CHAPTER I

Conceptual Tools and a Framework
Rationale of the Study

Does the use of communications media transforms the spatial and temporal organisation of social life in a fundamental way? Does it create new forms of action and interaction, and new modes of exercising power, which are no longer linked to the sharing of a common locale? What is it like to live in a world where the capacity to experience events is no longer determined by the possibility of encountering them on the time-space paths of daily life?

To understand the social impacts of the development of new networks of communication and information flow one has put aside the intuitively plausible idea that communication media serve to transmit information and symbolic content to individuals whose relations remain fundamentally unchanged. We must see, instead, that the use of communication media involves the creation of new forms of action and interaction in the social world, new kinds of social relationships and new ways relating to others and to oneself. It is this critical shift that we will focus on, i.e. the nature of the self and on the ways in which the process of self-formation is affected by the profusion of media materials and mediated interaction.

Let us explore some fundamental conceptual tools and theoretical frameworks for possible clues for the explanation of this phenomenon.

Social Selves – Society and the Individual

The view of human brings as self-contained unitary individuals who carry their uniqueness deep inside themselves, like pearls hidden in their sells, is one that is ingrained in the Western tradition of thought. It is a vision captured in the idea of the
person as a monad - that is, a solitary individual divided from other human beings by deep walls and barriers: a self-contained being whose social bonds are not primary in its existence, but only of secondary importance. This understanding of people as monads creates one of the central problems of the social sciences, a problem that has become known as the division between society and the individual? The question assumes from the very outset that these concepts represent two opposing entities which are fundamentally divided. The problems then becomes one of creating theories which can conceptualize the 'links' between the social and individual worlds, an enterprise doomed to failure because of the dichotomous way that the problem is conceptualized in the first place.

A long side this dichotomy, and related to it, there exists another problem in understanding the social nature of individuality. This is, not only do people in the Western world feel separated from the others with whom they live and who make up their society, they also feel divided within themselves, riven between the selves they present in relation with others and the individuals they feel themselves to be deep down inside. The armour that protects and separates us from other appears also to drive a deep wedge between our feelings and our ability to express them in public. People often believe they present a 'face' to others, and hide their true feelings inside. The connection between our action and thoughts, on the one hand, and our emotions on the other, is severed and appears to dissipate. It feels as through, not only are we divorced from others, but from our own selves as well. In philosophical terms, this reflects in the understanding of humans as divided between body and mind, a situation in which the emotions are seen to pull us in one direction while our rational consciousness attempts to temper the affects and pull up in another.
**First Person Singular**

While there is no culture known to western theory in which 'I' or its linguistic equivalent is not used, and which does not therefore have a conception of self and personhood, the manner in which this pronoun is used, what it means, does vary from culture to culture. Consequently, it is central to conceptions of subjectivity and identity within cultural studies that what it means to be person is social and cultural 'all the way down' that is, identities are wholly social constructions and are not entities which exist outside of cultural representations and acculturalization. By acculturalization is meant the social process by which we are constituted in and by culture, learning how to 'go on' as knowledgeable agents. Thus, acculturalization, which is centered on the family, peer groups, education, media and work organization, is the process by which the helpless infant becomes a self-aware, knowledgeable person, skilled in the ways of the culture.

Formed through a lifelong, relationship to cultural representations and discourses that constitute us, identity is wholly social and cultural in nature with no universal, transcendental or a historical elements to what it is to be a person. Identity is social phenomenon in two crucial ways:

- First, the very notion of what it is to be a person is a cultural question. For example, individualist is a market of modern western societies while the many other cultures people conceived of themselves as insuperable from family relations and their place in a network of social relationships rather more than as distinct individuals.

- Second, the very resource that form the material for an identity projects are social in nature, language and social practices, so that what it means to be woman, a child, Asian or elderly is formed differently in different cultural contexts.
In sum, identity is about sameness and difference, about the personal and the social, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others.

The sociological Subject: Self-identity and social identity

For Giddens (1991), self identity is the building up of a consistent feeling of biographical continuity including the ability to sustain a narrative about the self and to answer critical questions about 'What to do? How to act? Who to be? The individual attempts to construct a coherent narrative which is the very basis of identity so that 'Self-identity is not a distinctive trait, or even a collection of traits, possessed by the individual. It is the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography' (Giddens 1991: 53). The argument put by Giddens conforms to a common sense notion of identity, for is saying that our identity is, in one respect, what we as persons think it is. However, he is also arguing that identity is not a collection of traits that we posses, identity is not something we have, it is not an entity or a think to which we can point. Rather, identity is mode of a thinking about ourselves. But, we all now, what we think we are changes from circumstance to circumstance in time and space. That is why Giddens' describes in identity as project by which is meant the idea that identity is created and built on, something always in process, a moving towards rather than an arrival.

Though self-identity may be conceived by us as our project it is a sociological truism to say that we are born into a that pre-exists us, that we learn to use a language that was in use before we arrived and that we live our lives in the context of social relationship with others. In short, we are constituted as individuals in social process
using socially shred materials commonly understood as socialization or acculturalization. Without language, and without acculturalization, not only can we not be persons as we understand that notion in our everyday lives but also the very concept of personhood and identity and would be unintelligible to us. Without having learned to use words, and without having learned what others expect of me, I could not think of myself as being a man, as being British, as being a friend, a partner, a son and so forth. Indeed, without language, a social resources, I could not even use the pronoun 'I'. Giddens further argues that,

Social identities ... are associated with normative rights, obligations and sanctions which, within specific collectivities, from roles. The use of standardised market, especially to do with the bodily attributes of age and gender, is fundamental in all societies, notwithstanding large cross cultural variations which can be noted. (Giddens 1984: 282-3)

Thus, the resources that we are able to bring to an identity project depend on the situational power and specific cultural contexts from which we derive our competencies. That, is it matters, whether we are black or white, male or female, African or American, rich or poor, because of the differential cultural resources which have constituted us.

**Socialisation, Culturisation, Enculturation**

Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences under the head -Socialisation- locates the history and various dimensions of the term tracing its changing meaning and application. 'Socialisation' gained currency in the 1930s as a term denoting the process by which
culture is transmitted from one generation to the next. Socialisation has been
described as the process 'an account of how a new person is added to the group and
becomes an adult capable of meeting the traditional expectations of his society for a
person of his sex and age'. Although a review article by Irvin Child entitled
'Socialisation' (1954) signaled its formal acceptance, persons doing research on this
process have never been too happy with the term, in part because of its ambiguous
connotations and in part because it suggests that the concept is limited to learning of
social roles. This implies exclusion of the transmission of beliefs, values, and other
cognitive aspects of culture led Kluckhohn (1939) to suggest 'culturalisation' and
Herskovits (1948) to propose 'enculturation' as alternative terms. Enculturation is the
term preferred by social anthropologists given the centrality of the concept of culture
within cultural anthropology. As such, the term is synonymous with socialisation
preferred by sociologists.

Socialisation is the shaping of human behaviour both mental and physical through
experience in social situations. Socialisation subsumes all the process of
enculturation, communication and learning, through which the individual human
organism develops a social nature and is able to participate in social life. Some of
these processes operate continuously throughout life to shape and reshape attitudes,
for example the media and information services, while others operate at specific
stages in the life cycle, for example the processes by which a society communicates to
the elderly or the child what behaviour is expected of them, that is to say what their
roles consists of:
A new dictionary of sociology, (1999 : 205-6) observes that although socialisation into different roles (chiefly occupational) has been studied by social scientists in respect of a large number of organisations, the greatest attention has been reserved for socialisation in childhood as it takes place in the home, the school and the community. Early socialisation is thought by most social scientists to be critical in determining the social identity of the child and his later participation in social life. Of particular interest to social scientists has been the acquisition of morality, that is the development of internalised standards and values. Durkheim and Freud, for whom moral duty, feeling, commitment and passion were central to the problem of acquisition of morality, emphasised the importance of relationships with parents and parent figures in the socialisation process whereby cultural values become constitutive of the human personality. Theorists such as Mead and Jean Piaget, on the other hand, who are primarily concerned with the intellectual aspects of the moral socialisation, i.e. with moral reasoning and judgement, emphasize the importance of relationships with peers as the means whereby individuals develop a principled, self reliant and cooperative response to social life.

