## CHAPTER – 2

**THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Introduction</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Concept of Self in Indian Philosophy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Traditional Concept of Self in Western Philosophy</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Concept of Self in Modern Psychology</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 The Terminology of Self</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Personality and Self-Concept</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Self-concept and Personality Adjustment</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Adolescence and Self-Concept</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 Adolescence and Emotional Adjustment</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 Self-Concept and Emotional Adjustment of Visually Impaired Adolescents</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11 Developmental Changes in Self-Concept</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 INTRODUCTION

As we grow toward maturity each of us develops a private world comprised of attitudes feelings, values, perceptions and expectations which forms a frame of reference through which we view ourselves and interpret the physical and social environment. Psychologists have different names for this private world. Some refer to it as the individual’s ‘self-concept’ others as the ‘self’ or the ‘ego’ or the ‘sense of self-identity’. Although there are academic destinations among these terms we shall use them interchangeably and define self concept or ego as C.R. Rogers (1959) does in the following statement: “The self, that organized consistent conceptual gestalt composed of perceptions of the characteristics of the ‘I’ or ‘me’ and the perceptions of the relationship of the ‘I’ or ‘me’ to others and to various aspects of life, together with the values attached to these perceptions.” This self is the mediator of experiences between the individual and outside world of people and events which it is only one aspect of the total personality, it must be allotted an important place in the development of adjustment.

'Self-concept' is a term which is widely used in the field of psychology. It appears that human behaviour is centered much around the concept one has about one’s ‘self’ ‘who am I?’ ‘what am I?’ ‘who am I in relation to him/her?’ are few of the persisting questions that beings human mind. It is on the basis of answers to such questions that human behaviour changes from person to person, time to time and from situation to situation. It is said to be the core of the personality pattern (Dutta, 1987).

2.2 CONCEPT OF SELF IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

The Brahmanical or orthodox (astika) schools of Indian philosophy, especially the Vedantins and the Nyaya-Vaisesika argue that the self or Atman is a substantial
but non-material entity. The Katha and Chandogya Upanishads for example define the Brahmanical conception of the self as follows:

The light of the Atman, the spirit is invisible, concealed in all beings. It is seen by the seers of the subtle when their vision is keen and clear. The Atman is beyond sound and form, without touch and taste and perfume. It is eternal, unchangeable and without beginning or end, indeed above reasoning. (Mascoro, 1965).

The Brahmanical view on the nature of the self as portrayed in the Upanishads can be summarized as four major themes:

1. The self exists;
2. The self is immortal and without beginning or end;
3. The self is essentially non-material and
4. The self is identical with Brahman, the highest reality (Prevos, 2002).

The heterodox (nastika) schools in Indian philosophy, such as the Carvaka materialist and the Buddhists, question the Brahmanical arguments for a substantial, persistent and non-material self on metaphysical, moral and political grounds the Hindu caste system and believe that the Vedas are full of falsehoods, self-contradictions and tautologies. The Carvaka accuse the Brahmins of being impostors who abuse the words of the Vedas and interpreter them to suit their own egoistic needs. The Vedas are in their opinion nothing but a means of livelihood for the Brahmins who are lazy, lacking in intellect, energy, self-respect and sense (Chadha, 1998).

The views on the self by the Carvaka and Buddhists are illustrated by the following quotes:

The soul is not but the body characterized by the attributes signified in the expressions, ‘I am stout’, ‘I am youthful’, ‘I am grown up.’ ‘I am old’ etc. It is not something other than that. (Mascoro, 1965)
The views of the self in classical Indian philosophy span a wide spectrum of ideas. For the Brahmins, the self is a non-physical soul, for the Buddhists the soul is a mere figment of the imagination. The Carvaka on the other hand see the self as an epiphenomenon.

2.3 TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF SELF IN WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

Self is broadly defined as the essential qualities that make a person distinct from all others. The task in philosophy is defining what these qualities are and there have been a number of different approaches. The 'self' is the idea of a unified being which is the source of consciousness. Moreover, this self is the agent responsible for the thoughts and actions of an individual to which they are ascribed. It is a substance, which, therefore, endures through time, thus the thoughts and actions at different moments of time may pertain to the same self. In the west also the “self” as a theoretical concept has “ebbed and flowed with the currents of philosophical pondering.

Socrates (470-399 B.C.) stirred his listeners by his probing questions into the nature of human soul. He tried to make them consider what they meant when they said ‘I’ or ‘me’. A man’s soul was thus for Socrates, “his essence, his real self, the spiritual unity which informs the diversity of his actions”.

Plato (428 – 348 B.C.) declared that a person was not one saw not a being with a physique. The physique was a person’s body, not the person himself. A person was considered a mind or soul that governed or directed the body, which was of a divine nature and suffered no decay or dissolution (Taylor, 1978). Actually the concept of the human soul as something distinct from the body was much older in Greek thought.
To Aristotle (348-322 B.C.) soul was not something standing in divine seclusion from the body but it expensed itself in and through the body.

The French mathematician philosopher Rene Descartes (1596 – 1650), first discussed the ‘cognito’ or self as a thinking substance. In his "meditations on first philosophy" Descartes (1641) enquired “But what then am I? A thing which thinks, what is a thing which think? It is a thing which doubts understand (conceives) affirms denies dills refuses which also imagines and feels". Thus Descartes identified self with a thinking thing.

Berkeley (1685–1753) conceived of self as something which knew or perceived ideas and exercised diverse operations as willing imaging remembering about them “this perceiving active being is what I call mind spirit soul or myself”. He further stated “what I am myself, that which I denote by the term I, is the same with what is meant by soul or spiritual substances”.

David Hume (1711–1776) may be regarded as the pioneer in the empirical studies of self. He was the first to have studied self from the aspect of plurality. He analyzed self into one Kaleidoscope series of experiences following one another in an endless chain.

To Locke (1732–1724) consciousness was the essence of self, the self extended only to such experiences as were recognized by this consciousness to be belonging to it and the experience that was not thus remembered was in no way a part of self.

According to James Mill (1771–1816) all that could be said of self were sensations, ideas and the lows of their associations and that was contiguity in space and time.
Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) referred self to be the empirical or phenomenal self. It consisted of aggregate of feelings and ideas which existed at any moment and the factor or factors which determined the cohesion.

