

Lee kathryn indivassignment

[Family](#), [Parenting](#)



Woven Fang came from an average family and was studying in one of the top independent girls' schools in Singapore. She seemed like an average 16-year-old girl going through normal teenage girl problems, or so everyone thought. This essay describes the experiences and problems faced by Woven in her final year of secondary school. To understand Hoovers case better, theoretical background and research will be applied to explain her experiences and problems. Finally, some strategies and solutions will be proposed as resolutions to the issues presented.

Background - Woven's Story Woven's parents migrated from Taiwan to Singapore and raised their four children in Singapore. Her brother and two sisters were 12, 10 and 7 years older than her respectively. Her father, Mr.. Fang, was a businessman and traveled for long periods of time due to work. When he was in Singapore, he did not meddle in the affairs of his children, leaving his wife to take care of all their needs. As the youngest of four children and also because of the age gap between Woven and her older siblings, she was given extra care and attention by her mother.

She also turned out to be the brightest, making it onto top primary and secondary schools in Singapore. Compared to Woven, her older siblings were a letdown to Mrs.. Fang, as they did poorly in school. Faced with problems from her other children, Mrs.. Fang placed extremely high hopes on Woven, dictating most of Woven's life and making most of the decisions. In Sec 4, Woven started losing weight drastically. Despite the drastic weight loss, Mrs.. Fang refused to admit that there was anything wrong with her daughter. Finally, Woven was so thin that Mrs.. Fang had to bring her to a doctor for fear that her life was in jeopardy.

She was admitted into the capital and diagnosed with anorexia nervosa. Only during the numerous counseling sessions did Woven's problems surface. Woven admitted that she face problems in school. First, although Woven had been consistently doing well in school, she felt pressurized by the competitive environments she was in, where good grades were emphasized. On top of that was the pressure she felt from her mother to do well in school, especially as her mother often lamented to her about her siblings' failures and cautioned her not to turn out like them. Second, her schoolmates were all particularly concerned about weight and size.

Although she was of an average height of 1. Mm and an average weight of kg, her classmates teased her about being chubby looking. As a result, Woven began to doubt her intelligence as well as her appearance and eventually, she stopped eating. As her weight started to drop and she became thinner, Woven finally felt in control of something in her life - her actions actually produced results and this egged her on to lose more weight until she ended up in hospital. With a better understanding of her problems, the doctors treated her for anorexia and sent her for counseling at the same time.

After a couple of months in the hospital, she was allowed to go home when her weight increased slightly. However, this was not the end of her problems. Woven was forced to return to school where she would face her classmates again. She was worried about her appearance, grades and studies. Although the counselor suggested taking the rest of the year off from school and repeating Sec 4 again the next year, Mrs.. Fang refused as she felt it was

very embarrassing. At that point in time, Mrs.. Fang still refused to admit that her daughter was going through a very serious problem in terms of mental and physical health.

Back in school, Woven tried to catch up with her peers in her school work. However, she felt as if they were constantly staring at her. Although they did not say anything, she knew that they knew about her hospitalizing and about her eating disorder, making her feel all the more conscious about herself and her appearance. Unable to take the demands of school work and the ogling of her school mates, Woven returned to her old ways of not eating or vomiting what she ate. Although Woven is currently going through counseling her problems are far from being over.

Analysis - Applying Theoretical Background / Empirical Research to Woven's Case According to Frontbenchers bacteriological theory of development, Woven's Microsystems would have very powerful environmental influences on her development. In Woven's case, it can even be said that her mother would perhaps have the greatest influence on Woven's personal development, as her mother would have spent the most amount of time with her since she was born (Gene and Chukka, 2010). Mr.. Fang's absence as a father figure in Woven's life was an uninvolved parenting style, thus making Mrs..

Fang the most influential person in Woven's life. She had an authoritarian parenting Tyler as she often stressed for Woven to do well and often made decisions on her behalf in both school and home domains. As a result, Woven ended up worrying about pleasing her mother and felt like she had a lack of

control over her own life (Gene and Chukka, 2010). Naught and Chicest (2002) believe that authoritarian parents are "rigid and unresponsive" and "in extreme cases their children have low self-esteem and use aggressive coping behaviors". This was true in Woven's case. Mrs..