Socialisation is the process in which the culture of a society is transmitted to the children; the modification from infancy of an individual's behaviour to conform with the demands of social life. In this sense, socialisation is a functional prerequisite for any society, essential to any social life, as well as to the cultural and social reproduction of both general and particular social forms. As emphasised by Parsons and Bales (1955), socialisation, undertaken in the family and elsewhere, involves both integration into society and the differentiation of one individual from another. Because it is concerned with relationships between the individual and society, it is
clear that socialisation in this sense is a concept that bridges the disciplines of sociology and psychology. Theories of socialisation have concentrated on:

(a) cognitive development (e.g. Piaget);
(b) acquisition of moral and personal identity through family relationships (e.g. Freud);
(c) internalisation of moral categories and values of the group (e.g. Durkheim);
(d) the development of social skills which sustain interaction in all settings, chief of which is linguistic communication, through which the social and physical environment are appropriated and interpreted (e.g. Bernstein)

A distinction is also sometimes drawn between two forms of socialisation:

(a) Primary socialisation -- the process involved in becoming an adult social being, with focus largely on childhood;
(b) Secondary socialisation -- the more general processes through which culture is transmitted (e.g. adult peers, media of communications, etc.)

Collins dictionary of Sociology, (1995 : 612-3) describes socialisation as the process by which individuals learn the culture of their society. Primary socialisation, probably the most important aspect of the socialisation process, takes place during infancy, usually within the family. In modern society, other important agencies of socialisation include the educational system, the occupational group and the peer group -- a group whose members share similar circumstances and are often of a similar age. Within its peer group, the young child, by interacting with others and playing childhood games, learns to conform to the accepted ways of a social group and to appreciate the fact that
social life is based on rules. Haralambos (1989) states that socialisation is not, however, confined to childhood. It is a lifelong process. Without socialisation, an individual would bear little resemblance to any human being defined as normal by the standards of his society.

The heart of socialisation lies in the boundaries that cultures set on the development of individuals. Socialisation inevitably means the establishment of limits, but cultures differ in the degree of restrictiveness they impose. The boundaries set by cultures in the course of socialisation include not only explicit commands and admonitions, but also the subtler (but no less influential) force of the expectations of others as it is experienced through social interactions. Children begin to learn these expectations in infancy, and the social force of this awareness remains throughout adult life even though the nature of the perceived expectation may change. Simply being aware of the expectations of others provides the expectations with normative force; attachments to others make the force of their expectations even greater.

Awareness of group expectations was conceptualised by Mead (1934) as the "generalised other", and it can be powerful in inducing conformity to group norms. This is true even though the expectations may not be clearly articulated, and people may even be unaware of them if asked. These ideas on the development of normative expectations through social interactions have been stated and elaborated for decades by sociologists and social psychologists (Wrong 1994). Cultural differences in the normative restrictiveness can be analysed through an examination of the practices of socialisation through the sources and agencies of socialisation. This
analysis can then be used to predict the amount of variance among members of a
culture in various aspects of cognition, attitudes and behaviour.

**Goals of Socialisation**

Rama Pandey (1977) describes the three goals central to this process as follows:

(1) Impulse control, including the development of a conscience;

(2) Role preparation and performance, including occupational roles, gender roles and roles in institutions such as marriage and parenthood, and

(3) The cultivation of the sources of meaning -- that is, what is important, what is to be valued, what is it to be lived for.

Impulse control and the capacity for self-regulation are first established in childhood, usually through socialisation by parents and other adults, siblings and peers. All children must learn that they cannot simply take whatever they find attractive, or they will suffer social or physical consequences from others, "in undergoing a socialisation process that begins at birth," Wrong (1994) observed, "all human beings ... arrive at a balance between egoistic impulses and internalised social norms setting limits to acting directly on those impulses" (ibid. p201). Although impulse control and delay of gratification is established in childhood, it is also required in adulthood in that adults are expected to exercise controls over their impulses and to express them only in ways that are socially approved.

A second goal of socialisation is the preparation for and performance of roles. The process of learning and performing social roles has numerous aspects, and it continues throughout the life span. For children it means learning roles in the family, roles related to gender roles in play with peers, and roles in school. For adolescents, it
means learning roles in heterosexual relationships and experiencing more intensive preparation for adult role (occupationally or as a full time spouse and parent). For adults, it means preparation of performance of roles in marriage and parenthood, as well as in work, and it includes other roles that may arise in the course of adult development such as grandparent, divorced person, retiree or elder. Roles may also be based on social class or caste membership, or religious identity.

The third goal of socialisation, the development of sources of meaning, often includes religious beliefs, which typically explains the origin of human life, the reasons of human suffering, what happens to us when we die, and the significance of human life in the light of human mortality. Other common sources of meaning in various cultures include family relationships, attachments to a community or ethnic group, or nation, and individual achievement. Sources of meaning also include the norms that are taught and learned in the process of socialisation. That is, people learn through socialisation not just what the norms of social life are, but to embrace these as what is good, right and venerable, in short meaningful.

It should, however, be noted that there is a variation within cultures, given that different parents, peers, schools and communities within a culture may adopt socialisation practices that vary the cultural socialisation themes to some extent. Variance in socialisation may broadly be affected by the basic assumptions that culture premises on such as individualism Vs collectivism, and it can vary by gender, in the sense that boys and girls are subjected to somewhat different socialisation requirements. Another important point to address with regard to variation in socialisation practices within cultures is that there may be conflicts between the
socialisation promoted by different sources: socialisation through media may conflict with socialisation through the family and the school, socialisation by peers may take place at cross purposes to socialisation in the family, and so on. Typically some consistency of socialisation can be expected across the various sources, because the socialisation practices are rooted in the cultural belief system, and these beliefs provide the basis for the socialisation that takes place through all sources in the culture. Nevertheless, conflicts may arise between various sources.

**Socialisation in post childhood stage**

Socialisation process includes two main divisions of culture: the traditional positions, or *statuses*, in the society and the *role behaviours* associated with them. The socialisation that an individual receives in childhood cannot be fully adequate preparation for the task demanded of him in later years. As an individual matures, he moves through a sequence of statuses corresponding to different stages in the life cycle. In addition, his interpersonal environment may change because of geographic, social or ideational mobility, with consequent demands for new kinds of behaviour. Even though some of the expectations of society are relatively stable through the life cycle many other change from one position to the next.

There are other reasons why childhood socialisation may be ineffective in later years. One major cause is that the demands for behaviour at different stages of life cycle may conflict (Benedict 1938). Further, in any given case, the individual himself may be unable to learn the necessary skills. Again, there may be agents missing, as in the absence of a parent or key institutions or agencies. The process can also fail because subgroups with deviant values exist in every society, and they do not prepare the child
for the performance of the roles expected of him by the larger society at a later date.

Finally, the specific socialising agent, such as a parent to whom socialisation is entrusted by society, may be incompetent to carry out the task because he himself is not interested or because he is ignorant or emotionally disturbed.

Studies of socialisation/adult socialisation

Most work in the study of personality development has told us little about how an individual develops his reciprocal, socially regulated interactions with other human beings or how he comes to understand role prescriptions and to distinguish between the important statuses in his society. There are historical reasons for this. Most work on socialisation has come from the field of child development. But the emphasis from the beginning has been more on maturation than socialisation, more on development than learning; most of the output has consisted of studies of mental and physical development, and only to much lesser extent of studies of the social and emotional aspects of development.

Relationship to the socialising agent

The fact that childhood socialisation is usually so much more effective than adult socialisation can be explained partly in terms of the different types of relationships that typically obtain between the individual and the socialising agent or agency at different stages in the life cycle. The relationship between the child and parent is highly affective one; by contrast, the adult socialisation context is likely to be far less charged with emotion - in Parsons' phrase (1951: 59-61), it is characterised by "affective neutrality". Moreover, the parent socialising the child is likely to make a far more open and continual use of power, so that the child can hardly avoid realising that
it is the weaker party in the situation. Agents of adult socialisation, on the other hand, typically appeal more to the reason and self interest of the person being socialised, and use power only as a last resort.

There is at least one major consequence of this difference for the results of socialisation: adult socialisation limits itself, on the whole, to a concern with behaviour rather than motivation and values. In fact, it is less able to teach basic values and probably requires a relationship paralleling that of childhood to bring about equivalent basic value changes.

It follows that if society is to undertake basic resocialisation of adults in respect of motives and values, it has to institutionalise to some form the high power and affectivity relationship characteristic of childhood learning.

