

1) protean (new career orientation); and
2) conventional (traditional organizational orientation).

Hall first described the protean career in 1976. According to Hall (2004), a "protean" career is one that is managed proactively by individuals (self-directed) according to their own personal values (values driven), rather than by organizational rewards. Core protean values are freedom and growth (Hall, 2002), and the main criteria of success are subjective (intrinsic/psychological success) and not objective (extrinsic/material). A protean career orientation reflects the extent to which an individual adopts such a perspective to their career (Briscoe and Hall, 2006). A conventional career orientation defined career success in terms of measurable objective factors such as salary, recognition, or number of promotions (Gattiker and Larwood, 1988). The core value of conventional career orientation is "advancement".

The positive psychology paradigm suggests that learning about one's strengths and talents is crucial in developing deeper meaning in identifying and pursuing an occupation. One's signature strength is defined as "authentic strength that an individual self consciously owns and celebrates, thinking this is real me, the individual feels excited while displaying these signature strengths, learns quickly as they are practiced, feels more invigorated than exhausted while using them, and creates and pursues projects that revolve around them" (Rashid and Seligman, 2014, p.279). Using one's strengths and talents at work is associated with perceiving one's job to be a calling (Seligman, 2002). Calling can be defined as a pull toward a career path that connects one with a deeper purpose in one's life. Among college students, calling has been found to be positively associated with career maturity, career-decision self-efficacy, work hope, and academic satisfaction (Duffy, Allan & Dik (2011). Dik et al. (2014) assert that the process of identifying one's calling requires people to be strategically active in gathering information as opposed to waiting for a direct revelation concerning their calling. People often report that they found their calling after engaging in work that helped them realize their calling.

4.6.2 Workplace Identity and Relationships

When we meet somebody for the first time, usually we ask them what are they doing and we get the response in terms of the occupation/ profession they are in, e.g., 'I am a teacher/software enginner/ doctor/ advocate/ nurse etc. Thus we always associate ourselves with the work we are doing – be it a salaried job or an independent work. We define ourselves by our work which plays a central role in our identity. As you have learned in Unit 1 about the various indicators of identity, work is also an important indicator of identity.

Workplace refers to the place where we work. Each workplace has an organized structure characterized by a hierarchy of roles and positions, and a system of rules and regulations. It is also marked by a standard relationship among the individuals working in the organization/ workplace. Workplace is like a second home for the modern day youth which can be a great source of satisfaction or a source of stress depending on the interaction and relationships with other employees in the workplace.

As Maslow's hierarchy of needs point out, the need for belongingness is an important need. Every individual has a need to belong to significant groups like family, workplace, various club/activity groups, community/society. We derive our identity by belonging to a group. Individuals working in great institutions or big companies/agencies take pride in their workplace. It is beneficial at two levels: both at the individual level as well as the organizational level. At the individual level, it increases the self esteem, motivation and a sense of pride in the individual. At the organization level, it results in greater connectivity with the organization and enhanced performance and productivity.

One's work identity is thus an important area of one's life. When one identifies oneself with one's work and workplace, it not only motivates the individual to do his/her assigned role sincerely, but also to think for the larger goals of the organization and advocating for the organization.

Self Assessment Questions I

1) The Latin word e-ducere from where the word 'Education' is derived mean to ……..

2) According to Erik H. Erikson, the ego strength of …… emerges from the childhood stage of applying oneself to the tasks of society.

3) According to the Ashram theory, the …… stage is focused on attaining education.

4) ……. act in India guarantees free and compulsory education to all children between the age group of six and fourteen years.

5) …… ……. is a period during which the adolescent is allowed leeway to experiment freely with self roles and images to find a niche in the society.

6) …….. family and educational environments facilitate identity formation.

7) People with ……. competence will take initiative and have personal responsibility.

8) Procrastination is a strategy of …… of learning tasks.

9) …… is an application of a person's cognition and capabilities to work.

10) The two types of career orientation are - …….. and ……

11) …….. theory of vocational choice suggest that people make career choices that are compatible with their personality style.

4.7 PEERS

Who are peers? Peers are equals, individuals who are usually of the same age, gender and social status and who share interests. Peer group has an important role, especially in the present modern society, in influencing choices and decisions about educational courses to be pursued and careers to be taken. Peers relations are characterized by important features during adolescence and youth:

1) Peer relations become more salient in adolescence. Youth is more likely to spend time with age mates, as compared to children. The youth are less likely to be monitored by adults and are more likely to trust the expectations and opinions of peers.

2) With the transition to adolescence, peer relations grow more complex. New types of relations such as romantic relationships emerge in adolescence. Also, while selecting to be a part of friendship groups, the young people are more sensitive to the impact of a specific relationship for their status and reputation in a peer system.

3) Friendships are characterized by similarity, which is a product of both partner selection and influence. Similar backgrounds, tastes, values and interests propel individuals to select each other as friends and these characteristics are affirmed within the relationship. Similarity between friends is driven by the interaction of these three forces: selection, socialization, and de-selection.