Fang's parenting style also affected Woven's identity development, as suggested by Banding (1991). Parents are important figures in adolescents' identity development and poor communication between parents and adolescents lead to less positive identity development (Contracts, 2007). Marcia (1980) postulated a theory of identity formation, in which an individual can take on one of four identity commitments. Applying Marcia's concept of identity commitment to Woven, it is likely that Woven is a foreclosed individual, who has clear commitments which are internalized by her mother.

Her commitments were not self-chosen and it is believed that no other alternatives were seriously considered (Mishmash, 2005). According to Kroger (1993), it was observed that identity-foreclosed adolescents "evidenced the highest levels of authoritarianism and socially stereotyped thinking, obedience to authority, external locus of control, and dependent relationships with significant others". In line with this, Cote (2009) believes that adolescents are led to being identity-foreclosed by autocratic parents who control behavior without giving the adolescent a chance to express opinions. Therefore, it is likely that Mrs..

Fangs authoritarian parenting style resulted in her being an identity-foreclosed individual. Erosion's theory of personality development proposed

eight developmental Stages (Erikson, 1968, 1980). In his theory, an adolescent approaches identity formation (the fifth stage) 'With a sense of self as an autonomous, active and competent agent in a relatively secure world', only if the earlier four stages have developed well (Mishmash, 2005). Woven may not have developed a sense of self as an autonomous agent as a child and thus was hindered by feelings of shame, self-doubt and inferiority in her adolescent years (Mishmash, 2005).

Identity formation is such a challenging process that any robbers encountered in earlier development are likely to increase the chances of negative outcomes. Woven's parents are not the only ones to have a huge impact on her development. The people she meets every day in school are also part Of her Microsystems. As her peers and her teachers are involved in Woven's immediate settings, they have enormous influence over her development as an individual as well (Gene and Chukka, 2010).

The influence of Woven's peers on her would come in three forms - attitudes and values, social development and emotional support (Ginsberg, Babes, & Spaniard, 2006; Rubin, Bouzoukis, & Parker, 2006). This explains why Woven was especially affected by her peers about both studies and weight issues. The standards maintained by her peers about these issues would become very important to her and thus Woven was likely to conform to her peer standards of achieving good grades and being thin.

Through the influences of her peer group, her self-concept and self-esteem would be affected as well. There are many factors that can influence an adolescent female's self-esteem. The decline in self-esteem during

adolescence may be due to physical changes due to puberty, an increase in academic expectations and demands, and insufficient support by the school and parents (Contreras, 2009). These were all likely factors that influenced the decline in Woven's self-esteem over her secondary school years.

A vicious cycle in which declining self-esteem affected her academic performance which then affected her academic self-concept which again influenced her self-esteem is likely to have occurred. As a result of her declining self-esteem, her grades took a downturn and she lost her self-worth as an individual, wanting to conform to norms set by her peers instead. It is probable that Woven's academic, social and physical self-concept interacted with her sense of identity, which then influenced her self-esteem negatively (Gene and Chukka, 2010).

More support for this is provided by Harder (2006) who found that persistent low self-esteem usually leads to other more serious problems including low academic achievement, depression and eating disorders. It is evident from Woven's actions and behavior that she was going through a period of emotional turmoil. Some researchers might consider this normal because adolescence is often described as a time of emotional turmoil (Hall, 1994). However, at the end of the day, most adolescents do make it through these difficult and moody times to develop into competent adults.

In spite of this, Woven has exhibited signs of emotional stress, through her anorexic behavior, falling grades, failing self-esteem and consciousness with how her peers view her as a person. As the onset of Woven's problems occurred in late adolescence, it can be inferred that it was environmental

experiences that contributed to her emotional turmoil. Research suggests that emotional fluctuations in early adolescence are related to hormonal changes at that time, whereas in late adolescence, teenagers are more emotionally settled by then, displaying fewer worries and less moodiness (Hooper, 1980).