**Changes in socialisation content**

The substantive content of socialisation differs, of course, in important ways at different stages of the life cycle and in different major social institutions. Since both the needs for and the limits to socialisation vary by life-cycle stages, it is probable that the types of content vary accordingly. In later life the socialisation content variance can be classified in five major types (Encyclopaedia of social sciences, 1989).

Perhaps the most important change is the shift in content from a concern with values and motives to a concern with overt behaviour. Society assumes that the adult knows the values to be pursued in different roles, that he wants to pursue them with the socially appropriate means, and that all that might remain to be done is to teach him what to do.
Accepting conforming behaviour alone as evidence of satisfactory socialisation and forgoing any concern with value systems entails risk, for if the social system undergoes stress, then the conformity, since it is superficial anyway, may breakdown rapidly.

The second of the changes in the socialisation content might be described as a change from the acquisition of a new material to a synthesis of old material. As a person moves through the life cycle, he accumulates an extensive repertoire of responses, both affective and behavioural. These are organised in terms of roles and, at a more specific level, in terms of episodes within a role. These responses can be detached from the contexts in which they have been learned and used, and joined with others in new combinations suitable as social behaviour responsive to the new demands of adulthood. One can say, therefore, that the content acquired in adult socialisation is not so much new material as it is the aggregation and synthesis of elements from a storehouse of already learned responses, with perhaps the addition of several fragments that are newly learned when they are necessary to complete the social act demanded in a given situation.

The third change in the content of socialisation is the transformation of idealism into realism. As the individual matures, the society demands that he become more realistic and lay aside his childish idealism. The change in the content of expectations involves distinctions between statuses. Early learning encompasses the formal status structure; later learning takes into account the actual status structure, which may often be informal and unavowed. In socialisation the young child is not taught much about the informal systems; thus, in early years he may believe that the actual and the formal
are nearly identical. This serves to maintain and legitimise the formal status differentiations and to protect them from change. However, as the child mature, the realistic aspects of status differentiation also must be taught if the system is to work effectively. Closely related is learning to distinguish between ideal role prescriptions and that, which is actually, expected of one in a role. Here, as in the case of status differentiations, the inculcation of ideal-role prescriptions results in desirable idealism that strengthens and perpetuates the ideals of the society. As the child mature, he learns to take his part in society in term of the realistic expectations of others rather than in terms of conformity to ideal norms.

The fourth type of change in socialisation content is to a greater concern with teaching the individual to mediate conflicting demands. As one moves through the life cycle, he is forced to develop methods of choosing between conflicting role prescriptions. First, there is intrarole conflict, in which the expectations for performance of two or more individuals, or of one individual with respect to the different aspects of the role, are in conflict. Second, there is interrole which can be classified into two subtypes: where the conflict is between two or more individuals with respects to two separate roles, and where the conflict is between the expectations of one individual for performance in two different roles. The need to learn how to handle such conflicts occurs to a large extent in later life for at least two reasons. First, if the cultural norm is that children should be protected from seeing life's conflicts, then it follows that nothing will be taught about ways of mediating them. Second, in later life there are more roles, as well as more complexity within roles, so that there is a much greater possibility of role conflict.
The fifth characteristic of change in socialisation content is in the dimension of generality-specificity. This means that what is taught in socialisation may apply either to many social situations or to just a few. The dimension of generality versus specificity can be applied to both components of role prescriptions, that is, to both values and means. As a child, the individual is trained, both deliberately and unwittingly, by socialising agents in the goals and behaviour appropriate for his sex. There are male and female styles of doing many different things, and these are learned early. Society tries to motivate the child to perform the behaviour and to pursue the values expected of him, and it trains him in the necessary skills. These characteristics are general, in the sense that they are required in a variety of situations he will confront in society either as major components or as necessary coloring of other aspects of his behaviour.

The individual is socialised for his socio-economic position, or the style of life of a certain status level. In other words, he acquires general skills and values appropriate to carrying out in certain manner a number of specific role demands for behaviour. The values and behaviour characteristics of a subcultural group are usually acquired in childhood, and, as with sex roles and basic cultural values, some part of what is learned is gained outside of any deliberate formal training programme. Socialisation into new social level or style of life occurs in later life also. Media is one such agency for resocialisation.

**Deviance and social control**

Deviance can be defined as failure to conform to the expectations of other persons. One major cause is ineffective socialisation of the individual for the performance of
the roles expected of him, even though the social system in which he lives have been relatively unchanging. The second major cause is a shift in what is expected of an individual resulting from social change and leaving the individual in a situation where his prior socialisation, although quite adequate for performance with reference to the old role prescriptions, no longer serves him well. In a transient society and culture like ours, this could be source of upheaval, anxiety and tension. With a world changing fast the values and beliefs do not seem to serve the person well if there are conflicting behaviour and approvals patterns in different social institutions, reference groups and persons.

Reference Groups

The concept of reference group is one of the most fundamental and crucial for the of understanding the process of socialisation and the formation self. Sociologists, social psychologists, and cultural anthropologists have always operated on the fundamental principles that an individual's attitudes and conduct are shaped by the group in which he has membership. The self-appraisal, the correlative feelings and behavior also are considered to flow from the individual's location in a particular group within a social hierarchy. In the process of self-appraisal, from many possible groups available as a framework for social comparison, individuals make their own particular selections, thus reflecting the true complexities of their social location.

In shaping their attitudes men may orient themselves to groups other than their own. If the group to which individuals refer themselves, their reference groups, are empirically determined, knowledge and predictions of attitude, self-evaluation, and conduct will be enhanced. The fact that men may shape their attitudes by reference to groups other than their own and may shape their self-evaluations by the choice of
unusual points of social comparison is a distinctive contribution of reference group theory. To be sure, anomalous patterns of behavior may be understood without recourse to the concept. Some members of a group may depart from the modal pattern of behavior simply because of their simultaneous membership in other groups. Some individuals in a particular status may have an incongruent self image because they occupy other statuses as well, and the "status-set," rather than the discrete status, governs the process. But even here the concept of reference group makes a distinctive contribution to what otherwise would remain problematical: Which of the multiple memberships and multiple statuses weighs heaviest with the individual, and what weighs best represent their respective contributions?

Stouffer and his associates were led in their study The American Soldier (1949 vol. 1) enunciated the concept of relative deprivation, as they confronted the apparent contradictions between feelings of satisfaction or deprivation and the objective situation among groups of soldiers. They then invoked the interpretive principle that the soldier's sense of deprivation was not dependent on any absolute level but was relative to the perceived level in the groups with which he compared himself. These ideas and concepts, however, had little prominence until Merton and Kitt (1950) synthesized and presented them in systematic form and framework of reference groups.

One can find precursors of the ideas implicit in reference group theory. Sumner's idea of in-groups and out-groups is a distant relation; Cooley's discussion of selective affinity to groups outside of one's immediate environment is an even earlier and closer relative (Merton & Kitt 1950, Merton 1957). Cooley's notion of imaginary
conversation with a “interlocutor” anticipates the concept of reference individual and has inspired research which applies reference group concepts to mass communication (Bauer 1958). Cooley's remark that “people differ much in the vividness of their imaginative sociability” (1964; p.95) is suggestive of later findings on individual difference in the use of multiple reference groups. In 1980, William James, in his account of the “social self”, suggested that our potential social self is developed and inwardly strengthened by thoughts of remote groups and individuals who function as normative points of reference.

Kelley's distinction (1952) between comparative and normative reference groups is basic; it corresponds to the two functions of reference groups as standards of comparison for self-appraisal and as the source of the individual's norms, attitudes, and values. These two functions of reference groups may be conceived of a separate but equal in importance for study, having only the common property that the individual’s choice of a point of reference is the key to understanding both the process of self-appraisal and the formation of attitudes. The two types, however, may not always be empirically distinct; indeed, one group can serve both functions. Contained within the structure of norms in a group may be the directive that one should not compare himself with his betters, or look down on his inferiors, or even be aware of their existence. Given the possible interdependence of the two types of processes, it is all the more strange that while the study of the normative reference group has been cultivated, that of the comparative reference group has been neglected. We shall come back to this aspect during the course of the study.
Merton’s concept of anticipatory socialization is essential to this discussion (Merton & Kitt 1950: 87-88). Individuals may take as a reference group a nonmembership group to which they aspire to belong, and begin to socialize themselves to what they perceive to be its norms before they are even exposed to its influence. The power of some reference groups thus inheres in the fact that they will ultimately be membership groups - at least such is the belief of the aspirant - and therefore can exact some conformity as the price of admission or of more comfortable passage into their ranks.

