

Three the child which
aspects of the
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Three Main Elements of ' Looking-Glass Self': Cooley held that self and social are two sides of the same coin. Our ideas, loyalties, attitudes, and points of view are derived from others. One means of their transmission Cooley called the ' looking-glass self. According to him, self-ideas or self-attitudes develop by a process of imagining what others think of us by a kind of ' looking-glass' process. A self-idea of this sort seems to have three main elements: (i) The imagination of our appearance to the other person. (ii) The imagination of his judgment of that (imagined) appearance.

(iii) Some kind of self-feeling such as pride or mortification. As Cooley has stated in his ' Human Nature and the Social Order', the individual develops the idea of self through contact with the primary group, particularly with the members of the family. This he does by becoming conscious of their attitudes towards him. In other words, the child gets his conception of his self, and later of the kind of person he is, by means of what he imagines others take him to be. Cooley, therefore, called the child's idea of himself the ' looking-glass self.

The child conceives of himself as better or worse in varying degrees, depending upon the attitudes of others towards him. Thus, the child's view of himself may be affected by the kind of name given by his family or friends. A child called ' angel' by his mother gets a notion of himself which differs from that of a child called ' rascal'. The ' looking-glass self' assures the child which aspects of the assumed roles will bring him praise, which blame; which ones are acceptable to others, which ones unacceptable. People normally have their own attitudes towards social roles and adopt the same. The child first

tries out these on others and in turn adopts towards his self. The self thus arises when the person becomes an 'object' to himself.

He is now capable of taking the same view of himself that he infers others do. The moral order which governs the human society, in large measure, depends upon the 'looking-glass self'. Thus it is clear that we are prone to look at ourselves through other's eyes. Depending upon the character and weight of that 'other' [in whose mind we see ourselves] we develop different feelings. We are ashamed to seem evasive in the presence of a straightforward man; cowardly in the presence of a brave man, indecent in the presence of a refined man, greedy in the presence of a generous man and so on. We may boast to one person of an action but we may feel ashamed to express it to another. The way we imagine ourselves to appear to another person is an essential element in our conception of ourselves. Thus, I am not what I think I am and I am not what you think I am.

I am what I think you think I am'. Cooley concludes that "the self is social and that self-consciousness would not exist in the absence of society". The 'looking-glass self' affects the daily life of all individuals. (b) George Herbert Mead's Theory of 'Self': G. H. Mead, the famous philosopher and psychologist at the University of Chicago, also held the opinion like that of Cooley that the society is the determining factor in the socialisation of the individual.

He agreed with Cooley that the 'Self' is social. Mead has stated, 'the individual, largely through interaction, becomes aware of himself'. It means the individual comes to know about himself by what is known as 'role

playing'. 'Role-playing'. Mead has said that the individual in order to get a picture of himself plays the roles of others. In seeing himself as others see him, the individual is actually putting himself in the place of others, and imagining what their response might be.

This is 'role-playing'. The 'others' may be his parents, close associates, and finally, society as a whole. As the child gets older, he can be observed to act towards his dolls or toys as the mother or other members of the family have acted towards him.

The child, in his play, is taking the role of another person. Through 'role-playing', that is, by playing the role of the mother, father or other persons, the child is enabled to see himself objectively through the eyes of others. Of these 'others' some are more "significant". Significant Others: The new-born infant has needs like those for food, clothing that press for satisfaction.

The mother satisfies these needs and the child comes to depend upon her and 'identifies himself' with her emotionally. But in course of time, the child differentiates himself from his mother and comes to know that he has a subordinate role to the superior role of the mother. Then the child understands the role of the father. He differentiates his father from his mother and then integrates him into the social system. In this way, the number of the 'significant others' increase for the child.

The Generalised Others: The child not only differentiates itself from others but also begins to act towards himself from the viewpoint of the whole group. The child tries to understand the relative roles of various individuals involved in the same social context. The child begins to anticipate the

behaviour of all the members of a group in a particular context, {n other words, the child generalises the roles of others. For example, if the child is playing the role of a 'bridegroom' in its game of marriage, he must know not only the role of the bridegroom but also that of the bride, the father-in-law, priest, relatives, etc.

In the above example, the child plays a number of roles simultaneously, a generalised role of a number of people. The roles, moreover, are built around the rules of the game. According to the rule, the child generalises his behaviour. He plays the role of what Mead calls 'the generalised other'. The team of children with its rules is thus a carbon copy of the organised community. The whole community is 'generalised other' with which the child becomes identified. 'Self' and 'society', in the child's experience, are the two sides of the same coin. This is exactly like a situation in which every one of us may say, or more likely think,- 'what will people think if do this, or that' ? The 'people' in this expression are not any particular persons, but rather, generalised persons, or generalised others.

