

# Identity Development during Adolescence Period

# SELF CONCEPTIONS

- Collection of beliefs about oneself
- Study regarding self concepts of adolescents; “who am I” (Raymond & Marvin, 1977)
- Self descriptions of adolescents: less physical and more psychological; abstract; more self- aware ; differentiated as well as integrated self understanding.

# SELF-ESTEEM


- Subjective evaluations of one's worth/value
- It **decrease** from childhood to **early adolescence**; affects some adolescents
- Reasons: More knowledgeable & realistic about their strengths and weaknesses; Unhappy with their changing bodies; transitions in schools; begin to date.
- Most **adolescents emerge** from this period with **higher self esteem**
- Reasons: revive their self concept as they experience the changes

# Sense of Identity

- Seek to establish self identity; “who am I”
- **Identity crisis:** uncomfortable feelings one experience when they can't have a sense of who they are (changing bodies; cognitive growth allows exploring possible selves; social demands)
- Conflict of **identity vs role confusion** (Erikson)
- Definition of who they are and where they fit into the society.
- Sense of identity is achieved by integrating many separate perceptions into a coherent sense of self.

# James Marcia's Theory

- Four identity statuses based on their progress towards an identity in several domains (occupational, religious, political, etc)
- It talks about whether an individual has experienced **crisis** (dealing with identity issues & explored alternatives) and whether she/he has achieved a **commitment** (resolving the issues faced).

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- 4 Identity Statuses:
  - Identity Diffusion : No crisis; No commitment
  - Foreclosure: No crisis; Commitment
  - Moratorium: Crisis; No commitment
  - Identity Achievement: Crisis experienced;  
Commitment made

# Evaluation

- 20% of 18 year old had achieved a stable identity (Meilman, 1979).
- Identity formation takes a **long time**
- It occurs at **different rates in different domains** of identity (occupational choice; gender roles attitude, religious beliefs, political ideologies)
- It **doesn't follow** the expected way from diffusion or foreclosure to moratorium to identity achievement

# Gender Identity

- Personal sense of one's own gender
- It can correlate with person's assigned sex at birth or can differ from it.
- Sex: biological construct; reproductive organs, genes, hormones
- Gender: how they identify internally and express it externally (use clothing, appearance, behaviours)
- Gender Dysphoria: clinically significant distress due to mismatch between assigned sex and their gender identity.



# Gender Roles

- **Gender roles:** the pattern of behaviour that females and males should adopt in a particular society (two sexes to adopt different roles); eg: roles of wife, mother, husband, father, etc.
- **Gender typing:** awareness about biological sex and acquiring patterns of culture appropriate behaviour for the biological sex
- **Gender role norms:** society's expectation/standards concerning what males & females should be like; behaviour viewed as desirable for males or females
- **Gender role stereotypes:** overgeneralized & inaccurate beliefs about what males and females are like

# Gender typing process


- Prenatal period: Fetus develops male or female genitalia
- Birth to 3 years: label child as girl or boy; social experiences (differential treatment)
- 3 to 6 years: gender schemata (acquire basic gender identity and seek more information about it)
- 7 to puberty: gender stability/ self categorization that they are male or female
- **Puberty & beyond: formation of adult gender identity**

# Adhering to gender roles

- **Gender intensification:** sex differences may be magnified by hormonal changes associated with puberty & increased societal pressure to conform to gender roles expectations
- Eg: girls emphasizing on their feminine side & boys on their masculinity
- Eg: conform to traditional gender norms to appeal to other sex; girls ('tomboy') behave more feminine to attract boys

# Achieving Sexual Identity

- Seeing oneself as sexual being & developing an intimate romantic relationship
- Sexual maturity is achieved through the puberty
- Sexuality: Your attraction (physical, emotional or sexual) towards other people
- Types of Sexual orientation: heterosexual( attracted to other sex); homosexual (attracted to same sex); bisexual (attracted to both sexes); asexual (not interested in sex)
- Sexual orientation involves the influence of genetics and environmental factors.

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- Some of the other areas of identity development during adolescence include:
  - **Religious Identity:** similar to their families; question specific customs or practices.
  - **Political Identity:** influenced by their parents' political beliefs; becoming apolitical
  - **Vocational Identity:** takes longer time to develop; work on specific skills

# Influences on Identity Formation

- **Cognitive development** (imagine possible future identities)
- **Personality** (high in openness to experience ; low in neuroticism)
- **Relationship with parents** (authoritative parenting style; foreclosure-controlling parents & over protective; diffusion-neglected/rejected by parents)
- **Opportunities to explore**
- **Cultural context** (traditional societies-adopt adult roles without experimentation/foreclosure)

# Conclusion

- During adolescence the individual seek to establish a clear self identity.
- They search for “who am I?” to understand their own unique traits and what is important for them.
- They consider many possible selves/identities and gradually piece together a cognitive framework for understanding themselves.



*Thank You*

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