Eulau (1962) advanced and then tested an ingenious hypotheses: that anticipatory socialization may be an effective means for learning attitudes, but not conduct, since the aspirant will have had little real opportunity to practice the skills required and to be taught the correct performance of the role.

Basic to reference group theory is the fact that individuals often have multiple reference groups. Certainly, there are some individuals who have limited capacity to use many reference groups -- who lack rich “imaginative sociability”. Others, however, in appraising the many facets of the self, employ various reference groups, each specialized as a point of comparison for one particular dimension. In forming the total constellation of attitudes, several reference groups may be employed, each accorded a limited jurisdiction over some specialized attitude sphere. Studies of normative reference groups have found difference in the legitimacy that individuals accord to groups promulgating norms in various spheres (Michigan 1960). There are also instances where multiple reference groups impinge simultaneously on the same sphere of comparison or the same realm of attitude, and then they may either reinforce the same outcome or produce conflicting consequences for the individual.
Selection of reference group

The concept of reference group has always implied that one cannot make arbitrary assumptions about the groups to which an individual refers himself. Given the multiplicity of groups and the variability among individuals and situations we must determine which kinds of groups are likely to be referred to by which kinds of individuals under which kind of circumstances in the process of making which decisions. There will always be a large amount of empiricism needed, and the development of simple instruments to measure a person's reference groups is of great importance. Theorizing about the choice of reference groups and reference individuals is often based on simple assumptions about motivation. For example, the individual chooses a normative reference group so that in fantasy, or ultimately in fact, he can feel himself part of a more favored group. Or, facing rapid social change, the individual latches onto a reference group; thus anchored, he has a readymade perspective to order the distressing complexities of the environment (Shibutani 1955; Eisenstadt 1954). For social comparisons, he chooses a group so as to enhance his self-regard or protect his ego. Certainly in the search for reference groups such fundamental strivings play an important part. The pleasure principle is at work, but so, too, is the reality principle. Perhaps when reality is less highly structured, there is more freedom for the pleasure principle to guide the selection of reference groups.

Turner hypothesised that only those groups will be taken as points of comparison which are relevant to a particular aspect of self-appraisal. The similarity principle derived by Festinger (1954) in his theory of social comparison processes that an individual chooses others who are close to his level of ability - is congruent with Turner's "relevance principle," as is Merton' hypothesis that some similarity in status
attributes between the individual and the reference group must be perceived or imagined in order for the comparison to occur at all (Merton & Kitt 1950: 61).

Comparisons along a particular dimension are not made in a "cognitive vacuum." However, reference groups which are equal in respect to the relevant attributes but which are higher on the dimension of appraisal create greater feelings of deprivation. Thus the principle of similarity is specified: If the direction of choice is upward, deprivation is likely to be contained by choosing a group whose dissimilarity in other attributes legitimises the present inferior position of the person making the comparison. However, if one selects reference groups similar on these attributes, the direction of comparison is not likely to be upward.

**Normative reference groups**

The proposition that individuals identify with advantaged groups and thereby gain gratification must be qualified in terms of the social context. Such modes of selection may be characteristic of societies with high rates of upward mobility (Merton & Kitt 1950: 91), or where upward mobility is a strong value or is perceived to be frequent.

That normative reference groups are chosen in the spirit of identification perhaps also needs qualification. It may be true for the individual seeking a source of norms and values and attitudes. But what about the individual seeking a system of beliefs and knowledge? He may then choose his reference group in terms of its authority or expertness and with the full awareness that he has no bond of identification. Taking on a new reference group depends on possessing an acceptant personality pattern. A particular reference group is then likely to be chosen if it is seen as fulfilling personal
needs and if there is congruity between the individual’s personal values and norms and the norms and values he perceives as characteristics of the group. Thus some of the apparent effect of reference groups on the values of individuals may be spurious, since their values were prior in time and determined the choice of the reference group.

Organized groups announce their views to members and to outsiders; diffusion is aided by the mass media and spread by word of mouth. However, self-appointed communicators and the diffusion process may also distort the norms that finally reach the individual. More fundamental problems of perception must also be considered. Not all reference groups are organized entities. They may be vague collectivities, social categories, groups out of the dead past, or groups from a distant land. Such groups are living structures only in the mind of the perceiver and do not communicate or transact behavior. Here then is relatively free rein for autistic perception of norms. The choice of reference groups from the immediate environment, or from membership groups, or the choice of reference individuals, rather than groups, may be motivated by the individual’s need to simplify his perceptual tasks.

**Symbolic interaction**

As a social psychological theory, symbolic interaction addresses a set of interrelated questions, most of which take their place in the context of two major problems. The first is that of socialization: how the human organisation acquires the ways of behaving, the values, norms and attitudes of the social units of which he is a part. The focus here is on development - that which happens over time to the human neophyte: the infant, the recruit entering the army, the student entering the university, the bride entering a new set of family relationships.
The twin of the problem of socialization is that of personality: the organisation of persistent behavior patterns. Such organization cannot be assumed but must be demonstrated and accounted for. The task of a social psychology is to account for such organization insofar as it depends upon social relationships. It should be added that symbolic interaction addresses itself largely to the normal person - in the sense of the person without gross physical, physiological, or psychological defect.

To say that this position is oriented to the normal person is not to say that it is concerned only with personal organization, for the theory seeks to explore personal disorganization as well. As a matter of fact, one of the strengths of this position is that it treats personal organization and personal disorganization as facets of the same problem, rather than different problems, and that it can provide answers to both without invoking principles lying outside its theoretical scheme.

The initial assumption is that, insofar as interests are social psychological, man must be studied on his own level. The position of symbolic interactionism is anti-reductionist; it argues that valid principles of human social psychological behavior cannot be derived from, or interred from, the study of non-human forms. This assertion rests on the principle of emergence. Emergence suggests the existence of qualitative differences as well as quantitative is qualitatively different in some respects from other animal forms, it follows that principles derived from other forms cannot completely account for his behavior. The task of at least some social psychologists is to focus on that which is different in man.
A second assumption is that the most fruitful approach to man's social behavior is through an analysis of society. This assumption involves no assertion of some metaphysical priority of society over the individual. Social psychologists have argued that society is the ultimate reality; some other social psychologists give ontological precedence to the individual, denying the reality of society. Either position leads to confusion and contradiction. Symbolic interaction has not resolved the argument; but it has bypassed it. It has done so by beginning its analysis with the social act. Its basic unit of observation is interaction, and from interaction both society and individual derive. It worth nothing that this formulation permits an articulation between sociology and social psychology which alternative frameworks can forge, if at all, only with great difficulty. Both begin with the same “buildings bricks:” social actions. Sociology builds in another direction to the behavior of individuals. Those whose problems bridge the two fields, as is true of many students of the family, are provided with a framework facilitating movement form one level to the other, allowing systematic transactions between the two levels.

A third assumption concerns the equipment with which the newborn enters life. The human infant is, from this point of view, neither social nor antisocial, but rather asocial. It has the potentialities for social development. It is an active organism, it has “impulses,” but these impulses are not channelized or directed toward any specific ends. Original nature is amorphous and plastic; it lacks organization.

A last assumption is that the human being is actor as well as reactor. The human being does not simply respond to stimuli occurring outside himself. In fact, what is a stimulus depends on the activity in which the organism is engaged: objects become
stimuli when they serve to link impulses with satisfactions. The environment of the organism is a selected segment of the “real” world, the selection occurring in the interests of behavior which the human being himself has initiated. It is the assumption which leads to the fundamental methodological principle of symbolic interaction the demand that the investigator see the world from the points of view of the subject of his investigation.