The keynote to a scientific understanding of the working of the mind was given in 1879 by Wilhelm Wundt, who stood for experimentation and quantitative measurement as the foundation of a psychological theory. “Although Wundt saw the need to make a judicious use of introspective data imagining meaning and colour to events observed under controlled conditions of psychological observations the philosophical concept of the self lost the dignified status according to it in earlier philosophies” (Singh, 1970).

### 2.4 CONCEPT OF SELF IN MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

Self is an individual’s material possession, perhaps, in the same class as his worldly goods. The self has figured prominently in theory and research on social control, economic behaviour, social deviance, personal aspiration, psychological development, inter-personal attraction, social influence, psychopathology, psychotherapy.

Wundt (1832–1920) the founder of modern structural psychology tried to simplify and mechanized the self. His physiological experiments led him to believe that mind was composed of sensations and feelings and center by a process of creative synthesis.

Freud (1856–1940) was first interested more in the details and elements of the mind and it was only relatively late that he recognized the part self played in adjustment. Freud referred the term ‘ego’ as a set of mental processes operating in the interest of satisfying inner drives. The ego and the self were not totally independent concepts.
Baldwin (1895) went an interactionist account of self-development that stimulated the study of self on a scientific footing. He formulated that the ego and alter are born together.

Cooley (1902) defined the self as that which is designated in common speech by Pronouns of the first person singular, 'I', 'me', 'my', 'mine' and 'myself'. He noted that what was labeled by the individual as self produced stronger emotions than what was labeled as nonself, and that it was only through subjective feelings that the self could be identified. He introduced the concept of the 'looking-glass self' which referred to an individual perceiving himself in the way that others perceived him.

Early, Jung (1931) found self to be one that represented human striving for unity. Later Jung (1944) developed psychology of totality, the main concept of which was the self. To him self was the mind point of personality, around which all other systems were constellated. It held these systems together and provided the personality with unity equilibrium and stability. The self was life's goal, a goal that people constantly strove for but rarely reached.

According to Mead (1934) "self is a social structure and it arises in social experience". As an individual incorporates into himself the system of mutually related attitudes in the community with reference to the common activities and goals of the group as a whole, he becomes a complete self, a social product in a complete sense. Self is a structure of attitudes, not a group of holds. The self is reflexive in character and can be phase in terms of 'I' and 'me'. 'I' is the response of the individual to the attitudes of others, the 'me' is the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes and to which 'I' responds. The 'me' is what is remembered and reflected upon. The 'I' is what remembers and does reflecting. 'I' and 'me' taken
together constitute the personality, as it appears in social experience. Without self having 'I' and 'me' aspects, there could be no novelty. The self is not something that exists first and then enters into relationship with others. On the contrary, it is something which develops out of social interaction and is changing constantly, adjusting as new situations and conflicts arise. It assumes an existence of self. Self is perpetually in a state of uneasy equilibrium. It strives for superiority (approval of others), yet it fears inferiority (disapproval of others). The self is a dynamic system, the part of which are functionally related, but never completely integrated. It is always striving and seeking.

Adler (1935) discovered the creative power of the self and regarded it as the prime mover, the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life. The creative self which was hard to describe, intervened between the stimuli acting upon the person and the responses the person made to these stimuli. The doctrine of a creative elf asserted that humans made their own personalities, out of the raw materials of heredity and environment. It gave meaning to life, created the goal as well as the means to the goal.

Goldstein (1939) believed that the individual was motivated by one sovereign drive rather than plurality of drives, which he called self actualization or self realization. It meant that human strive continuously to realize their inherent potentialities by what ever avenues were open. What appeared to be different drives as hunger, sex, power, achievement and curiosity were merely manifestations of the sovereign purpose of life, to actualize oneself.

Angyal (1941) observed that humans were capable of developing ideas about themselves as organisms because many of their organic process became conscious. The sum total of these self conceptions constituted the symbolic self. However,
Angyal also warned that the symbolic self was not always a reliable representation of
the organism i.e. might not be a true picture of reality.

Lecky (1945) identified ‘self’ as the nucleus of personality. To him personality
was a dynamic process, as it involved a continuous assimilation of new ideas and
rejection or modification of old ideas. The self concept as the nucleus of the
personality played a key role in determining what concepts were acceptable for
assimilation into the overall personality organization.

Symonds (1946) explained that as the ego developed an adjusting apparatus
and enlarged its power of perceiving, thinking and acting, so the self which was the
awareness of that growing capacity for control and adjustment developed
concurrently. The concept of the self was determined in large measure by success or
failure of the ego while, on the other hand, success and failure of the ego were to a
degree determined by the adequacy of the self.

Snygg and Combs (1949) defined the self concept as “those parts of the
phenomenal field which the individual has differentiated as definitely and fairly stable
characteristics of himself”. Thus, they viewed the self concept as the nucleus of a
broader organization which contained identical and changeable as well as stable
personality characteristics.

Horney (1950) was concerned with the discrepancies between the real or
actual self and the idea of self which the person possesses. While setting goals for
ourselves, we form an idealized self image, i.e., the self we would like to be. Yet there
is always the danger of confusion between one’s motions of his real self and of the
self he would like to become. It infact one adapts the idealized image as the real self,
the basis for neurosis is established. The conflict between the ideal and the real self,
which Horney took as the basis of neurosis, derives from a faulty representation of self that is acted upon.

Roger’s (1951), congruent self is the “organized, consistent, conceptual gestalt, composed of perceptions of the characteristics of ‘I’ or ‘me’ to others and the various aspects of life together with the values attached to these perceptions”. According to Sullivan (1953), the self arose out of social interaction. He emphasized the interaction of the child with significant others particularly the mother figure, rather than with society at large.

Maslow’s (1954), actualizing self is “man’s ultimate need, adequacy, his driving force for the desire to enhance himself within phenomenal field,” which he calls self-actualization. The self grows into adulthood only partly by objective or subjective discovery, uncovering and accepting what is inner nature of that person.