4) Status or prestige is an important element of adolescent peer relations. Although peers appear to be made up of equals, inwardly some members are more equal than others. Within any group of young people, certain individuals are rated as more likeable than others and more popular than others. Within cliques, leaders and followers emerge.

4.7.1 Socializing Mechanisms of the Peer Group

The peer group is an important socializing agent contributing beyond the influence of the family and school. Peers socialize each other through certain mechanisms. They are: reinforcement, modeling, punishment and apprenticeship (Berns, 2016).

a) **Reinforcement –** Children and youth alike want their behaviours such as dress sense, language, academic performance, interests and preferences, attitudes and values to be accepted and approved by their peers. Children and adolescents provide reinforcement to their peers by accepting and approving their behavior. The behaviour can be an act of kindness or aggression against another friend. They offer all forms of reinforcement like verbal praise, sharing of secrets, involvement in play activities, giving responsibilities to carry out a plan of action etc.

b) **Modeling –** Children and youth influence each other through modeling and imitation. Again, modeling takes place in various domains such as the way of dressing, the manner of talking, the balance between studies and leisure time activities, the kinds of hobbies and pastime activities and in the worldviews. Through modeling the friends' behaviours, one can learn new behaviours such as how to use chopsticks, music or film preferences, new values such as to give greater importance to smart work as compared to hard work and new attitudes such as acceptance for live-in relationships. Modeling also allows for learning the consequences of behavior by observing someone else. For example, hitting someone results in punishment. People model the behaviour of those peers whom one admire. Amongst youth, the need for role models whom one can emulate is especially high. Successful entrepreneurs, charismatic leaders, popular film stars – all are potential role models. As a socialization method, modeling has broader effects than reinforcement.

c) **Punishment** – Peers also influence their contemporaries through punishment. Punishment takes various forms – rejection and exclusion from the group, physical aggression, teasing, bullying. Rejection and exclusion can be due to various factors – physical characteristics (short height, dark complexion, overweight, physical handicap), academic abilities (gifted or learning disability), physical prowess (weak, non-athletic), behavioural characteristics (bragging, dominating, uncooperative), social status (poor family, backward caste/race) or prejudice.

d) **Apprenticeship –** Usually, the word apprenticeship is used in the world of work – a beginner takes on an apprentice role under a master to learn a trade well enough to succeed alone. Peers often teach their age-mates a variety of skills and introduce them to new kinds of knowledge and information. Examples include: friends who teach us to do mathematics problems, familiarize us with a particular brand of music/author, or educate us about sex. Learning from peers in the form of peer review of one's performance, peer tutoring and peer counseling have been found to be quite effective in youth development.

4.7.2 Peer Dynamics

Peer dynamics of acceptance, rejection/exclusion impacts on the budding identity of an individual. Peer acceptance goes a long way in helping the adolescent and youth to feel "normal" and builds up their confidence and self esteem. On the other hand peer neglect and rejection leads to maladjustment. Children who are not asked to play by the peer, not chosen to be in the team, not invited for the party, or excluded from the club feel shattered. Family interactions affect to

some extent, the successful integration of the child in the friends' group. Learning to understand emotions, express one's emotions appropriately, negotiate competing demands and regulating behavior according to others' requirements are the kinds of social competence skills that begin at home which help one to be a part of the peer group.

Table 4aT: Characteristics of Children Accepted/Rejected by Peers (adapted from Berns, 2016)

Characteristics of children accepted by peers	Characteristics of children rejected by peers
Adaptive and Cooperative	Shy and withdrawn
Initiate interaction	Dishonest
Understands emotional expressions	Unsporting attitude while losing
Shows concern for others	Unable to interpret others' emotional states
Can communicate effectively	Unable to communicate effectively
Physically attractive	Bossy and Aggressive
Athletic	Unappreciative of others
Helpful	"Different" physically, behaviourally, academically, socially
Positive social reputation	Negative social reputation

4.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF PEERS TO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Peers are significant to human development because they satisfy basic social needs: the need to belong to a group and interact socially, and the need to develop a sense of self (a personal identity). Peers form an important group of belongingness for adolescents and youth besides family. They enable them to have experiences independent of parents or other adults. Peers' opinions are important for young people to develop their own identity as in the 'looking glass self' concept discussed in the earlier Unit 3. We think of ourselves as clever, attractive, good in sports by comparing our skills with our friends. We think of ourselves as having a good sense of humour, a poor sense of dressing, or as intelligent because our age mates tell us so. Peers are an important source of self confirmation and thus, self esteem, assuring us that we are not really different or "weird". Thus, belonging to a group clarifies personal identity and enhances self esteem. They also provide role models for one to incorporate into one's self image. Peers show what is worth doing and how to do it. Our music, dance, cuisine, food preferences are often shaped by our friend circles.