The starting point is with the act: behavior by an organism stemming from an impulse requiring some adjustment to appropriate objects in the external world. A social act is one in which the appropriate object is another individual. But another individual does not “stand still”; he, too, acts with reference to the first actor. Thus every social act implicates at least two individuals, each of whom takes the other into account in the processes of satisfying impulses. Since such acts occur over time, they have a history. This makes possible the appearance of gestures, defined as any part of the act which stands for, or comes to be a sign of, those parts of the act yet to occur. Thus, in responding to one another, individuals may be involved in what Mead called a “conversation of gestures:” they may come to use early stages of one another’s acts as indicators of later stages. Such gestures have meaning. Vocal sounds can serve as gestures, and they too may have meaning. The meaning of a gesture (an early stage of an act) is the behavior which follows it (the later stages of the act): meaning is, by definition, behavior. Some gestures have an additional property. They may mean the same thing, imply the same set of subsequent behaviors, to the organism which produces the gesture and that which perceives it. When this occurs, the gesture becomes a significant symbol. To illustrate: the cry of the infant may serve as a sign of hunger to the mother, and she responds by feeding the infant. The cry is a gesture
whose meaning lies in the parental response. At a later stage, the child may call out “milk!” and, unless the appropriate parental response is made, protest vigorously. The word “milk” is here a significant symbol. Language, basically is a system of shared meanings and this in turn implies that language is a system of shared behavior. Communication between human beings presupposes these characteristics of language symbols.

Symbols arise in the context of social acts, and they function in completing acts: they reflect the interests from which the acts stem. We respond to symbols as predictors of further behavior, our own as well as that of others. Since these symbols predict later behavior, they provide a basis for adjusting our activity before that later behavior has occurred. Thus symbols may be said to function in the context of the act in place of that which they symbolize, and may further be said to organize behavior with reference to that which is symbolized. Symbols entail a plan of action.

Language symbols do not merely stand for something else. They also indicate the significance of things for human behavior, and they organize behavior toward the thing symbolized.

Some symbols represent generalizations of behavior toward objects; these are categories. To categorize is to apply a class term to a number of objects, to signify that a number of different things are, for certain purposes, to be treated as the same kind of thing. Classification or categorization is essential to activity, for life would be impossible if one were forced to respond to every object in the world as unique. Class terms, or categories, are of course symbols, and as such they share the characteristics
of symbols. They have meaning, they are cues to behavior, and they organized behavior.

Human respond to a classified world, one whose salient features are named and placed into categories indicating their significance for behavior. In short, humans do not respond to the environment as physically given, but to an environment as it is mediated through symbols-to a symbolic environment. Persons frequently enter situations in which their behavior is problematic. Before they can act, they must define the situation, that is, represent it to themselves in symbolic terms. The products of this defining behavior are termed “definitions of the situations.”

A particularly important kind of category is that called “position.” Positions are socially recognized categories of actors, any general category serving to classify persons: father, sergeant, teacher are positions by this usage, as are playboy, intellectual, blacksheep. The significance of such categories is that they serve to organize behavior toward persons so categorized. An equivalent assertion is that in attaching one of these position designations to a person we are led to expect certain behaviors from him and we behave toward him on the basis of these expectancies. To the expectations with regard to behavior attached to a position the term “role” is given. These expectations are social in the same sense symbolic behavior is always social: the ultimate meaning of the positions to which these expectations apply is shared behavior. They are social in another and most important sense, namely, that it is impossible to talk about a position without reference to some context of other position: one cannot talk about the behavior of father except with reference to the positions of mother, child, and so on. Thus every position assumes some counter-
position, and every role presumes some counter-role. To use the term "role" is necessarily to refer to an interpersonal relation.

The discussion of categories has been couched in terms of an actor responding to objects in the external world, including people, by classifying them in functionally relevant ways. Under certain circumstances, an actor may apply such categories to himself: he may respond to himself as he responds to other people, by naming, defining, classifying himself. To engage in this kind of behavior is to have a self. Self can be defined in various ways, each calling attention to slightly different aspects of the same activity. Mead defined the self as that which is an object to itself. Others have discussed other responses of the same organism. It is useful in the present context to define the self in terms of categories one applies to himself, as a set of self-identifications.

However defined, self refers to activity, to reflexive activity, and not to an object, thing, or essence. It is a necessary concept, from the stand-point of the symbolic interactionist, but it is one fraught with the dangers of reification.

The self is defined in terms of socially recognized categories and their corresponding roles. Since these roles necessarily imply relationships to others, the self necessarily implies such relations. One's self is the way one describes to himself his relationships to the others in a social process. The discussion thus far has presumed but not made explicit the concept of "role-taking," or alternatively, "taking the role of the other." Role-taking refers to anticipating the responses of others implicated with one in some social act.
Role-taking may involve the anticipation of responses of some particular other. More frequently, it involves the anticipation of responses of what Mead called the “generalized other.” To revert to the classroom illustration, the instructor must deal with the class not as discrete individuals but as an organized unit, the members of which can be expected to behave in differentiated yet related ways. To take the role of the generalized other is to see one’s behavior as taking place in the context of a defined system of related roles. The concept of reference group, as it is currently used, represents partially a restatement and partially an extension of the generalized other concept.

In comparatively recent work, the concept of “significant other” has come into use. This concept represents the recognition that, in a fragmented and differentiated world, not all the persons with whom one interacts have identical or even compatible perspectives; and that, therefore, in order for action to proceed, the individual must give greater weight or priority to the perspectives of certain others. To speak, then, of significant others is to say that given others occupy high rank on an “importance” continuum for a given individual.

One last set of concepts must be mentioned. Symbolic interaction makes use of “mental” concepts such as thinking, volition, and self-consciousness. The case can be put in stronger fashion; its judgment is that any scheme which rules out such concepts distorts the facts of human experience. However, its usage of these terms is not traditional. Where frequently these concepts are defined in such way as to place them outside the bounds of scientific discourse, symbolic interaction defines these terms
behavioristically and, in so doing, permits their treatment within the conventions of scientific procedure. Thus, thinking is defined as the internalized manipulation of language symbols. Volition becomes the process of selecting among alternatives symbolically present in the experience of the individual. And self-consciousness is the activity of viewing oneself from the standpoint of others.

**Symbolic Interactionism and socialisation**

The problem of socialization has a number of interrelated facets among them questions of how meanings are obtained by the human infant how the self develops and is structured, and how thinking and objectivity arises in the course of experience. The human infant, active but unorganized, is born into an ongoing set of social relationships. Such relationships are premised upon a set of shared meanings. The infant acts, but randomly: he thrashes his arms, he exercises his vocal cords. The adult responds to these actions, say the crying of the infant, by doing something to the infant—he feeds it, or changes it, or turns it over on its stomach. He will eventually find that response which will complete the act in a desired way, that is, stop the crying. There is in the situation an ‘impulsive’ act which is, incipiently, a gesture, and there is incipient meaning as well. The incipient meaning is that part of the act supplied by the adult. In time, both the cry of the infant and the response of the adult become specialized; when this occurs, the cry is a gesture in the previously-defined sense. The significant point is that, since it is the gesture. What kinds of completions will he supply? He is, of course, limited by the repertory of meanings available in the social unit of which he is a part. Further, the adult will have defined the situation, including his positional relationship to the infant, for example, that of father to son, and this definition will invoke the set of expected behaviors we call the role of the father. If
the father is a middle class American, and if he takes the cry of the infant to mean that
the infant is thirsty, his response will be to supply milk of water-but not wine or
whiskey. The meanings attached to the gestures of the infant are social meanings, and
they are supplied through his relationships with already socialized participants in an
ongoing society.

The early activity of the child will include random vocalization. Eventually, too, he
will imitate sounds others make. Others respond to the initially random vocalization
by selecting out particular sounds and responding to these. They respond to the
limited sounds as well by acts which contain the adult meanings of these sounds. For
the child, the correspondence between sound and meaning will be initially vague, but
in the process of interaction over time the correspondence will become more
pronounced.

The 'self' comes into existence in the same way. We come to know what we are
through other's responses to us. Others supply us with a name, and they provide the
meaning attached to that symbol. They categorize us in particular ways- as an infant,
as a boy, et cetera. On the basis of such categorization, they act toward us the manner,
in which they act towards us defines our 'self,' we come to categorize ourselves as
they categorize us, and we act in ways appropriate to their expectations. The evolution
of the self is, of course, gradual; moreover, it is continual. This development is one of
increasing complexity, in a sense, for as the child moves into the social world he
comes into contact with a variety of persons in a variety of self-relevant situations. He
comes, or may come, into contact with differing expectations is based. Thus he has,
through the role-taking process, a variety of perspectives form which to view and
evaluate his own behavior, and he can act with reference to self as well as with reference to others. In short, the socialization process as described make possible the appearance of objectivity. Furthermore, since these processes may be internalized through the use of language symbols, it also makes possible the appearance of self-control.