Allport (1955) coined a new term ‘proprium’ to indicate self which he defined as “all the regions of our life that we regard as peculiarly…. ” The proprium consisted of those aspects of the individual which he regarded as of central importance and which contributed to a sense of inward unity. Allport listed eight aspects of the proprium, such as – bodily sense, self identity, ego enhancement, ego extension, rational agent, self image, proprieate striving and the knower. Allport intended that proprium should not be thought of as segmented. It was a unity and those aspects were descriptive aids in understanding the development of the self.

Jersild (1963) states “the self, as it finally evolves, is a composite of thoughts and feelings which constitute a person’s awareness of his individual existence, his feelings about his characteristics, qualities and properties”.


Secord and Backman (1964) define self as "each one of us has a set of cognitions and feelings towards ourselves. The term most commonly applied to this set of element is self-concept". Thus a person's attitude towards himself has three aspect: cognitive, affective and behavioural.

According to Cattell (1966), self was one of the sentiments, but an especially important, since nearly all attitudes tended to reflect self sentiment in greater or lesser degree. The system of sentiments focused around the self was considered by Cattell to play a crucial role in the integration of the personality.

2.5 THE TERMINOLOGY OF SELF

Self as the central core of the personality has its different terms in psychological literature. These terms are; soul self, ego, self-concept, self-percept, self-image, individual, organism, person, proprium, self-regarding sentiments, self-actualization, self-esteem etc. It is indeed confusing to find such varied terms having same or nearly same connotations.

Similarly one also encounters a multitude of selves such as bodily self, real self, actual self, ideal self, empirical self, material self, spiritual self, social self despised self, looking glass self, mirror self, psychological self etc.

2.6 PERSONALITY AND SELF-CONCEPT

Personality has been described and explained by sociologists, social psychologists, psycho-analysts and psychologists mainly under three categories:

(a) Trait and Type Approach: The approach explains human personality on the basis of stable traits. Individuals are classified into types by the predominance of traits, which characterize them.
(b) Association – Learning Approach: Personality is the essence of the learned habit of response that an individual makes to the stimulus conditions of his internal and external environment. Learning plays a central role in the formation of personality.

(c) Phenomenological Approach: According to this approach, an individual reacts to his subjective perception of the stimulus rather than the objective manifestation of the object itself. This subjectively apprehended world is known as phenomenal field, which determines behaviour and which is the cause of action. It emphasizes the organizing factors within the individual and stresses that the important determinant of behaviour is not the stimulus object itself, but rather the organisms apprehension of it (Tripathi, 1990).

Various theories put forth are Lewin’s field theory, Organismic theory of Goldstein, self-theory of Rogers, Snygg and Combs. In recent socio-psychological studies of personality, self-theory is an important one.

The concept of ‘self’ is of special interest in personality study. Self concept is said to be the ‘core’ or centre of gravity, of the personality pattern. The personality pattern is made up of ‘traits’ or specific qualities of behaviour organized and integrated into a whole. These consists of reactions to frustrates ways of meeting problems aggressive and defensive behaviour, and outgoing or with drawing attitudes toward other people” (Hurlock Elizabeth, 1964). In other words traits are the patterns of response tendencies. The core or centre of gravity of this pattern is the concept of self the picture the individual holds of himself, his abilities, his characteristics, his worth and his relation to the world about him. The traits and the concept of the self are so interrelated that “the pattern can be compared to a wheel in which the hub
represents the concept of self and the spokes represent the traits. Just as the spokes of a well are held in position and thus influenced by the hub, so the traits are influenced by the concept of self" (Hurlock, 1979).

According to Allport (1961), the self is something of which we are immediately aware. We think of it as the warm central, private region of our life. As such it plays a crucial part in our consciousness (a concept broader than self) in our personality (a concept broader than consciousness) and in our organism (a concept broader than personality). Thus it is some kind of core in our being.

Self concept is also termed as 'keystone of personality'. Its importance arises from its influence over the quality of a person's behaviour and his methods of adjustment to life situations. In Zewin's (1951) words, it also gives 'consistency to the personality.

According to Freud the personality is made up of three major systems: the id, the ego and the super ego. The ego (self) is said to be the executive of the personality because it controls the gateways to action selects the features of the environment to which it will respond and decides what instincts will be satisfied and in what manner.

Rogers (1959) conceives two fundamental constructs in his personality theory viz. the organism and the self. Personality adjustment to a large extent depends upon the congruence or incongruence between the self as perceived and the actual experience of the organism. It also depends upon correspondence or discrepancy between the self and ideal self.

2.7 SELF-CONCEPT AND PERSONALITY ADJUSTMENT

Adjustment is a continuous and life-long process and life means continuous adjustment to changes in the physical and social environment. Throughout the life
individual faces situations in which prompt and complete satisfaction of his need is not possible. All these situation calls for adjustment. The dictionary meaning of the word ‘adjustment’ is ‘to fit’, ‘make suitable’, ‘adapt’, ‘modify’ or ‘make correspondent’. Thus when one makes an adjustment between two things, he adapts or modifies one or both of them to correspond to each other. Psychologists have defined the term ‘adjustment’ in a various ways.

Originally, the concept of adjustment was biological one and was the corner stone in Darwin’s ‘Theory of Evolution’. In Biology, the term was used in two senses. In the first sense, it has been used ‘in reference to the balance between various organs or parts of the organism in their total functioning’ and in the second sense the concept of adjustment takes a more dynamic meaning which can better used as ‘a process of adjustment of the organism to its surroundings’.

Symonds (1933) defined adjustment “as a satisfactory relation of an organism to its environment”. The word satisfactory relation may mean adaptation to the demands of reality. Thus adjustment is a process that helps a person to lead a happy and contented life while maintaining a balance between his needs and his capacity to fulfill them. In addition to his own basic needs an individual is also subjected to certain demands of society. If he thinks only in terms of satisfying his own needs without thought of the norms, ethics and cultural traditions of society, he will not be adjusted to his environment. Adjustment does not cater only to one’s own demands but also to the demands of society. Also adjustment involves gratification of a person’s needs as governed by the demands of various environmental situation. This is not however, a one day process. An individual maintains the balance between himself and his surroundings either by modifying his own behaviour or by modifying
the environment. In other words, adjustment is an all inclusive term meaning relationship between an individual and his environment through which his needs are satisfied in accordance with social demands. It includes traits of behaviour and motives for behaviour as well as adjustment made with these traits and motives.