4.8.1 Social Competence

Peer groups also help in the development of social competence in individuals. Social competence involves behavior informed by an understanding of others' feelings and intentions, the ability to respond appropriately, and knowledge of the consequences of one's actions. Through the social interactions with their contemporaries, individuals learn to get along with others, develop morals and

values, learn appropriate social and cultural roles, and achieve personal independence (Rubin, Bukowski & Parker (2006).

1) Engagement with peers teaches children the limitations that group places on their selves in return for providing opportunity to belong. One learns to recognize the rights of others, to share, to see things from other people's perspective and to please others in the process of getting along with others. Getting along with others is also related to the ability to empathize, both emotionally and behaviourally.

2) As children develop, peer group experiences expand their understanding of what is acceptable and what is not. They learn to distinguish right actions and values from wrong. They learn how their actions can hurt, comfort or help others. Peer group interactions involve many opportunities to formulate rule of game, follow rules, cooperate and divide roles.

3) Peer groups give individuals the opportunity to try out roles and values learnt at home. How to balance one's personal autonomy with concern for the desires of other, whether to be assertive or passive, does one compete for individual recognition or cooperate for group recognition, how to interact with friends of opposite sex – are a few dilemmas that one faces in peer interactions. They also learn methods of conflict resolution.

4) To participate in peer activities, individuals have to weigh loyalty to peer norms against individual norms and parental norms. Striking a balance between parental influence and peer influence is an important task for identity development. The two are not often in sync and hence a growing individual faces dilemmas, confusions and crisis in life. For example, academic achievement is an important value in many families, while athletic achievement is an important value in many groups of adolescents. What to follow- is the adolescent crisis? Erikson (1963) identifies a danger of the adolescent stage of development as "temporary overidentification, to the point of apparent loss of identity, with the heroes of cliques and crowds" (p.62). The peer group's symbols and rituals (way of dressing, ways of behaving, attitudes and opinions), as well as its approval and support serve as a defense against a sense of identity confusion. Often this results in a clannish sort of a behavior by way of which the adolescents exclude those who are not like the members of the group. This helps them affirm who they are by excluding who they are not.

According to Hans Sebald (1989, 1992), adolescents turn to their parents with regard to scholastic or occupational goals – in general, future oriented decisions. For present oriented decisions related to clothing, dating, social activities and recreation, they turn to their peers. On moral issues, parental values dominate; on appearance, such as grooming, peer values dominate (Martino, Ellickson, & McCaffrey, 2009).

4.9 CROSS SEX FRIENDSHIPS: CAN BOYS AND GIRLS BE FRIENDS?

Close friendships are marked by emotional qualities of loyalty, mutual regard, trustworthiness and support. There is also emotional availability and self

disclosure given and received. Friendships are also characterized by sharing mutual activities, mutual enjoyment and companionship.

Cross sex friendship are defined as "non romantic, non familial, personal relationship between a man and a woman" (O' Meara, 1989). It is most common during the youth stage and the social sanctions against such relations are weak in this stage. As one grows and get entangled in the world of work and marriage, cross sex friendships show a greater decline as compared to same sex friendships (Monsour, 2002). Recent reviews of the literature on this topic have emphasized the advantages of cross-gender friendships, citing such benefits as doubling one's potential number of friends, gaining insider information about the opposite gender, improving understanding and acceptance across the genders and thereby reducing sexism and sexual harassment, validating oneself as attractive to someone of the opposite gender, breaking down the old boys' network in the workplace, and gaining the enrichment that stems from having a friend who is different than oneself (Kaplan & Keys, 1997)

Cross sex friendships, however, appear to be more complex than both same sex friendships and romantic partnerships, which have a clear place in heterosexist society. In one of the first major papers on cross sex friendship, O' Meara (1989) proposed that cross sex friends confront four major challenges: determining the type of emotional bond shared, facing sexuality in the relationship, presenting the relationship as an authentic friendship to the outsiders, and addressing equality in the context of gender inequality. Researchers who have found attraction in cross sex friendship have offered a variety of explanations. Monsour (2002) noted that the media instills in men and women the suggestion that they should be attracted to their cross sex friends. Another explanation uses the evolutionary mechanisms and suggests that men's and women's perceptions of their cross sex friendships are influenced unconsciously by their evolved mating strategies. Findings suggest that opposite sex friendship is a strategy men use to gain sex, women use to gain protection and both sexes use to acquire potential romantic partners. One of the evolutionary advantages of such friendships is that they provide information about other sex useful to decide whether or not wants to engage in mating with the other.

4.10 TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

Transition to adulthood is marked by changes in the life spheres such as: leaving school and college, getting voting rights, legal rights, license to drive, the age at which young people can be drafted in armed forces, age for legal conviction, marriage, entering the job market, financial and residential independence. However, these markers have demonstrated a vast diversity due to class, regional, religious, ethnic and other socio-economic-demographic factors. For example, in the Western Nations, youth who graduate from college have a fairly orderly passage to adulthood, even though there is a delay in full time employment, marriage and parenthood (due to prolongation of education). Less educated youth have a more disorderly transition involving spells of work, education and home leaving interspersed.