The individual, at the same time and through time as well, occupies a variety of positions in sets of social relationships. If he responded in each of these in terms of unique sets of role-expectations and self-definitions, his behavior would be discontinuous. Usually, however, there is a continuity and organization among the behavior of a given individual. The question is how such personal organization can be accounted for. The basic answer provided by symbolic interaction theory uses the concepts of self, role, and definition of the situation. On entering an ongoing social situation, one responds to that situation by defining it. This definition includes the assignment of positions to others, and thus the setting up of expectations concerning their behavior. It, further, includes an assessment of self, that is, the assignment of positional identities to oneself. Others in the situation are, of course, engaged in the same kind of activity. The behavior that ensues is a function of such definitions, situation, role and self, of the interacting persons. Congruence permits efficient, organized behavior. Expanding this, again noting that the individual moves through a variety of interpersonal situations, the congruence of definitions, and so the behavioral expectations these imply, is fundamental to continuity of behavior. Personal organization is thus seen as a function, not simply of that which the individual carries around with him-in the form of self-concepts-and the situations in which he interacts with others as these are mediated symbolically.
When one asks what kinds of social conditions foster or permit such congruence, the
generalized answer is that when meanings are widely shared in a society, or among
those persons within a society with whom one actually interacts, congruence likely.
What happens when meanings are diverse among the others with whom one interacts?
Reversing the above process, but maintaining the same explanatory principle, it may
be said that incongruities in definition and so incongruities in expectations will result,
and that personal disorganization is the outcome. A number of possible types of
incongruity may be suggested: conflicts or lack of coordination between self concepts
and the expectations of others; conflicts among aspects of self called into play in the
same situation; the temporal succession of expectations which do not articulate, and
so on.

It may be worthwhile to take one type of incongruity, say lack of coordination
between self concepts and expectations of other, and not more closely its relevance to
personal disorganization. At the same time the question can be raised: under what
circumstances do identities change? Others validate identities by behaving in
appropriate ways, ways which provide cues on the basis of which further performance
in terms of the identity is possible. If these cues are not provided, then such
performance is no longer possible, and the identity will fade.

The Construction of Self/Personality: The constructivist approach

The prevailing assumption in personality psychology has been that personalities,
however conceived by any particular theorist, originate within individuals. Such an
assumption reflects the emphasis on the individual that is typical of western
conceptualization of human beings (Triandis, 1989). The contrasting assumption is that personalities are created collectively by interpersonal process. The constructivist approach combines both an individuated and a collective view of human nature approach combines both an individuated and a collective view of human nature. The aspects of personality that are associated with the individual make up the contribution of the actor to personality construction. The actor represents a combination of hereditary and environmental influences, including a cumulative history of past experiences. Typically, the study of personality has been concerned exclusively with the study of the actor. However, in the constructivist approach, the actor is viewed as just one of the components in the construction process. The three components of constructed personality are shown in Figure 1.

![Fig. 1.1: The self in constructivist approach](image)

According to the constructivist view of personality, the actor's behaviour is interpreted by an audience of one or more observers. The observer can be another person (or persons) who is (or are) actually present, or the actor can imagine being
observed by another. Whether observers are real or imagined, they construe the actor’s personality on the basis of information available such as behavior, appearance, and possessions. The figure depicts an actual observer watching the actor’s performance. However, the observer need not be physically present. When we imagine another person’s reactions to our self-presentation we are, in a sense, playing to an imaginary audience that may affect our performance just as strongly as any physically present observer. The third component of constructed personality is the self-observer. This element refers to the human capacity to be self-aware. Self-awareness means that we can attempt to see ourselves as others see us. This capacity permits us to imagine, and even attempt to control, the personality that observers see. All three components are placed on the same circle, which implies their interconnectedness and interdependency. The figure also shows some of the topics of psychological study that are traditionally associated with each of the components of actor, observer, and self-observer.

The Origins of the Constructivist Approach to Personality

The theatrical metaphor implied by the use of the terms “actor” and “observer” reflects the influence of the dramaturgical view of personality and identity, which may be traced to the sociology of Goffman (1959), the social psychology of impression management (e.g., Schlenker, 1980) and symbolic interactionism (e.g., Mead, 1934).

Goffman introduced the metaphor of the theatre for interpersonal events, with the stage and actors representing social situations and the people in them. In interpersonal behavior, the actor performs roles for an audience. A successful performance
involves presenting the desired image of oneself and having this image acknowledged by others. For example, most of us have learned that it is unwise to lay claim to an expertise that one does not possess because, if the falsity of the claim is discovered, one's desired image will be rejected by others. Impression-management theorists have developed these ideas further by examining actors' manipulations of their effects on others. Self-presentation is not necessarily done consciously, nor is it inevitably cynical or deceitful. We use self-presentation in our attempts to have others see us as we see (or wish to see) ourselves.

A prerequisite for self-presentation is awareness of oneself, or consciousness. Accordingly, the self is an essential component in the construction of personality. The symbolic interactionists were concerned with how self-awareness develops, and the role of language in this process. The "symbolic" part of the name for this school of thought refers to the view that object in our world are really symbols: they all have social meaning. The "interactionist" part refers to the special role of symbols in human communication. In order for us to communicate, we must be able to adopt the other's perspective. In the process of taking the other's perspective we also learn to see ourselves as another symbolic object in the world we become self-aware. The construction of personality is rooted in a symbolic interactionist view of what it means to be a person: self-awareness enables communication, communication enables self-presentation, and personality is constructed from the interpretation of self-presentations.
The final important origin of the view that personality is a construction is to be found in the more generic theory of the social construction of reality developed by the sociologists Berger and Luckmann (1967). Like sociology, and in contrast to the physical sciences, much of psychology is concerned with the study of abstract concepts that have no direct counterparts in the physical world. For example, stages in the life cycle such as "old age" have acquired a social reality because our culture enriches them with specific meanings. Thus at an arbitrary retirement age, a person joins the ranks of "the elderly" and is subjected to a pervasive separatism that reflects our negative constructions of ageing. A person's identity or personality may also be viewed as having a social reality constructed by cultural beliefs and practices.

In sum, the construction of personality, as a metatheory for personality psychology, draws on the dramaturgical approach and the social constructionist theory of social reality. The constructivist approach to personality was developed to achieve two related purposes: (1) to integrate the study of personality and the study of person perception, and (2) provide a broad theoretical framework within which the various perspectives on personality can be placed.

**The Actor in Personality Construction**

The emphasis on the actor in past personality psychology is the result of the view that personality in some sense "resides" within the individual. This view has been pursued through biological, psychodynamic, and trait theories.
Candidates for the basic unit of actor-focused personality theories include types, motives, cognitive strategies, personal projects, life tasks, and life paths. The most tried and tested, however, is the trait. Traits have been used in personality theories in two ways: as descriptions of the actor's behaviour, in which they summarize a person's pattern of behaviour, and as explanations of the actor's behaviour, in which they are viewed as causal or generative mechanisms (Wiggis & Trapnel, 1993).

However, many personality theories based on traits have adopted the view that traits cause and explain behaviour (Alston, 1975). These theories assume that traits cause predictable behaviours that are relatively stable across situations and across the lifespan. Trait theories may be classified into two varieties: in single-trait theories, only one aspect of personality is under investigation, whereas multi-trait theories aim to be comprehensive. For a single-trait theory to be useful it must identify a trait that determines a large number of important behaviours, and a reliable and valid measure of the trait must be developed. The most successful single-trait theories are also embedded in a broader psychological theory.

Rotter's concept of locus of control is an example of a highly successful single-trait approach (Rotter, 1966). It distinguishes between people with relatively internal locus of control, who believe that they have control over the good and had things that happen to them, and people with relatively external locus of control, who believe that what happens to them is a consequence of chance, fate, or powerful others. Locus of control is a way of viewing the world that Rotter referred to as a generalized expectancy, and it forms one part of Rotter's social learning theory (Rotter, 1954). Rotter developed a general measure of locus of control (Rotter, 1966), which has...
since been followed by numerous more specific measures for expectancies about
locus of control in particular behavioural domains. For example, the importance of
sense of control is stressed by health psychologists who wish to increase preventive
behaviours and adherence to treatment regimens (Peterson & Stukard, 1989).