From psychological point of view adjustment can be defined as a process of need reduction. Because every living organism develops his own needs and these needs must be satisfied by interaction with the environment. But there are so many hindrances to come across in the process of need satisfaction. Unfulfilled needs always create frustration, dissatisfaction or the problem of adjustment. According to Good (1959), "Adjustment is a process of findings and adapting modes of behaviour suitable to the environment or to change in the environment". But adjustment is not easy and simple to achieve. It depends on number of interacting elements. Similar situations demanding adjustment are dealt with by different individuals in a variety of ways and the different adjustment differs in effectiveness.

In simple words, it may be defined as a relationship between an individual and his environment through which the individual’s needs are satisfied in accordance with their social demands, because a person attempts to meet its demands with the resources of his environment. The most important areas of adjustment are the home, health, emotional, social, educational etc.

Adjustment and personality are inextricably bound together. In the words of Lazarus (1976), "They are two sides of the same coin, out it is really impossible to speak of one without the other". Again self is conceived as the care of the personality, the care that determines the adjustment pattern. It is well documented that behaviour is a function, in some significant part, of one’s self concept, one’s self regarding
attitudes. People behave according to as they perceive themselves to be. Rogers (1947) believes that the self is a basic factor in the formation of personality and in the determination of behaviour. To him adjustment is in part a function of the self concept and self acceptance. As the perception to self changes behaviour, changes the person’s feeling of adequacy is basic to psychological adjustment.

Rogers (1959) further speaks of three kinds of congruence’s – encongruences, which are basic to the process of adjustment-

(1) The congruence and incongruence between the self as perceived and the actual experience of the organized when the symbolized experiences that constitute the self faithfully mirror the experiences of the organism, the person is said to be adjusted, mature and fully functioning. Such as, a person accepts the entire range of organismic experience without threat or anxiety. He or she is able to think realistically. Incongruence between self and organism makes individual feel threatened and anxious. They behave defensively and their thinking becomes constricted and rigid.

(2) The congruence or lack of it between subjective reality (the phenomenal field) and external reality (the world as it is). The phenomenal field at any given moment is made up of conscious (symbolized) and unconscious (unsymbolized) experiences.

(3) The degree of correspondence between the self and ideal self. If the discrepancy between self and ideal self is large, the person is dissatisfied and maladjustment.

Rogers (1959) also stresses the need for unconditional positive regard by others. He says “If an individual should experience only unconditional positive
regard, then no conditions of worth would develop, self-regard would be unconditional, the needs for positive regard would never be at variance with organismic evaluation, and the individual would be psychologically adjusted and would be fully functioning.” Thus, Rogers postulates the need for positive self-regard from others (warmth, liking, respect, sympathy and acceptance), and a need for positive self-regard, which was related to or dependent upon positive regard from others.

When positive self regard depends on evaluations by others, discrepancies may develop between needs of the organism and the needs of the self-concept for positive self-regard. There is thus incongruence between the self and experience leading to psychological maladjustment. Maladjustment is the result of attempting to preserve the existing self-concept from the threat of inconsistent experiences. This leads to selective perception and distortion or denial of experiences (Dutta, 1987). Numerous studies have dealt with self-ideal congruence and its relation to adjustment pattern. Green (1945) has shown that level of aspiration is related to emotional maladjustment. Students who rate themselves as emotionally unstable tend to make either very high aspiration estimates, or estimates below actual performance. The well-adjusted groups consistently give estimates just little above average.

Self-concept is highly influenced by many factors, e.g., family, teacher, social interaction, religion, sex, socio-economic status, physical traits, body characteristic, socio-economic status of school, caste etc.

Carl Rogers (1947) stressed the importance of an individual’s self for determining the process of his growth, development and appropriate adjustment to his environment. There are two basic systems underlying Roger’s personality theory-
organism and the self. According to Rogers the acquisition of the concept of self is a long and continuous process. Human beings have inherited the tendency to develop their self in the process of interpersonal and social experiences which they acquire in the environment. In other words, our inner world (in the form of our natural impulses) interacts with our total range of experience to form the concept of our self. The concept's of self thus developed may differ from person to person as they are based purely on one's own personal experiences. The concepts of self are sometimes based more on personal needs than on reality. Once a concept of self is formed, the individual strives to maintain it by regulating his behaviour.

The most unfortunate result in the development of personality occurs in cases where an individual develops some false image. This false image is sometimes so strong that even indisputable reality vehemently denied. Inconsistency between one's actual image and false self-image may then lead to abnormality in one's behaviour. Similarly, the development of an ideal self too unreasonable and unattainable or too different from one's real self, may result in maladjustment and serious personality disorder. An individual's adjustment, happiness, growth and development all depend upon the union and harmony between the image of his self and the organism i.e. the experience or situations he meets in his life.

2.8 ADOLESCENCE AND SELF-CONCEPT

Adolescence is considered to be the very special period in human life cycle. It begins with puberty - the period when sexual maturity and attainment of the emotional, social and other aspects of adult maturity occur. Of course, it does not mean that at the end of this period all the adolescent growth trends are complete. Adolescence simply means a peak in human growth and change. The period from the
age eleven to sixteen years is called early adolescence and the late adolescence covers
the period from then until eighteen, the age of legal maturity. The dawn of
adolescence is comparatively earlier in girls than in boys.

Early adolescence is markedly a period of rapid growth and development. At
this period various physical, mental, social, emotional and intellectual changes take
place. These changes create confusion in the mind of adolescents. At this stage he is
in ambiguous position. Being neither a child nor an adult he frequently finds himself
involved in emotional conflicts with younger children in the family, with parents,
teachers and other members of the community. In late adolescence children start to
emerge from the world of make believe and dependence on others and begin to
become young men/women. Now, they begin to be aware of social, moral, economic
and religious responsibilities. Life’s perspective becomes broader life values emerge
and concepts begin to take definite shape. They are at the threshold of maturity and
adulthood.

Adolescence as a period of rapid development occupied with many problems.
The problems of adolescence have been studied by psychologists since a long time,
but systematic studies were conducted for the first time by G.S. Hall in 1904. Hall
viewed “adolescence as a natural and inevitable period of inner conflict and
behavioural turmoil”.