This 'generalised others' may include the associates of our community. In this way the social explanation of the self is complete. It is clear from the above description that the self is not something that exists first and then into relationship with others. The 'self is a product of social interaction. 'It arises in social experience'. "It is something that develops out of social interaction and is constantly changing and adjusting as new situations and conflicts arise..." The self develops and grows in a social context. (c) Freud and His Concept of the Human Mind: Sigmund Freud was an Austrian Psychiatrist and

the founder of Psychoanalysis. Much of the works of Freud centre on the 'Human Mind' rather than the process of socialisation.

Though Freud has not established any theory concerning socialisation as such his ideas have contributed much towards the clarification of that process. This can be ascertained by an understanding of his analysis of the human mind. Freud has divided human mind into three compartments.

They are as follows: (i) Id: The 'id' is concerned only with satisfying the animal impulses of man. (ii) Ego: The 'ego' serves as the mediator between desire and action. It represses the urges of the 'id' when necessary. (iii) Super Ego: The 'super ego' always holds up the behaviour norms of society.

It provides the 'ego' the idea of moral and immoral and this in turn intervenes with the id. The Super Ego: In the Freudian analysis of the human mind the concept of 'super ego' is of great sociological importance. It is significant in the study of socialisation also. According to Freud, the individual's super ego is a reflection of his parents' standards of right and wrong. The individual imbibes these into his own personality by identifying himself with his parents. The parents' standards are no other than the societies or one of its sub-groups in which the individual happens to live. Thus, logically the child, in its socialisation process adopts the norms of conduct of the society through the super ego.

(d) W. I. Thomas Theory of the 'Definition of the Situation': The views of W. I. Thomas concerning the process of socialisation can be understood by an analysis of his theory of "the definition of the situation". According to Thomas, the situation in which the child finds himself has already been

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defined for him. The rules according to which he must behave are determined by the group into which he is born.

The child cannot behave according to his own whims and fancies. He must act according to the expectations of the group and compromise his wishes with those of the group. The wishes and the expectations of the group always call for restraint, order, discipline and self-sacrifice in the child. A kind of conflict may take place between the wishes of the child and those of the group. Though not always, the group usually wins out in such a conflict. Thomas has described this situation graphically in his "The Unadjusted Girl". Thus, according to Thomas any deliberate action calls for an appraisal of the situation within which the person finds himself.

Once the situation is defined for him, he can act appropriately in it in the normal course of life. His role also becomes apparent. Thomas has pointed out, that in infancy situations are defined for the infant by the mother and other members. The parents define the situation through speech and other signs and pressures. The parents may give instructions to their child to correct his behaviour.

Thus, they may instruct: "Be quiet", "Sit up straight", "Blow your nose", "Wash your face", "Mind your mother", "Be kind to sister", "Pray God", and so on. The child's wishes and activities are inhibited by these instructions or definitions. Thomas has argued that by definitions within the family, by playmates, in the school, by formal instruction, and by signs of approval and disapproval, the child, that is, the growing member, learns the norms of his society.

(e) Durkheim's Theory of ' Collective Representations': Durkheim's theory of ' Collective representations' throws some light on the study of the process of socialisation. In his theory of socialisation Durkheim has asserted that the individual becomes socialised by adopting the behaviour of his group. By ' collective representations' he meant the body of experiences, ideas and ideals of a group upon which the individual unconsciously depends for his ideas, attitudes and behaviour. To Durkheim, collective representations are objects or factors of social value. These objects are symbol-products and are mutually owned and mutually proclaimed. Durkheim has stated that the ' collective representations' have a great force because they are collectively created and developed.

It means, collective representations or social values are the product of collective action. Hence they are imperative and compulsive. For example, the flag is a political representation; sacred writings are religious representation and so on. Durkheim has said that these collective representations or social values directly or indirectly mould the character and to behaviour of the new born child.

According to Durkheim, the individual mends his ways in accordance with the group standards. The accumulated group experience provides the individuals the necessary guidance in learning the appropriate behaviour. It is in this respect Durkheim's ' collective representations' resemble Sumner's concept of folkways and mores. Durkheim believed that the ' collective representations' have an autonomous existence, completely independent of individuals. He advocated a theory of " Collective Consciousness" and " group mind", which he believed, exist independent of individual

consciousness. This part of Durkheim's doctrine has been severely criticised and is, at present, rejected by many of the American sociologists.