Multi-trait theories attempt to include all aspects of personality. They assume that
individual differences can be described in terms of particular profiles on the same set
of personality traits. Multi-trait theories all use similar data and analytic methods but
have generated somewhat different models of personality structure. The data include
self-report questionnaires about behaviours, feelings, thoughts, and opinions; trait
ratings; and objective tests, so called because the person taking the test is unaware of
what is being assessed. The preferred analytic method is factor analysis, which
identifies groups of interrelated responses that can all be described by the same
underlying traits.

The observer in Personality Construction

The constructivist approach emphasizes the interpersonal nature of personality. Both
the dramaturgical model and symbolic interactionism helped shape the view of
personality as a construction, and both these influences stress the importance of the
observer. Observers form impressions of actors' personalities on the basis of
information supplied by actors. This information includes actors' behaviours,
appearance, material possessions, and the situations in which they place themselves.
Indeed, virtually any information that is available to the observer about the actor may
be used to construct an impression of that person. However, typically the actor's
behaviour is the most important source of information for personality construction.
The actor brings certain biological and learned characteristics that interact with situational factors to result in behaviours. In the process of impression formation, these behaviours are comprehended by the observer in terms of personality constructs or categories. Accordingly, personality constructs or categories. Accordingly, personality construction entails both an actor and an observer: the process requires an actor's behaviours, and the interpretation of those behaviours in personality terms by an observer.

The observer of personality has traditionally been studied by social psychologiest investigating person perception. Perception has now become a central topic in social cognition, which is the study of the way observers process information about actors (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). In order to interact successfully, it is necessary for the participants to understand what each other is doing and why. The level of understanding and explanation necessary depends on the nature of the interaction. Brief encounters where there is a well-defined script, such as interacting with the checkout person at the supermarket, can proceed smoothly without making elaborate personality inferences. Where the situation is more ambiguous, and holds the possibility of future interaction, such as a first date, then it is likely that the participants will work harder at forming impressions of one another.

When observers try to understand and explain actors, they do so with the aid of personality language. Indeed, personality language is the medium of personality construction. It consists of the nouns, adjectives, and verbs that describe individual differences. These terms are used to categorize behaviours and the people performing them. They way observers use personality categories differ depending on whether-
they are categorizing behaviours or people. The categorization of behaviour involves matching the attributes of the behaviour to those of the personality category. The rules used by observers for making inferences about the actor’s personality traits are the subject of attribution theory.

Observers’ choices of personality traits are influenced by characteristics of a subset of the many personality categories that are available. Moreover, they tend to apply the same subset of categories that are available. Moreover, they tend to apply the same subset of categories across different actors. Likely candidates for these widely used categories are the ones that we apply to ourselves. That is, we evaluate others in terms of the personality traits that we believe are important aspects of our own personalities. Despite these individuating preferences, there is also considerable agreement among observers about the meaning of personality -descriptive terms and the relations among them.

Although observers tend to use their particular subset of personality terms to describe others, and these terms are likely to be broad ones, observers are also affected by immediate contextual factors. Observers are susceptible to “priming effects”, particularly when the actors, behaviour is open to a number of interpretations. That is, they are likely to see the actor in terms of categories that they have recently used, or that are relevant to their current goals. In addition, when observers expect to interact again with an actor, or believe they will be asked to predict the actor’s subsequent behaviour, they tend to make more extreme personality inferences (Monson, Keel, Stephens & Genung, 1982). Contextual factors can even moderate observers’ pervasive preferences for broad traits. When describing characteristics that are
inconsistent with their overall impression of the actor (such as describing something negative about a person they like), observers tend to minimize the thing negative about a person they like), observers tend to minimize the inconsistency by using a narrow trait category to describe this discrepancy (Jahn et al., 1991).

In addition to studying the personality categories that observer use to construct personality, social psychologists have also studied how personality categories are combined to form coherent impressions. This work dates back to Asch’s (1946) seminal studies of impression formation in which he discovered that some traits in a personality description, called “central” traits, were far more influential than others. For example, the inclusion of cold in an otherwise positive set of traits resulted in an overall negative impression. More recently, Asch has studied how people reconcile such inconsistencies by examining their explanations for them (Asch & Zukier, 1984). The process of forming a coherent impression from sometimes conflicting information requires active constructions by the observer in the form of explanations and elaborations. For example, Casselden and Hampson (1990) found that subjects found it more difficult to construct impressions of imaginary people described by two inconsistent traits than by two consistent ones. However, when subjects could think of an example of a person characterized by the two inconsistent traits, such as “Mozart” for a “creative and immature person”, an impression fell easily into place.

According to the view of personality as a social construction, the way observers form impressions of actors’ personalities is an integral part of personality psychology. The
dramaturgical approach regards personality as a performance in which personality is constructed in the process of actors performing for observers. They key to the construction process is self-awareness. Actors must be able to imagine the impression that the observer is constructing of them in order to modify their performance in which personality is constructed in the process of actors performing for observers. The key to the construction process is self-awareness. Actors must be able to imagine the impression that the observer is constructing of them in order to modify their performance. Therefore, the ability to observe oneself is a critical component of personality construction (see Figure 1).

The Self in Personality Construction

The human capacity for self-awareness permits us to attempt to see ourselves as other see us. When personality psychologists study personality via self-reports such as questionnaires, they are assessing people’s perceptions of themselves. Social psychologists also study people’s self-perceptions in their investigations of the concept of self. A major issue in the study of the self has been whether people have a unified self-concept, or whether they have many different selves. Personality psychologists have assumed that self-report data assess a unitary self. For example, the typical instructions at the beginning of personality questionnaires do not specify which self the respondent should describe. However, social psychologists recognize the possibility of multiple selves.

William James (1892) said that we have a many selves as people selves as people with whom we interact, and the idea of multiple selves is consistent with symbolic interactionism and the dramatically approach. Most people would agree that they
modify their behaviour to some extent depending on with whom they are interacting. Different observers bring out different aspects of our personalities. For example, a woman may be dominant and stern with her colleagues at work, but gentle and caring with her family at home. Observers who interact with this person only at work would form very different impressions of her from those who those who interact with her only at home. Goffman equated personality with the various roles a person plays in life, such as co-worker this by suggesting the different personalities are constructed in the context of very relationship that one has.

In social cognition, the idea of multiple selves has been studied extensively by Markus and her colleagues. In addition to role-specific, relationship-specific and ideal selves, Markus and Nurius (1986) have proposed that our “possible” selves are also important parts of the multiple self-concept. Visions of our future possible selves may determine how we make important life decisions such as career choices. The notion of multiple selves raises the question of whether there is any one self that is more authentic than the others. People sometimes say that they feels more “real” is some relationship, whereas they feel they are putting on an act in others. It may be the case that we feel the most “real: when we are with someone we believe is seeing us as we wish to be seen. There is a feeling of falseness when one tries to live up to someone else’s ideal of what one should be like.

The self-concept develops as the result of self-awareness, which permits us to imagine seeing ourselves as others see us. We could not have a sense of self, and hence an impression of our personality, without self-awareness Although self-awareness is essential for the construction of personality construction. We can think
of people we know who seem to be highly sensitive to feedback and concerned with how they are evaluated by others, as well as those who appear to be oblivious to such matters. Personality psychologists have formalized these individual differences in self-awareness, and there are now two theories devoted to this subject: public versus private self-consciousness (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975) and self-monitoring (Snyder, 1979).

People who are high on public self-consciousness tend to rely on external sources of information about themselves, whereas people who are high on private self-consciousness use their inner thoughts and feelings and self observations of behavior. The dimension of public self-consciousness seems particularly relevant to personality construction, and differences in self-presentational behavior have been found between people high on public self-consciousness are more likely to change their behavior in response to their perception of the situation than are individuals low on public self-consciousness.

The self-monitoring dimension is probably very similar to public self-consciousness. High self-monitors are described as being sensitive to other people's self-presentations and are able to modify their own accordingly. The self-monitoring scale even includes the item "I would probably make a good actor". However, findings on differences between high and low self-monitors have been rather inconsistent. This may be due to deficiencies in the measure of self-monitoring, and revisions of the scale may yield more consistent findings.
Although people differ in the degree to which they are aware of their effects on others, self-awareness is critical for personality construction. Without self-awareness, the actor's personality is only a projection of the observer. Proud pet owners may tell you about Joey the parrot's great personality, or Harry the horse's cute character. However, such anthropomorphism is misleading because it projects the human concept of personality on to creatures with an entirely different (and unknowable) form of self-awareness to our own. The contrast between human and non-human animals is extreme, but the same argument applies in a more moderate form to cross-cultural comparisons. People from different cultures have different concepts of self that may result from subtle differences in forms of self-awareness (White & Kirkpatrick, 1985).