In adolescence, the social roles and responsibilities of adolescents are changed
far which they are not mentally prepared. To change over to new roles requires
adjustment and it takes time to change old habits of childhood in home, school and
society. Garrison (1959) holds that “adolescence – the period of transition involves
physiological changes, psychological changes, social changes as well as educational
and intellectual changes." Due to these changes adolescents very often find it difficult to adjust with the environment and it stands as a problem to them.

From the perspective of the life span adolescence appears as the time when the surge of life reaches its highest peak. The adolescent's life is, or might be, full of opportunity to enter into new experience, to explore new relationships, to feel new resources of inner strength and ability.

Even if all has gone well in their earlier development, adolescents face a promised land that is also a strange land. No matter how much help their elders try to give them, they cannot fully open the way or prepare a place. It is primarily the adolescents themselves who must find a path and build a settlement of their own before they can be at home in this strange land. They must seek to discover themselves, their reaches and limits, and their role in the adult world.

It is this striving to be and to become – to delve into the meaning of existence, as far as it can be found – that constitutes the living of a life. It is not, of course, the adolescent alone who is so occupied. But the adolescent is deeply involved in the search through which each human being in each new generation, almost from the day of his birth, has sought to realize himself and to discover who he is, what he is and what he might become (Jersild, 1970).

An adolescent's self-concept is dynamic, and casualty is complex. That is problems and difficulties can lower self-concept; but low self-concept can also cause problems. For example, researchers have found that levels of self-worth in each of the above domains are associated with behaviours and accomplishments relevant to success in these particular areas of development. For adolescents, having a high academic self-concept is associated with positive academic performance (Byrne,
1996) and having a high physical self-concept is related to increased physical activity (Marsh, *et al.*, 2006). Positive overall self-concepts have been linked to various markers of positive development, including positive peer relationship and overall happiness (Tarrant *et al.*, 2006).

An adolescent can make targeted self-evaluations in a number of different domains. Researches have identified the following eight domains that make-up an adolescent's self-concept -Scholastic competence, Athletic competence, Physical appearance, Peer acceptance, Close friendships, Romantic relationships, Job competence, Conduct/morality (Harter, 1999).

Having an overall negative self-concept in adolescence has been associated with depression, drug use and eating disorders in girls (Lewinshon, *et al.*, 1997). Both male and female adolescents struggle with negative self-concepts, but female adolescents tend to worry more about physical appearance than do males (Harter, 1999). Additionally, black adolescents tend to have more positive self-concepts than do their white counterparts.

Several signs may indicate that an adolescent has a negative self-concept. These may include one or more of the following:

- Doing poorly in school;
- Having few friends;
- Putting down oneself and others;
- Teasing others;
- Showing excessive amounts of anger;
- Being excessive jealous;
- Appearing conceited; or
- Hesitating to try new things. (Hadly *et al.*, 2008).
2.9 ADOLESCENCE AND EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

To understand the adolescent it is important to know what he does and thinks but it is even more important to know what he feels. The more we seek to understand the adolescent’s world the more necessary it becomes to look into his feelings – his pride and shame, love and hate, hope and discouragement and his fears.

Adolescents themselves emphasize the importance of emotions. When you people report what they admire or dislike about themselves, they mention emotional characteristics more often than their physical characteristics or their mental ability.

To be emotional means to be ‘moved’. An emotional experience usually involves feeling (such as the feeling of fear), impulse (such as an impulse to flee) and a perception of what it is that gives rise or seems to give rise to emotion. Sometimes these elements of the experience are so vague that a person cannot clearly identify them (Jersild, 1960). For practical purposes, expressions of feelings that exceed mildness and become intense will be considered as emotion. Emotions play a significant role in the development of child and adolescent. Some believe that emotion is prior to all experiences and is fundamental to them to the extent that all learning is acquired in emotional terms. We tend to act on the basis of how we have perceived the situation, and this state of feeling has a significant effect on our total perception and behaviour. The total organism is involved in emotions, which have some physiological concomitants.

We should think of emotions positively as well as negatively. Emotions can be disorganizing or a source of motivational energy; they can give richness an vitality to the individual’s actions. Feelings can be pleased as often as they are unpleasant. The
range of response in the emotional life of any given individual is great (Dinkmeyer, 1967).

Emotions might be described in terms of the movement they inspire between people. Adler (1927) believed that emotions were accentuations of character traits and that like character traits they had a goal and a direction. From this point of view, emotions occur whenever they are appropriate to the given style of life and the behaviour pattern of the individual. The purpose of emotions, then, is to modify to his benefit the situation of the individual in whom they occur.

Emotions can be viewed as moving the individual toward people as well as against or away from people. Adler (1927) used the term disjunctive and conjunctive emotions. He described disjunctive emotions as those which tend to separate us from people. Anger and sadness would be examples of disjunctive emotions. Conjunctive emotions, such as joy, sympathy and modesty, join us with people.

Jersild (1960) also speaks of negative and positive emotions. Negative emotions – anxiety, fear and anger – occur when the individual’s self is threatened; positive emotions occur when the individual’s goals are enhanced and he feels secure.

Study of emotions shows that reactions are highly individualized or personalized. From child to child different situations elicit humor, joy, fear or anger. In each situation it is desirable to determine the reaction of other people to the child’s emotional behaviour. Sometimes merely by observing the consequences of the emotion it is possible to determine, to an extent, the goal or direction of the emotion.

During adolescence, as at all times of life, the conditions that give rise to emotion are as varied as the conditions of life itself. Emotion is involved in everything in which the adolescent is involved. Emotions occur in the adolescent’s
life when his desires are fulfilled, or when he is blocked or thwarted in his efforts, or when he is harmed or threatened with harm. Emotion is aroused by any happening that touches upon the adolescent's view of himself, any occurrence through which he discovers his talent's and his limitations, and any even that threatens to contradict a view he has of himself. Among the circumstances that are most potent in arousing emotion in the adolescent are those that collide with his pride in himself or the expectations he places upon himself or those that arouse misgivings concerning himself.