Arnett (1998) contends that instead of outward, demographic events, internal qualities should be emphasized as marking the transition to adulthood. The character qualities needed to take on adult roles are accepting responsibility for

self, being able to take independent decisions, becoming less self oriented. The criteria deemed important by young people today have been categorized (Badger, Nelson, & Barry, 2006) broadly into domains such as *independence* (e.g., being financially independent from parents), *interdependence* (e.g., develop greater consideration for others), *role transitions* (e.g., parenthood, finished with schooling), *norm compliance* (e.g., avoid becoming drunk), *family capacities* (e.g., become capable of caring for children), and *relational maturity* (e.g., accept responsibility for the consequences of your actions). Unlike demographic transitions these criteria are intangible and are obtained gradually over time.

A study by Seiter and Nelson (2010) revealed that in general, young people in India embraced criteria that reflect family capacities and relational maturity. Indian culture is similar to the collectivistic nature of Chinese culture. For example, religion in India highly emphasizes the fulfilling of duty to family and society at large (Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002). Additionally, Indian families work as a unit, rather than a group of individuals pursuing their own life courses. There are socially prescribed life trajectories as well a hierarchy of family relationships imposed upon Indian children (Saraswathi 1999). Maturing in India may involve learning to integrate into that system of relationships through gaining skills such as controlling one's own emotions as well as taking responsibility for the consequences of their actions. While not in the top five criterion, 84% of the respondents indicated that "Capable of supporting parents financially" was a necessary attribute for being considered an adult. In collectivistic societies, respect for elders is prevalent and part of the connectedness between the individual and family that is indicative of such societies (Nelson, Badger & Wu, 2004). This is certainly the case in India where the joint family system includes a place for the elderly. Many families find it important to have a son because it is their son who is expected to care for their parents in their old age (Singh, 2004). It follows naturally that Indian respondents would consider "capable of supporting parents financially" as an attribute necessary for adulthood. Many adult children live with their parents while pursuing their education, even after marriage it is expected that the wife will move into the household of the husband's family (Singh, 2004). Thus, unlike the western countries, transition to adulthood in the Indian youth may not be marked by living in a separate household.

Self Assessment Questions II

Indicate whether each of the statements is True (T) or False (F).

1) Peers are more important to children as compared to adolescents.

2) Adolescents prefer friends who are dissimilar from them.

3) Everyone in a peer group is not equal in terms of status and prestige.

4) Teasing and bullying are examples of punishing behaviours shown by individuals towards the peers.

5) Peers reinforce the behavior of a person by accepting him/her in one's group.

6) We cannot learn from our friends as they are of the same age as us.

7) There is usually a high correlation between parental norms and peer norms of behaviour.

8) Cross sex friendship is another name for romantic relationship between a man and a woman.

9) Internal qualities and readiness are more important than demographic events in marking the transitions to adulthood.

10) Setting up a separate household is an important criterion of adulthood in Indian society.

4.11 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit, we discussed how education, work and peer group constitute three important contexts of identity development for youth. The cognitive, emotional and social development of young persons is affected by the features of their educational experience and peer relations. We also learned about the career orientations and how the choice of career depends on various factors. Further, we discussed the transition of the youth into adulthood and the various markers of it.

4.12 KEY WORDS

Protean career orientation : is one that is managed proactively by individuals (self-directed) according to their own personal values (values driven), rather than by organizational rewards.

Conventional career orientation : defines career success in terms of measurable objective factors such as salary, recognition, or number of promotions (Gattiker and Larwood, 1988). The core value of conventional career orientation is "advancement".

Social competence : involves behavior informed by an understanding of others' feelings and intentions, the ability to respond appropriately, and knowledge of the consequences of one's actions.

4.13 ANSWERS TO SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Self Assessment Questions I

Answers: 1) lead out; 2) competence; 3) Brahmacharya; 4) Right to Education; 5) psychological moratorium; 6) democratic; 7) high; 8.avoidance; 9) career; 10) Protean, conventional; 11) Holland's

Self Assessment Questions II

Answers: 1) F; 2) F; 3) T; 4) T; 5) T; 6) F; 7) F; 8) F; 9) T; 10) F

4.14 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1) What are the macro influences that shape the culture of educational institutions in a given society?

2) How does education impact identity development?

3) What factors affect work choices?

4) How many types of work orientations are there?

5) What strategies are used by peers to regulate each others' behaviours?

6) What is the significance of peers to social development?

7) How is transition to adulthood negotiated by Indian youth?

