

The quest for identity

Sociology



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Self-understanding is the primary incarnation of a person's identity. We become who we figure ourselves to become and this is on a daily basis. This is not to say that disposition is unstable, on the contrary, it is an integration of constancy of character. The development of one's identity is the intermingling of all human activities and relationships among precise perspectives.

It is not only within the walls of the school that an adolescent's identity is developed. More of it is through the relationships and activities that they endow themselves into. These are the things that they attain the most indulgence from and thus would most likely to shape them towards an identity that would form them into the future. The proverbial question of "Who am I?" is one that is often answered in the context of reciprocity from these core identity shaping matters.

As with the subject exemplified by the author through Mac, the 14-year old boy who always gets into a fight. A deduction of this concept would equate that in the boundaries of the school he would be perceived as a difficult child. But a deep analysis of the child's psychological thinking reveals that he is someone who can be counted on by his friends and family in the instance that his help is needed. It cannot then be concluded that he is a misfit just on the basis of his school records and the many brawls he gets himself in.

Identity crisis is another major difficulty that arises within this age group. A "developmental moratorium" as presented by Erikson in his model is necessary for adolescents to augment their capability of growth as they are allowed to experiment among varied experiences in their quest for identity.

It is an opportunity for them to use cognizance and explore potentials for further development. This attitude of keeping in tune with the possibilities is

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essential for a moratorium on experience. Erikson presents how individuals figure out what way they are to fit in into the society in the future.

If we are to stick to Erikson's model, then it would not make for much of a choice for adolescents such as Mac. Living under moderate to poor condition, others such as him would configure into a place in the society where he would be easily accepted and wherein monetary compensation would be reciprocated swiftly. This does not pose much of a choice for developing a fitting identity. It stomps growth and thwarts the molding of a person to the best of his abilities and to the maximization of his capabilities.

This is where the author is right in suggesting the necessary influences that thrust them away from wayward behavior and propels them to the realization of their latent potentials. Activities inside and outside the school grounds and mentoring are just some of the best means towards this goal. Identity development is something that makes or breaks advancement and it is important that during these pivotal points in an adolescent's life they are surrounded by model behavior and that they are able to enhance their potentials and interests.