The total life adjustment process has two essential parts – first, it is necessary for the organism to be stirred up when it has a need. Second, the organism has to do something to satisfy the need and to reduce the stimulating condition that served as a drive. The first aspect is as important as the second. If an animal that lacked food and water did not have appetitive drives to arouse it to activity, it would Languish inertly and could not survive or reproduce its kind. The function of emotional tension is similar. If we do not have emotion to stimulate us, to overcome a threat, to escape a danger, and perhaps also to embrace a mate, we would be ill-equipped for survival. With emotion the organism can be energized to respond to a danger before it strikes, if there is a cue that the threat is approaching. Normal emotion is therefore adaptive in the distinct meaning of being valuable for individual and racial survival. It is not, of course, adjustive for it stirs up activity, whereas adjustment means the reduction or satisfaction of drives.

The concept that emotion is adaptive seems to be at variance with the common observation that an 'overemotional' person is unhappy and ineffective in his adjustments. This discrepancy can be reconciled by considering the strength of
emotional drives. Just as the hunger drive can exist at all strengths from a good appetite to intense near-starvation. So, emotional tensions can occur at all degrees of intensity. A moderate hunger is a useful drive that stimulates an animal or person to eat before his nutritional resources are exhausted. Starvation is too intense a drive, causing the famished person to think about nothing but the seeking of food to the exclusion of all of life's other interests and activities. Various degrees of emotional tension have similar functions. A little fear may make us more cautious, and a little anger may lead to our persistence. Both may increase efficiency in everyday life (Laurance et al., 1956).

The increased complexity of our social order has brought about a greater demand for guidance and training, if growing boys and girls are to be able to meet satisfactorily the conditions they will face tomorrow. However, growing up itself is accompanied by many problems. These relate to various aspects of the adolescent's life and are very real and significant to the individual concerned, although they may appear trivial to the mature adult. A number of students of adolescent behaviour have concerned themselves with the problems of adolescents. Studies show that home and school problems loom large in the lives of growing boys and girls. The consequences of these problems are important in connection with adequate personal and social adjustments of adolescents (Garrison, 1965).

The nature of adolescent problems varies with social and living conditions. Problems among preadolescents will be related, in a large degree, to their personal needs, whereas those of older boys and girls are more often connected with social needs. The possibilities of frustration increase with maturity and the expansion of the needs and wants of adolescents. The major sources of frustration are cultural
demands, the home situation, the social-class status and the school. These sources do not operate separately. It is the combined influence of these and other forces in the adolescent's environment that operate to produce a well-adjusted or poorly adjusted personality.

2.10 SELF-CONCEPT AND EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED ADOLESCENTS

The WHO has developed and published an international classification of 'Impairments', 'Disabilities' and 'Handicap'. Though the terms 'impairment' 'Disability' and 'Handicap' are related to the different planes of disadvantages. A disabled person according to the WHO, is one suffers from any one of the following three types.

(a) Impairment: It means a permanent or transitory psychological, physiological or anatomical loss or abnormality of structure or function (e.g. an amputated limb, paralysis after polio, diabetes, mental retardation impaired hearing, near singleness etc.)

(b) Disability: It refers to restrictions on or presentational of carrying out an activity because of an impairment in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being e.g. difficulty in walking, seeing, speaking, hearing, counting, lifting, reading, writing etc. A disability may last for a long or short time, be permanent or reversible progressive or regressive and may vary in its impact from one situation to another.

(c) Handicap: This term is used to denote a disability that interferes with what is expected at a particular time in one's life (e.g. inability to care for one self,
communicating thoughts and concerns, development a capacity for independent economic activity)

In other words impairment represents exteriorization of a pathological state and in principle represents disturbances at the level of the organ.

Disability may arise as a direct consequence of impairment or as a response by the individual, particularly psychologically to a physical, sensory or other impairment. Disability represents objectification of impairment and as such it reflects disturbances at the level of the person. It is a difficulty in performing one or more functions that are generally accepted as normal and essential in daily life such as self care, engagement in social relationship and earning a living.

Handicap in the context of health experience is a disadvantage for an individual resulting from impairment or a disability that limits or prevents the fulfillment of that individual role. As such the handicap reflects the consequences for the individual, cultural, socio-economic and environment. A handicap may result from impairment without the mediation of a state of disability one can be impaired without being disabled and disabled without handicapped.

According to government of India, ministry of welfare (Document No. 4-2/83 HW III) dated 6th August 1986, “An impairment is a permanent or transitory psychological or anatomical loss and /or abnormality. For example, a missing or defective part, tissue organ or mechanism of the body.”

Further, there are both quantitative and functional definitions of the visual impairment. Visual impairment is usually defined as visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with proper correction or a limitation in the field of vision such that the
widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angular distance not greater than 20 degrees (American foundation for the Blind. 1961).

Functional definitions vary according to the purpose they are intended to serve. This as have ‘travel vision’, ‘Shadow vision’, ‘near vision’ and ‘distance vision’ as well as ‘educational blindness’ and ‘occupational blindness’. Because of its practical importance, educational blindness has been more systematically studied. The educational blind are those people whose vision is so defective that they cannot be educated via vision. Their education must be primarily through the auditory coetaneous and kinesthetic senses. The educationally blind must read and write in Braille.

Types of Visual Impairment

There are three types of blindness –

(a) Congenital Blindness

A congenitally blind person is one who has never experienced sight and is unable to visualize visual concepts. Such a person has to conceptualize ideas about objects reality through any means other than vision.

(b) Adventitious Blindness

An adventitiously blind person is one who has developed blindness later in life. His loss of sight, which may be gradual or abrupt, has taken place after experiencing the world first through the medium of vision.

(c) Partially Sighted

Such a person does not lack total vision; a person with less than 20/200 vision after correlation, is however, blind in legal terms. The adaptation process of the partially visually impaired is not the same as that of the completely blind (Sen, 1988).
Causes of Visual Impairment

Visual impairment is caused by certain defects in any one of the parts of the human eye. There are four functional parts of the eye; disturbances to any one of these parts or systems (either due to inborn or acquired defect), may lead to visual disability, either partial or total, depending on the nature of the defect.

The four systems or parts recognized for their eye are:- (a) Protective part, (b) Refractive part, (c) Accommodation part and (d) Receptive part.