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UNIT 5 YOUTH CULTURE: INFLUENCE OF MEDIA AND GLOBALIZATION*

Structure

5.1 Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Youth Culture

- 5.3.1 Features of Youth Culture
- 5.3.2 Consumerism, Youth and Globalization
- 5.3.3 Media and its Impact on Youth

5.4 Let Us Sum Up

5.5 Key Words

5.6 Answers to Self Assessment Questions

5.7 Unit End Questions

5.8 References

5.9 Suggested Readings

5.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through the Unit, you will be able to,

- Describe the features of youth culture; and
- Discuss the impact of globalization and media on youth culture.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

The emergence of youth as a specific cohort of population is associated with industrialization and is linked with the need for extended training and education for entering the labour market. Rising prosperity, high educational demands of the economy and rapid social change have collectively contributed to the emergence of a stage of life called youth. The youth occupy the in-between space between school and work. Many of them enter college. The congregation of large number of similar aged people sharing the same position in the social structure heightens the generational identification. Generational consciousness also entails a feeling of psychological disconnection from previous generations, their life situations, and their ideologies. This creates ripe conditions for the emergence of youth cultures. Youth cultures are profoundly influenced by media and globalization.

5.3 YOUTH CULTURE

Before understanding youth culture, let us know what do we mean by culture. Culture refers to the shared practices, values and beliefs. It gives a sense of belongingness. The youth can be said to have a culture of its own as it is marked

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by distinctive ways of dressing, using language, music preferences, engaging in sports and interests, typical behavior and life style. This collective expression of the social experiences of the youth characterizes it as having a culture of its own. For example, we have the college culture, the hippies generation, the motorbike gangs, working class youth culture etc. There are also subcultures within the youth culture. Researchers have debated about the existence of one uniform youth culture. As we have studied in the earlier Unit 3, youth identity is affected by gender, class, caste, ethnicity etc.; and these aspects also create different youth cultures. For instance, girls have a different way of socializing than boys. Slum youths have a different way of social interaction and functioning than their counterparts in urban or rural setting. Thus, to understand the youth culture, one needs to take into account the social context also.

Age also plays an important role in the development of the youth culture. The youth marks a transition from childhood, adolescence to adulthood. As children and adolescents, being a part of the schooling process, they develop a shared meaning and experience. At this stage, they are still dependent on their parents and significant other adult members. But at the same time, they are also expected and required to be independent like adults. So, the youth relies on the peers in this transition phase and tries to make sense of his self by being part of a youth culture. According to Erikson, the adolescents are faced with a major psychological conflict of identity versus role confusion. The youth culture can facilitate the identity development in the adolescents.

5.3.1 Features of Youth Culture

i) *Generational consciousness* – Youth cultures are marked by a sense of generational consciousness. It is a subjective awareness of having lived through certain sociopolitical events. For example, 'The children of liberalization' is a generation of Indian children born soon after the economic reforms of liberalization in 1991. They were born in an India which was to witness rapid economic, technological and social changes due to opening up of its economy to the world. These 'Liberalization Children' are different from those before them because they have not experienced the ideology of self restraint and policies of protectionism of socialism; the violence of Partition and political oppression of Emergency are alien realities for them. Instead they have come of age at a time when their nation entered the era of market economy, coalition politics, technology boom, hedonist consumerism in a globally interconnected world. Living in times of a vibrant, growing and free economy and a global culture of innovation and initiative, they have seen Indians script success stories all over the world. These historical opportunities create a sense of generation, a sense of belonging to a cohort.

ii) *Relationship of youth lifestyles with class, ethnicity and gender* – Youth cultures are often expressions of resistance stemming from one' class, ethnicity and gender location. Example of a class based youth culture is Larrikinism in 19th century Australia. Larrikanism refers to the culture of the working class youth much complained about by the Sydney Press and Police for their attacks on 'respectable citizenry' in the form of insults, assaults, loitering, riots, and resisting arrest. Larrikan culture was described by its contemporaries as culture of overt sexuality and high costume, drinking, dancing, gambling, violent sports and a quasi gang organization.

Smith (2005) pointed out that larrikins were not agitating for better wages and conditions and ameliorating the working experience in general. Rather they were rejecting the capitalist work ethic in itself.

Example of an ethnic based youth culture is Hip-Hop. It is a poetic-musical movement of the African diaspora and an articulation of afro-descendent youth against racism and discrimination. Youth cultures are also spaces of expression of gender based roles and values. For example, motorcycle gangs is an instance of how the use of motorbikes expresses a particular form of masculinity. There is very less work available on feminine presence in political-cultural youth groupings. Critics of subcultural studies have noted that the idea of "subculture" has become loaded with masculine connotations. Feminine participation in the subcultural practices requires one to broaden one's lens to include fans/audience. For example, most rock and roll band members in the 1950's were boys but girl participants in this culture became either fans or record collectors and readers of the 'teenage-hero' magazines and love-comics (McRobbie and Garber, 1976).