As such, it is likely that the people around her affected Woven's emotional development. Emotional stress is usually the result of conflicts that adolescents have with their parents and these conflicts often happen because adolescents want to make independent choices which are usually not in line with what their parents have in mind for them (Child DevelopmentReference). Interventions - Resolutions to Woven's Case The following strategies and interventions are believed to help Woven irately.

Although there are many factors that contributed and led to Woven's current problems, the main cause of her problems seems to be her mother. This is because her mother would have had the most influence over Woven's development from a child and into her adolescent years. Therefore, tackling Mrs.. Fangs parenting style and the mother-daughter relationship is the foremost important issue. A successful intervention on this relationship will also affect Woven's formation of her own identity and self-esteem positively.

With this as a base to build on, it will be easier to tackle the issues about Woven's peers and how she views herself as a result of her relationship with them. It is suggested that competent adolescent development is most likely to occur when adolescents have parents who carry out the following actions (Contracts, 2007). For Woven's case, Mrs.. Fang should avoid the tendency to

be too controlling and allow Woven to make her own decisions about school and what she wants to do. Instead of trying to control Woven's life, Mrs..

Fang should monitor her development and try to understand Woven's cognitive and constitutional development. She should also show more constructive ways of dealing with problems and conflict because studies have shown that reprimanding only serves to increase the parent-child gap. In addition, both parent and child should come together to discuss ways to help Woven (Contracts, 2007). Woven's parents are also advised to take on a democratic instead of autocratic role. They would encourage Woven to participate in family decision making, thus fostering identity-achievement in her.

This would be the most desirable outcome for Woven's self-identity as Kroger (1993) observed that " identity-achievement individuals showed the highest levels of ego development, moral reasoning, internal locus of control, self-certainty and self-esteem, performance under stress on a concept attainment task, and intimacy in interpersonal relationships" (Mishmash, 2005). In line with the study conducted by Campbell, Adams, & Dobson (1984), healthy identity formation of an individual is developed by family relationships that are both individuated and connected.

A family atmosphere which promotes individuality and connectedness is lacking in Woven's life. She needs to have her own individuality, where she can have her own point of view and develop her own communication pattern to express herself. At the same time, her family environment should promote connectedness, where emotional affection among family members is

promoted. This suggests that Woven should be allowed to develop her own point of view, while her parents work on building the relationships within the family.

A combination of connectedness and individuality in the parent-adolescent relationship forms the base from which Woven can explore her widening social world (Campbell, Adams, & Dobson, 1984). To further support the reasons why Woven's parents have to change their parenting style, it is believed that the "fit" between "parents' style of interaction and the interactive style and needs of the child" forms the foundation to a healthy emotional development of the child (Child Development Reference). Therefore, it is apparent that parents do play a vital role in their children's emotional development.

To salvage the relationship they have with their daughter and to prevent Woven from sinking further in her own problems, it is highly recommended that both Mr.. And Mrs.. Fang undergo counseling to understand how their actions as parents have a great impact on their daughter. Both parents and Woven should also attend parent and child counseling sessions where the counselor is able to take on a mediator role and help to bridge the gap between them. Although Woven's parents are accountable for the bulk of her problems, the school environment she was in was very unhealthy as well.

School-wide program which focus on self-image and self-esteem ought to be implemented to educate Woven and her peers on such issues. It is also necessary to educate them on the perils of eating disorders which could have damaging and dangerous consequences on their lives, as it affects

their hysterical and mental health. In conclusion, Woven went through a difficult and trying period growing up, which led to some impairment in her development as an adolescent, especially in the identity and emotional development aspects.

This was largely caused by the context of her development, which includes her immediate family members, in particular, her mother, as well as her peers and school environment. However, appropriate interventions and strategies could assist Woven in fixing some of these problems. The proposed interventions and strategies would not solve Woven's problems overnight but it is imperative that they are implemented to kick-start Woven's road to recovery. (2495 words) References Banding, D. (1991) The influence of parenting style on adolescent competence and substance use.