(a) Protective Part consists of a socket in the skull in which the eye ball lies; around this are eyebrows or eye lashes and tear glands, any defect in them may cause visual handicap. Trachoma is a serious disease of the eye-lids even causing total blindness sometimes, this disease can affect the cornea and the conjunctive of the eye; any drooping of the lids because of the disease, may affect vision adversely.

(b) The refractive part of the visual system is designed to focus light on the retina in which the cornea, the crystalline lens, the aqueous humor and the vitreous humor are involved certain defects in the refractive system identified are myopia, hypermetropia, cataract, astigmatism and glaucoma. These eye problems affect the passing of the ray of light through the eye.

(c) The disability which may be categorized under the third system is the directive type, consisting in the structure of the six ciliary muscles of the eye controlling eye movements sideways or up and down. If these muscles functioning are defective, it may lead to squint or crossed eye. This defect results in the failure of the two eyes to direct simultaneous gaze due to faulty co-ordination of the muscles. Nystagmus is another type of defect in directive function.
(d) The receptive system where vision takes place depends upon the retina, the optic nerve, the brain cortex in the occipital lobe. There are different types of impairment in the receptive system. One such defect is called retrolental fibroplasias which is a condition of the retina caused by excessive oxygen supplied to the premature baby.

A host of conditions may degenerate any of these four functional systems of the eye which may be either congenital or environmental. Diseases like – meningitis, epilepsy, small pox, hydrocephaly, brain tumor, etc. may affect the area of the seeing part of the brain, impairing the visual process (Sen, 1988).

A great deal of speculation exists regarding the characteristics of the blind. The visually impaired children show many problems such as behaviour problems as also problems of learning difficulty, because the concept formation of the congenitally blind is restricted as they do not have all the necessary sensations. Concept formation depends upon the sensory stimulation through different senses; and children having impaired vision would have difficulty in experiencing certain things through other
senses. They would also have difficulty in perceiving objects in space or in developing abstract concepts.

The blind differs from the sighted in the perceptual field in respect of the range and variety of experiences in the ability to get about and also in the control of the environment and the self in relation to it. The lack of vision affects behaviour is an adjustment process but also there are behavioural aspects which can only be maintained by visual feedback. Lack of visual feedback restricts the range of behaviour. It was a common belief that the blind people are overcompensated by their other senses. Hayes (1941) however, contended otherwise that there is no psychological overcompensation, and they function as all do, except that do it without sight. "In memory, as in sensation, compensation was not a gift but the reward of persistent effort, i.e., attention, practice, adaptation and increased use of remaining faculties" (Shastri, 1977). Thus, sensory and motor limitations of the blind people have far reaching implications for perception and cognition. They influence the gathering of information, the maintenance of behavioural sequences, the acquisition of plans the stimulation of images produced by behavioural outcomes and assessment of risk (Sen, 1988).

The potential relation between visual impairment and difficulties in the formation of the self-concept has been the subject of much controversy for several years. Most of the studies coincide in the need of continue investigating in this area because discrepant results have been found. Pioneer works in this field (Jervis, 1959) observed two extremes in the appraisals of self-concept is visually impaired youths: either they had a very poor self-concept, or they overvalued their personal attributes compared to sighted people.
Some studies (Beaty, 1991, 1992) have found that visual impairment could be the cause of the feeling of incapacity and inferiority, which may be reflected in a lack of social acceptance, low academic results, physical incapacity, and poor social adjustment. Thus, circumstances such as the presence of visual impairment have been noted to affect the formation and development of the self-concept negatively. Meighan (1971) analyzed the sample of 203 adolescents with visual discrepancy (102 women and 101 men), 120 were completely blind and 83 had partial vision. The results showed significant differences between the self-concept of the blind and that of the people who were not blind. However, no significant differences were observed between the subgroups of adolescents with visual impairment.

In contrast, other studies have suggested that visually impaired children are not at more risk of developing low self-esteem than their sighted counterparts (Alexander, 1996; Griffin-Shirley and Nes, 2005). Comparative studies of blind and sighted adolescents found no differences in self-esteem and established that the relations with friends contribute significantly to the impairment of visually impaired young people's self-esteem. Some investigations have attempted to determine whether there are gender differences in the self-concept of visually impaired men and women. The results revealed that the sighted males score higher in self-confidence than the females but there were no differences in the blind subjects as a function of gender in any of the self-concept factor (Paulinelli and Tamayo, 1986).

According to Sacks and Wolffe (1998) visually impaired adolescents have low frequency of interaction with both sighted and visually impaired peers and visually impaired adolescents differ from their sighted peers in amount of independent travel and they have to work harder to maintain their friendship with sighted peers. In terms
of adjustment, adolescents with low vision engage in passive activities and spend their time alone. Morse (1983) reviewed several studies on the psychosocial adjustment of children with low-vision. He concluded that children with low-vision tend to be more unsettled by the limits of their vision. In a study Peadboy and Birch (1967) found that children with low vision tend to exhibit with more frequency under achieving behaviours and fatigue and are more prone to emotional problems.

An important aspect of psychosocial adjustment is the development of a positive self-concept. Self-concept can be defined as a set of attitudes individuals hold about themselves that help shape their identity, self-image, and self-esteem. Self-concept and is what conditions our expectations and motivates our behaviour and has important implications on our personal professional and social lives. A positive self-concept is usually associated with the ability to cope and overcome the consequences of a disability. It gives an individual a positive outlook on life satisfaction and commitment (Schinazi, 2007).

Individuals differ in how they accept their disability. In some cases, the inability to cope leaves the individual feeling detached from the general society. In other situations, individuals detach themselves because they feel they cannot fit in or are being pitied by others. Negative self-concepts are usually associated with isolation, depression and mental and health problems (Lopez-Justicia, 2006).

2.11 DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGES IN SELF-CONCEPT

Children begin to think of themselves as separate individuals during the toddler period. By 21 to 24 months, children can recognize themselves in the mirror, and they begin to use such words as me, I and mine as a way of asserting their
individuality. In part, behaviour attributed to the ‘terrible twos’ is an expression of the child’s emerging self and individuality.

During preschool and early elementary school, children primarily describe themselves in terms of their physical characteristics, interests, action, and other concrete labels (Harter, 1999). For example, a 4-years-old might say, ‘I am boy, and I like to play with Logos’. This tendency to use physical self-descriptions reflects a young child’s concrete thinking abilities.