iii) *Counter culture* – Often, youth culture is portrayed as a resistance against hegemonic (dominant) culture. It is seen as counter "establishment" and anti parental culture. Youth members of a particular subculture are seen as constantly striving for mechanisms to create a space for their own ways of being which are in conflict with the adult world. The hippies counter culture of the 1960's in America is one of the most iconic examples of youth culture. The hippies felt alienated from middle class society which they saw as dominated by materialism and repression. They were opposed to the Vietnam war and they took part in antiwar protests and marches. They developed their own lifestyle of which elements of dress and drug use stood out. The hippie men and women usually wore flowing, casual dresses with beads and sandals. Many males grew long beards. They had communal or cooperative living arrangements. Often, they tended to be dropouts from society, foregoing regular jobs and careers. Their expressed values were nonviolence and love. Their plea was "Make love not war". They promoted openness and tolerance as alternatives to the restrictions and regimentations they saw in middle class society. The hippies promoted the recreational use of hallucinogenic drugs as a way of expanding consciousness.

In the post-Second World War America, the medium of rock music also allowed youths to express their sense of solidarity which was often in opposition to adult society. Deadheads have been described as cult like members of a nomadic subcultural community consisting of supporters of the music of the Grateful Dead, a rock and roll band that formed in the early 1960s in America. Deadhead subculture does incorporate many of the lifestyle values associated with the bohemian youth movements of the 1950s and 1960s. These values include: passive resistance, particularly in the political arena; physical, psychical or existential movement; dissociation with the material comforts of their middle class origins; expressivity and subjectivity, as opposed to conformity and deferred gratification; individualism, in the sense of a freedom to "do your own thing"; and exploration, particularly in spiritual quests for meaning (Miller, 1991). At the heart of this value system is a set of values that has spiritual connotations.

iv) *Lifestyle* – The particular objects of consumption, like denim jeans or leather jackets or motorbikes are the central elements of the subcultural style of the youth cultures. These elements express a range of meanings and values of a particular youth culture. For example, motorbike represents male centered experiential sensibilities such as quest for freedom, recklessness, outlaw which are sought after by the members of motorbike gangs. The mechanical features of the motorbike also correspond to the features of the motorbike gangs themselves. Motorbike's strength, roughness, fierce acceleration, the aggressive thumping of its exhaust matches and symbolize the assertive masculinity and the rough camaraderie of the gang members (Willis, 1978).

v) *Impact of mass media, technology and consumerism* – Youth cultures are affected by the objects and ideas churned out by cultural industries like media, music and fashion. Communities which are cut off from the kinds of technology which can disseminate ideas and information widely will have less diverse youth cultures. The diffusion of cultural images (music, fashion, language, cultural practices) through technology has led to youth cultures becoming more heterogeneous and less static world over. There are exchanges amongst different styles, and coexistence of many different kinds of cultural practices. Young people do not generally identify with one style only. They may rather get influences from many and they often make up a style of their own. Youth are not just passive receivers of mass media images. Rather there is productive reception. They take the concepts, images and ideas from media and mix and match them in the way they want to construct an identity.

vi) *Help in evolving the dominant culture* – The youth cultural practices, fads, language inevitably filter into the culture at large and influence the fashion and the life style in the general culture. What starts out as experimentation with new identities at smaller scale gradually become more common. Steve Mizrach (2006) pointed out that the cyber age is helping to create new identities for people, ie. the cyborg, slacker, virtual, mutant and mediant. Many of today's subcultures (cyberpunks, ravers, modern primitives, zippies) are experimenting with these new kinds of identities already, as a sort of rehearsal or practice for when they will be more common. As always, these subcultures are showing in microcosm where large sectors of society will be heading in the future. Thus, youth cultures don't constitute only a rejection of the larger culture but a challenge for the larger culture to adapt to. They lead the society into new areas of growth.

5.3.2 Consumerism, Youth and Globalization

One of the shorthand ways of assessing the reach of globalization is to find evidence of global images, symbols and practices of consumption the world over. These pertain to fashion, music, sports, leisure, entertainment, food preferences, travel etc. Examples include spread of hip-hop music the world over, the popularity of McDonalds in China, and the high viewership of American soaps in India. Youth are typically seen as the vanguard of these practices and the first to bend to what is understood to be the homogenizing pressures of globalization, a globalization fundamentally tied to Americanization.

A closer look at youth cultures, however, reveals that globalization is not straightforwardly a story of homogenization. Rather youth world over understand and negotiate with the forces of globalization in light of one's local values, needs and priorities. The engagement with such forces is structured by the culture's own preoccupations about tradition and modernity. A popular form of music amongst north Indian youth, Bhangra pop, is an instance of fusion music reflecting a blend of western and folk elements. Indo-western dresses are also popular amongst Indian men and women. A good example of global-local combination can be seen in the way the international restaurant chains like Pizza Hut, Dominos, McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) had to "Indianize" their food items to suit indigenous tastes.

