Chapter 4
Socialization

Chapter Outline

• Why is Socialization Important Around the Globe?
• Social Psychological Theories of Human Development
• Sociological Theories of Human Development
• Agents of Socialization
• Socialization Through the Life Course
• Resocialization
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Why is Socialization Important Around the Globe?

• **Socialization** is the lifelong process of social interaction through which individuals acquire a self-identity and the physical, mental, and social skills needed for survival in society.
  
  • Socialization enables us to:

  • Socialization is most crucial:

  • Socialization is also essential for:
• **Sociobiology** is the systematic study of “social behavior from a biological perspective.”

• **Nature (heredity) v. Nurture (social environment)**
  • isolated children—don’t learn speech or how to walk; no social skills
  • child maltreatment=abuse and neglect
  • Neglect most common type of maltreatment
  • Biology affects our personality so does the environment we grow up in
  • Harlow’s experiments with monkeys—preferred soft cloth mother to wire cage with bottle; did not learn how to socialize with other monkeys
Social Psychological Theories of Human Development

• Freud and the Psychoanalytic Perspective

  • human behavior and personality originate from unconscious forces within individuals

  • people have two basic tendencies: the urge to survive and the urge to procreate

• The **id** is the component of personality that includes all of the individual’s basic biological drives and needs that demand immediate gratification.

• The **ego** is the rational, reality-oriented component of personality that imposes restrictions on the innate pleasure-seeking drives of the id.

• The **superego**, or conscience, consists of the moral and ethical aspects of personality.
Freud’s Theory of Personality

Figure 4.2

Ego
"I guess I'll have to wait until I have the money to buy that candy bar."

Superego
"It's wrong to steal."

Id
"I want that candy bar, no matter what!"
Piaget and Cognitive Development

- **Stages of Cognitive Development**
  - **Sensorimotor stage (0-2 years):** Babies put everything in their mouths; start to learn about object permanency at 2 yrs; start to learn words “eat” or “bath”
  - **Preoperational stage (2-7 years):** Using words and creating mental images of objects; limited in their logic
  - **Concrete operational stage (7-11 years):** begin to understand consequences of actions without having to do action; begin to feel empathy towards others; take on roles of others
  - **Formal operational stage (12-adolescence):** begin to think in abstract thought; think about the future and evaluate different options and courses of action
  - **Piaget studied his own children**
Kohlberg and the Stages of Moral Development

1. **Preconventional level (age 7-10):** children’s perceptions are based on punishment and obedience

2. **Conventional level (age 10-adulthood):** people are concerned about how they are perceived by peers and how one conforms to the rules

3. **Postconventional level:** people view morality in terms of individual rights; moral conduct is based on principals and not on just laws and government; doing what is right even if no one is looking.

Gilligan’s View on Gender and Moral Development

Men are more likely to use *abstract standards* of right and wrong when making moral decisions, whereas women are more likely to be concerned about the *consequences* of behavior.
Sociological Theories of Human Development

- **Symbolic Interactionist Perspectives**
  - a sense of self or personal identity cannot be formed without intense social contact with others

- **Self-concept is:**
  - the physical self
  - the active self
  - the social self
  - the psychological self

- **Our self-identity is:**
Cooley’s looking-glass self

• refers to:

1. We imagine how our personality and appearance will look to other people.
2. We image how other people judge the appearance and personality that we think we present.
3. We develop a self-concept.

Mead’s role-taking

• is the process by which:
• **Significant others** are those persons whose care, affection, and approval are especially desired and who are most important in the development of the self.
  
  • The “I” is a person’s identity.
  
  • The “me” is the objective element of the self.

1. preparatory stage (0-3 years) > mainly imitate others; playing Mommie
2. play stage (3-5 years) > begin to take on the roles of others
3. game stage (early school years) > begin to understand themselves in relation to others; begin to understand the expectations put on them by society; being a good team player; doing your best as team player

• **Generalized other** refers to the child’s awareness of the demands and expectations of the society as a whole or of the child’s subculture.
Functionalist Perspectives

• Socialization is important so that people learn to play the roles so that society functions. Socialization helps people to learn how to conform to society’s rules.
  • Primary socialization

  • Second socialization

  • Tertiary socialization

• Conflict Perspectives

  • Socialization contributes to false consciousness and reproduces inequalities in the class structure in the next generation.

  Low income children may believe there is no reason to try harder to improve their lives by getting a higher education.
Agents of Socialization

- **Agents of socialization** are persons, groups, or institutions that teach us what we need to know in order to participate in society.

The Family

- The family is the most important agent of socialization in all societies.
- Forms our sense of self
- Primary source of emotional support

Reciprocal socialization is the process by which the feelings, thoughts, appearance, and behavior of individuals who are undergoing socialization also have a direct influence on those agents of socialization who are attempting to influence them.
• The School
  • Children spend significant time in school throughout childhood, adolescence, and even adulthood. Are tested and evaluated from the beginning of school. 60% of all preschool age children are in a daycare.
  
  • From a functionalist perspective, schools are responsible for (1) socialization, or teaching students to be productive members of society; (2) transmission of culture; (3) social control and personal development; and (4) the selection, training, and placement of individuals on different rungs in the society.

  • Conflict theorists assert that students have different experiences in the school system depending on:
Peer Groups

• A peer group is a group of people:
  • Contribute to our sense of belonging
  • Attribute to our likes and dislikes > music, clothes, food
  • Peer pressure:

• The Mass Media
  • The mass media is composed of large-scale organizations that use print or electronic means to communicate with large numbers of people.
  
  • The media have functioned as socializing agents in several ways:
    1. they inform us about events
    2. they introduce us to a wide variety of people
    3. they provide an array of viewpoints on current issues
    4. they make us aware of products and services that, if we purchase them, will supposedly help us to be accepted by others
    5. they entertain us by providing the opportunity to live vicariously (through other people’s experiences)
Types of Socializations:

- **Gender socialization** is the aspect of socialization that contains specific messages and practices concerning the nature of being female or male in a specific group or society. What does it mean to be a “boy” or a “girl” in our society?

- **Racial socialization** is the aspect of socialization that contains specific messages and practices concerning the nature of one’s racial or ethnic status as it relates to our identity, interpersonal relationships, and location in the social hierarchy.

- **Anticipatory socialization** is the process by which knowledge and skills are learned for future roles.

- **Workplace (occupational) socialization** is a type of socialization that occurs when a person makes the transition from school to work.
Socialization is a life long process:

- **Childhood**: a very important time in a person’s life; a sense of self is developed at this time; issue of trust vs mistrust which is building block of all relationships

- **Adolescence**: often a difficult time with emotional distress; trying to find their own identity; not always marked by special events

- **Adulthood**: difference is sense of freedom; young adulthood working on career choices, family and children

- **Late Adulthood**: may experience social devaluation because they are not working or as active as they were before
Resocialization

• **Resocialization** is the process of:
  
  • Voluntary resocialization: when we assume a new status—work or retirement
  • Involuntary resocialization: jail or prison

• A **total institution** is a place where people are isolated from the rest of society for a set period of time and come under the control of the officials who run the institution.
Socialization in the Future

• The family is likely to remain the most fundamental socializing institution.

• Other institutions will continue to have a profound influence as well.

• The socialization process will continue to be a dynamic and important part of our life as we assume various roles throughout our life span.