**Table 2.1: Developmental changes in Self-Representations in Childhood and Adolescence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age period</th>
<th>Developmental Characteristics</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toddler and early childhood</td>
<td>Concrete observation characteristics focused on abilities, activities and possessions. Isolated representation with no coordination or coherence,</td>
<td>I go to school. I can run fast. I have a baby sister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early to middle childhood</td>
<td>Simple links between traits; all-or-none thinking; typically positive representations.</td>
<td>I am nice and my teacher likes me. I am good at running and climbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle to late childhood</td>
<td>Trait labels is that focus on abilities and interpersonal characteristics; social comparisons with peers. Integration of positive and negative characteristics.</td>
<td>I am good at math, but reading is hard for me. I have friends than my sister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early adolescence</td>
<td>Integration of traits into simple abstractions. Focused on skills/attributes that influence interactions with others. All-or-none thinking. Don’t detect inconsistencies between traits.</td>
<td>I am a pretty cheerful person, especially with my friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late adolescence</td>
<td>Higher-order abstractions that reflect personal beliefs, values and moral standards. More stable and balanced view of positive and negative standards.</td>
<td>People say I am moody. I am happy some days, but depressed sometimes. I am American, but I respect my Chinese heritage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Meece (2002)
That is, young children describe themselves in terms of attributes that may be physical (e.g., ‘I have brown hair’), active (e.g., ‘I can count’), social (e.g., ‘I have a baby brother’), or psychological (e.g., ‘I am nice’). However, a young child’s understanding of self is very limited. Children may sometimes feel mean and sometimes feel nice, but they have difficulty coordinating these two views of themselves into a unified sense of self (Harter, 1999). Also, children’s self-evaluations during this period are unrealistically positive because young children have difficulty distinguishing between their real and ideal self. Because young children want to be smart, they often describe themselves as smart (Stipek, 1984).

During the middle childhood years (8 to 12 years old), children begin to describe them selves in terms of higher-order concepts that are based on several different features of the self. For example, a 10-year-old girl might describe herself as a good student because she reads well, gets good grades, and finishes her work on time. Whereas younger children are unable to integrate opposing attributes (e.g., mean and nice), older children are able to do so. Accordingly their self-descriptions tend to include both positive and negative characteristics (Harter, 1999). Older children are also more likely to describe themselves in terms of interpersonal and social characteristics, such as caring, loyal, trustworthy, and so forth. These self-descriptions suggest that older children are beginning to place themselves within a social context.

Older children also understand that they may have thoughts and feelings that are hidden from others. Psychologists refer to this developmental trend as the emergence of the inner or psychological self (Selman, 1980). It is not until adolescence, or during the formal operational period, that children begin to describe themselves in terms of abstract values, beliefs, and attitudes (Damon & Hart, 1982;
Harter, 1999). Adolescents, for example, are much more likely than younger children to describe themselves in terms of a political, religious, or orientation. However, young adolescents are likely to have different conceptions of themselves in relation to parents, close friends, teachers and so forth. Discrepancies in self-perceptions across relationships and roles can cause confusion and uncertainty. These feelings are exacerbated by the adolescent's ability to reflect on internal states. Adolescents can become preoccupied with their thoughts and feelings. Cognitive advances in the adolescent years enable young people to develop a coherent and integrated representation of the self. As described below, identity formation involves defining oneself in terms of an organized system of beliefs, goals and values. The Focus on Development table summarizes changes in self-conceptions from early childhood through late adolescence.

Along with these changes in self-conceptions, children develop a more differentiated view of the self as they mature. As early as kindergarten, one first grade children develop separate concepts of their physical, social and cognitive abilities (Wigfield & Schiefele, 1998). An older student's academic self-concept may be further broken down according to success in individual subject's areas, such as reading, mathematics, or science. That is to say a student may view himself or herself as good in mathematics but not musically talented. Teachers and parents need to remember that children's self-concepts vary across subject areas. They may have poor academic self-concepts in some subject areas but average or above-average self-concepts in others (Marsh, 1989). One view of a differentiated self-concept is shown in Figure 2.2.
Another important change that occurs during the school years in the use of social comparisons to evaluate oneself (Ruble, 1983), whereas preschoolers may describe themselves in terms of actions (e.g. 'I can ran fast'), older children are much more likely to make comparative judgements of their abilities (e.g. 'I am the fastest runner in the class'). Theorists believe that such comparisons help children to identify their unique characteristics and to differentiate themselves from others. However, comparisons can also produce declines in self-concept or self-esteem when children perceive themselves as less able, less socially competent, or less attractive than their peers. Social comparison processes in the classroom can have a very negative effect on children's to learn.
Numerous studies report that age affects children's overall and academic self-concept. In general there is a decline in students' overall self-concept during late childhood and early adolescence followed by resurgence in late adolescence and early adulthood (Eccles et al., 1998).

In general, children's academic self-concepts become more accurate with age, whereas young children are likely to overestimate their abilities in certain areas, older children have a more realistic view of their abilities. That is, their self-perceptions are more highly correlated with grades, teacher evaluations, and other external feedback (Marsh, 1989). The increasing accuracy of children's ability perceptions are related to several factors. First, children are better able to utilize social comparison information in judging their skills and abilities by the middle childhood years. Also, age and ability stratification in school can stimulate social comparisons among children of the same age. Further, as children's cognitive abilities, mature they are better able to integrate multiple sources of information about their abilities (teacher comments, grades etc.).

Another important change in adolescents' self-perception that teachers need to consider is their increasing ability to reflect on themselves. As adolescents become more self-reflective, they develop a greater understanding of themselves. However, this self-reflective tendency among this age group often leads to an increased sense of self-consciousness, because adolescents assume that others are also observing and evaluating them. This developmental trend can often lead adolescents to dress and act like their peers, so they would not stand out from others. It can also lead adolescents to be highly critical of themselves. Because of this sense of self-consciousness teachers should take care in singling students out in public for either special recognition or disciplinary actions. It may be more appropriate to provide such feedback in private. Gradually, as an adolescent's self-concept becomes more firmly established, he or she begins to feel more secure and less self-conscious (Meece, 2002).