Blum (2009) suggests that societies use three strategies in dealing with globalization imperatives. They are – absorption, rejection and assertion. Absorption implies a mechanical and uncritical assimilation of globalization influences. Rejection occurs when societies appeal to nationalist sentiments and view globalization as a threat to the collective sense of identity. Assertion is a strategy that attempts to balance one's sense of collective identity with efforts towards global integration. Globalization affects different sections of society differently which correspondingly employ different kinds of strategies. Bajrang Dal, the youth wing of a Hindu Nationalist organization called Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), has shot to prominence in recent times for opposing the Valentine's Day celebrations in the Hindi hinterland on the ground that it is a western concept and it spoils the Indian culture because it promotes indecent expression of love. The outfit has vandalized restaurants, shops, hotels celebrating the day and also beaten couples who frequented these places and parks. Kakar (1995) stated that such a self conscious, fundamentalist Hindu identity is a consequence of global modernity which has led to migration from geographical regions and cultural homes and disappearance of traditional work identities. This has resulted in loss of familiar, stable community life and ancestral ideals and values. In a bid to reclaim a personal sense of identity and heal the feelings of loss, a sense of cultural identity is increased, restored or constructed. Westernization is viewed as a threat and thus rejected. Nandy, Trivedi, Mayaram and Yagnik (1997) provided a brief analysis of the activities of this volatile group. The youth power of Dal is drawn mainly from the ranks of the poor, upper caste population of the smaller cities and semi urban areas. They are partly educated and socialized to enter the burgeoning modern sector of India but are often jobless. The VHP helps them to cope with their economic and social anxieties by handing them a cause to fight for and by persuading them that on their young shoulders lies the responsibility of restoring to the Hindus their lost honour and pride. As if out to prove their worth to society and themselves, the Bajrang Dal youth have expressed their restlessness and frustrations through some of the more violent incidents that have taken place as part of the Ramjanmabhumi - Babri Masjid agitation.

5.3.3 Media and its Impact on Youth

Media has a variety of forms – print media (includes newspaper, magazines, pamphlets, comics, books), electronic media (television, radio, films, laptops, tablets, cell phones, mp3 players, game systems, CD ROMS, DVD) and digital media (internet and social media, mobile apps etc.). These have pervaded the lives of human being extensively, affecting especially the youth in a significant

way, in their daily activities, studies, work, social relationships and their worldviews. The current generation is often referred to as the "Net generation", the "millennium generation", and "digital natives". These children involve themselves to a great extent in a media rich environment, using computers, playing online games, constantly communicating and connecting with their friends by electronic devices, right from their early childhood. As they grow up, they use more and more media tools, as part of their learning as well as leisure and entertainment. Youth are described as having created a bedroom culture that facilitates their media consumption without parental supervision or limitation.

Adolescence characterizes independence and autonomy from the parents and the family. They interact more with their peer group and extend their social relationships beyond the family. Media technologies (internet, messengers, whatsapp etc.) play a major role here in communication, social interaction and relationship formation. Even after coming back from school/college, youth continue to be in contact with friends at school/college or remote friends through social networking sites or mobiles. This continuous contact provides a sense of co-presence, of being together with others in a virtual space. Social networking sites allow people to join up or invite others who are likeminded.

Media is also being employed for identity formation and expression by the youth. On social networking sites, users are required to present information about themselves such as age, gender, location, education and interests. This is often used by the youth to express the unexplored aspects of the self and to create a virtual persona. This has the potential of turning maladaptive for the person who loses a sense of real self or when the contradiction between real and virtual self becomes too wide. On the other hand, playing with online identities allows acting out of conflicts, to work on significant personal issues. Being online detaches the individual from the constraints imposed on real self in terms of location and social roles. The youth have the opportunity to express online their "real" or inner selves, using the relative anonymity of the internet to be the person they want to be.

Yet another opportunity that media offer is production of media content. In social media, user generated content flourishes. Bloggers post news, their personal thoughts and feelings and analysis of news, music and films, independent musicians distribute their music, amateur photographers post their photos, or distribute their videos. Through these ways, young people build their identities and socialize with others in an information based society. No longer are youth pawns in the hands of commercial companies that control media technology but they are also empowering themselves by using digital spaces to produce internet content and reaching out with their innovative presentations to large and global audience.

Immersion in the media rich culture influences the skills and interests of teens in important ways. Research suggests that that they think and process information differently from previous generations. They depend on media technologies for searching information, for learning and communicating with others. Thus, media is shaping their learning and social preferences. They also are eager to acquire skills needed to develop creative multimedia presentations. Media multitasking has become a way of life. Young are constantly switching between checking email, browsing the net, posting on facebook and sending a message on their mobiles.

The ever present perceived need of the youth to be in contact with peers coupled with the sense of curiosity and experimenting attitude of the youth sometimes expose them to risk of contact from strangers and exposure to harmful sites. Internet addiction is also emerging as a significant potential danger for the net generation.

