

Sociology Essay 1

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The self-discrepancy theory explains the effect of one's ideal/ought self to one's actual self. More specifically, it can be stated to be the difference between these two viewpoints, on an individual level. In sociology, the term actual self is used to refer to your representation of the attributes that you believe you have, or the attributes you believe others see in you. Therefore, your personal view of your actual self is not necessarily going to be the same as your actual self as others perceive you. Ideal self refers to who they wish and hope to be. Ought self is used when the person is working hard to better themselves. Self-views are often motivated by internal expectations of oneself, but also from external factors. From this, there are several emotional reactions that can occur. Positive emotions arise when those work hard to reduce the gap between their actual and ought self. For others, they may think it is impossible to become who they want to in life, which can lead to negative emotions and sometimes depression.

Self-awareness in self-discrepancy theory is a significant factor in how one view themselves and which labels they place on themselves. For very self-aware people they can self-analyze their traits to get an internal picture of who they are versus who they wish to become. If they are self-aware, it is not difficult to follow what they perceive other's reactions with good detail. This allows them to understand further how others view and think of them. However, this can also lead to unnecessary emotional responses, as it is easy to misinterpret how others view ourselves. Often, this misinterpretation leads people to begin unnecessarily doubting themselves.

Changing stereotypes is a tough challenge that everyone across the world seems to be facing. Many reasons exist for why stereotypes are persistent, but here are three: psychodynamic, sociocultural, and cognitive perspectives. Firstly, the psychodynamic perspective explains that stereotypes serve as a self-defense mechanism against anxiety, that it boosts a group's self-esteem to view others outside their group in a negative light. For stereotypes to be negated, according to this mechanism, an alternative must be provided to counter anxiety that would develop from a void of stereotypes. To strength this stance, society must teach and support new stereotypes; this is the sociocultural perspective. If the society as a whole support's stereotypes, it is more comfortable and more enticing for people to follow suit. Lastly, the cognitive perspective states that it is in our nature as people, to categorize things for the reason of simplicity, order, and predictability. Stereotypes follow the nature of people, in which it simplifies the amount of information processing needed. It makes it easy to look at a person or group of peoples, then categorizes them into a general group. As these three mechanisms are deeply ingrained into our ancestry, society, and cognitive nature, altering these views is exceptionally challenging.

Gender roles have long existed as normalcy but recently have been categorized as stereotypes. Two significant reasons for why these are strengthened and maintained can be found during one's first seven years of life. During these years, a person develops their morals, ethics, and who they are as a person, even if they are unaware of it yet. Families, both parents, siblings, and outer family contribute heavily to the development of the child and often pass down their views during this stage. If a child grows up around families who believe strongly in typical gender roles, where the father protects and provides for the family, while the mother nurtures and is the homemaker, it will be difficult to change that child's mind once he grows up, as this is what he knows to be right. However, if the child had a bad experience growing up, it is more likely to change his view, as he may want to deviate from his upbringing. The last significant factor is that of the education system. Peers and teachers of developing children often have a

substantial effect on the child. These views are then consistently driven into the child, which both strengthens and maintains a potential stereotype.