(Young (1996) developed a brief eight item questionnaire for assessing internet addiction. The questions are as follows:

1) Do you feel preoccupied with the Internet (think about previous on-line activity or anticipate next on-line session)?

2) Do you feel the need to use the Internet with increasing amounts of time in order to achieve satisfaction?

3) Have you repeatedly made unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop Internet use?

4) Do you feel restless, moody, depressed, or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop Internet use?

5) Do you stay on-line longer than originally intended?

6) Have you jeopardized or risked the loss of significant relationship, job, educational or career opportunity because of the Internet?

7) Have you lied to family members, therapist, or others to conceal the extent of involvement with the Internet?

8) Do you use the Internet as a way of escaping from problems or of relieving a dysphoric mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression)?

Patients are considered "addicted" when answering "yes" to five (or more) of the questions and when their behavior could not be better accounted for by a Manic Episode. Sleep deprivation, interpersonal difficulties, declining study habits are few of the fallouts of excessive internet usage.)

Television has been another media which has come under scrutiny in relation to the impact it has on the viewer's mental health. A substantial amount of research has investigated the effect of television viewing on aggression. There are two kinds of offerings that television makes to its viewers – young or old. One is entertainment. The viewer takes a passive pleasure in being entertained, live out a fantasy through the characters on the television screen, identify with exciting and attractive characters, get away from real life problems and escape real life boredom. Second is information. The viewer learns about grooming, fashion, travel, news, diverse customs etc. The world enters our homes through the television. It has been suggested that in order to predict the effect of television on people, one must know something about the content of television program and something about the viewer's needs and situation. While many children may learn a criminal act from a crime programme but only a few children – for example, those who have psychopathic tendencies or are under the influence of a criminal gang – are likely ever to make use of this information. A few important variables that mediate the relationship between television viewing and aggression are – recurrent exposure to aggressive content on television, uncritical acceptance

of the medium, lack of a set of values providing a standard against which to assess the views offered on television, linking of media content with one's own needs and emotions.

Self Assessment Questions I

Identify the correct answer for each of the questions.

1) Indian children born soon after the economic reforms of liberalization in 1991 share
   a) Identity crisis
   b) Unemployment
   c) Generational consciousness

2) Larrikanism was a youth culture of
   a) Dalit youth in India
   b) Working class youth in Australia
   c) Black Youth In UK

3) Which of the following populations are not represented adequately in cultural-political youth cultures
   a) White Americans
   b) Female youth
   c) Black youth

4) 'Make love not war' was the slogan of which youth culture
   a) Hip-Hop
   b) Deadheads
   c) Hippies

5) Which of the following is not true of youth cultures
   a) They are violent in nature
   b) Their values are often in conflict with the establishment
   c) They are influenced by media and consumerism

6) Quest for freedom, recklessness, outlaw and rough camaraderie are signs of
   a) Motorcycle gangs
   b) Hippies
   c) Larrikans

7) Bhangra-Pop, a genre of music, represents
   a) Homogenization
   b) Preservation of indigenous music
   c) Global-local fusion

8) Which of the following is not a strategy of dealing with globalization

   a) Separation

   b) Absorption

   c) Assertion

9) Media consumption by youth in the privacy of their rooms without parental supervision or limitation is called

   a) College culture

   b) Bedroom culture

   c) Peer culture

10) Which of the following is considered as a problematic consequence of media rich environment

   a) Co-presence

   b) Social overload

   c) Production of media content

5.4 LET US SUM UP

In youth, the relationship between self and society is particularly tenuous. Youths are prone to creating and joining subcultures as a means of giving an experience of common belonging and at the same time a heightened version of their own innermost personal experiences, disappointments, dreams and desires. Musical taste, dressing styles, living arrangements often become symbols of affective sensibilities which are used by adolescents and youth to distinguish themselves from adults and from each other. Youth's involvement in revolutionary movements like Chinese Cultural Revolution and Naxalism in India are further instances of youth's efforts at changing the social system. Youth subcultures and activism experiment with consumerist and technological trends which are spread globally through media. The extent to which youth across the world are exposed to mass media, digital technologies and globalization differs. This differential access to media and technology impacts the formation of youth identity differentially.

5.5 KEY WORDS

Culture : refers to the shared practices, values and beliefs. It gives a sense of belongingness.

Youth culture : refers to the collective expression of the social experiences of the youth.

Generational consciousness : refers to a subjective awareness of having lived through certain sociopolitical events.

5.6 ANSWERS TO SELFASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Answers: 1) c; 2) b; 3) b; 4) c; 5) a; 6) a; 7) c; 8) a; 9) b; 10) b

5.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1) What is youth culture?
2) Describe the features of youth cultures.
3) How does globalization impact youth identities?
4) Evaluate the effects of media technology on youth culture.

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