**Role of Agencies and Institutions in Socialisation and Self Formation**

The aim of the section is to bring out the crucial role of the various agencies in the formation of the socio-cultural values and life styles, which, in turn, develop in the child a sense of morality, and a sense of good and bad, desirable and undesirable. The development of such a sense is important for cultural survival and it has been generally defined as "the internalization of moral values and rules of moral action from external imposition of internal acceptance of these rules" (Saraswathi et al. 1977).

The development of moral standards and the concomitant cultural transmission of values take place as a result of socialization whereby the growing child learns to be concerned with appropriateness as a general guide to his conduct. As a mode of enculturation or inter-generational transmission of values, the process of socialization
becomes one acquiring, incorporating, or internalizing cultural values through a variety of learning mechanism, or it becomes one of cognitive development. This, in turn, facilities the growing child to such worth paying attention to. It also helps in "acquiring those psychological orientations and properties that enable individuals to perform in accordance with the expectations of others as they move from position to position in a social order over time".

The Concept of Values

In any social system, the quality of institutional roles and individual personality is related to the ethos of the particular culture, and the specific role expectations and personal dispositions to the value of this culture. Each individual has within himself, as a part of his personality, a rank order of value himself, as a part of his personality, a rank order of value orientations which usually are laid down in the child's socialization in a particular cultural tradition through the role expectations imposed on him (Kluckhohn, 1961). An individual's values determine his 'perceptual sensibility', and can be defined as "a set of principles whereby conduct is directed and regulated as a guide for individuals and social group" (Shils, 1968). Further, a system of ideals, ideology and values serve as a governing framework for the integration of the complexity of needs, demand and goals of the individual. Thus, "a value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristics of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends to action".

The value realm, which defines the meaning of human life, consists of enduring and central clusters of beliefs, the thoughts and feelings which influence or determine
importance valuations or choices regarding persons, situations, and pleas. Values are usually social in nature for they are objects of common regard on the part of socialized individuals. Values can be taken to refer to response that attribute goodness or badness to some event. Values are both positive and negative; the positive values are the desirables; the negative values, the undesirables. What the person recognizes as desirables are not necessarily his desires. As people grow up and become "culture broken" through the process of socialization, the desirables tend to become desired and his values become his life goals. Sinha (1972) has found that in terms of desirable and non-desirable social values, when one seeks an opinion as regards this, there is a general agreement regarding the non-desirable (the don'ts) values, but less about the desirable values (the do's).

**Transmission of Values**

The term of values, the essence of socialization is the development of the person's inner world in ways that are adequate to the interpersonal situations and to the larger social order in which he participates. As socialization is the process by which the child learns the ways of a given society or social group so that he can function within it, we may state that "socialization involves developmental change in the organism through communication in emotionally significant relationships which are shaped by social groupings of varying scope" (Klkin and Handel, 1972). The developing child perceives his significant others as role models who provide the patterns of behaviour on which the child patterns his conduct. It is through interaction with these role models that the child develops his system of values which in turn develops in him the ability to regulate his own behaviour.
Socialization of values in the second generation can be the end product of many socializing agencies. A child learns about his culture and about his own identity through hearing and reading stories of group experiences, through idealizing group heroes, through observing and sympathizing and with family members in their interaction with fellow ethnic members and outsiders, and generally through participating in the group way of life. In the course of his social life, the child experiences different customs, rituals, manners, loyalties and prejudices of the group of which he is a part, and this goes a long way in the inculcation of his values system.

**The Family as an Agency of Transmission**

The family is the first unit with which the child has continuous contact and the first context in which value systems develop. Hoffman and Lippitt (1960) have reviewed the studies on family life variables in child socialization and have classified these variables in terms of family sub-culture, social class, and occupation. The relationship between parents also has an important bearing on the transmission process. It includes such variables as power relationships, decision making patterns, division of labour, communication patterns and nature of affective relationships. Another important variable is the child-oriented parental attitudes. This includes child-rearing goals, concepts about the parental role and the child role attitudes towards parenthood, attitudes about discipline techniques, and acceptance or rejection of child.

**Family Subculture**

The family into which a child is born places him in a community that is a part of a particular society. This community and society form the subcultural background for the growing child. A child's subculture determines his status in society, and provides
him his first role models. Further, the family's status in the community affects not only the way others respond to the child and the kind of formal education he is likely to receive, it also mediates for the child the culture available in the larger society. All subcultures are based on different types of social differentiation of which, in the Indian context, the caste system is of particular relevance in the socialization of some of the values prevalent in society today. The caste system has two distinct features. One, it shapes the pattern of group action in terms of determining the traditional orientation, the aspirations and response patterns for the vast majority of the people of India. Secondly, the caste system exhibits strong elements of hierarchy. As such, it determines not only social status, but also moulds the behaviour patterns of the group and its members. Caste regulates communications with the members of other groups; it mediates the form and content of interpersonal relations and channels human affections.

Social Class

Caste is not the only determinant of the "way of life" or values of a particular culture. Social class is yet another parameter of a given subculture. Many studies have been carried out to survey whether all social classes in a given society are orientated to the same or different values. Results show that in the lower classes, greater emphasis is laid on tradition-oriented activities; there exists a wider range of values but a lower degree of commitment to these values. Commitment to traditional cultural values is more to be found in middle and upper-middle classes of the Indian society (Rodman, 1963). Occupationally, in the modern Indian context, personal initiative receives greater emphasis as a value in the upper-middle classes. Kohn et al. (1969) have analyzed that "upper middle class occupations are distinguished from working-class
occupations in that the former involves more self-direction and self-reliance, less close supervision, and with certain exceptions, greater, less close supervision, and with certain exceptions, greater involvement with ideas than with things".

Corresponding to this social class difference in occupations, there is a difference in emphasis on value between these two classes. Middle-class people value obedience, self-control and self-direction in their children, while working-class people are more concerned with training their children in obedience to cultural norms (Kohn, et al. 1969).

Lower class subculture is not strongly oriented toward the future, as are the middle and upper-middle classes. In terms of temporal focus the lower classes give priority to past events in their time value orientations because they are intensively preoccupied with problems of survival, and, in comparison to their better off counterparts, are more taken up with the doctrine of karma and its consequences. Further, austerity and self-restraint as qualities to be valued are found more among the middle classes than in the lower classes. With feelings of inferiority deeply ingrained in them the lower classes place heavy reliance on fate, chance, or luck; belief in such factors as causes of their destiny helps to relieve their sense of failure.

The traditional Indian family is characterized by its hierarchical organization, very similar to the organization of the caste system in the larger society. "For an Indian, superior and subordinate relationships have the character of eternal verity and moral imperative" (Kakar, 1978), and are marked by a system of dependency and deference. Every individual has a position in the family hierarchy ad in keeping with his position he is expected to be obedient to his elders and nurturant towards those younger to
him. Thus, every child is told that it is his duty to look after youngers and that he has the right to demand obedience and compliance from them in return.

The important determinants of the authority a person can wield in the traditional family are age, sex and generational status. A woman's authority usually depends on her husband's position in the household. In cross-sex relationships, the authority associated with age is considerable but carries less weight than in same sex relationships. A son or a daughter owes less formal deference to the mother over a younger sister than an elder sister does over a younger brother. Thus, regardless of personal talents or achievements, respect for tradition, deference for age and impartiality as between different persons occupying comparable statuses are, therefore, values cherished and inculcated in the context of the traditional family (Kakar, 1978).

These subcultural and familial values a child picks up and integrates into his personality functioning in his day-to-day interactions for, in the Indian setting, there is no effort made to consciously segregate children from the adults in the family, and as such they may normally witness adults interacting with each other in varying moods and tempers. While children are not expected to participate in the talk between elders, they learn a great deal about the elders and about their own roles just by observing and listening. Indeed, there is an absence of the Western emphasis on the separate role of the child. Murphy (1953) quotes a very apt remark made by an Indian friend: "You bring up your children; we live with ours".
Family Rituals and Customs

Just as the child learns a great deal from his daily interactions with his parents and other significant members of his subculture, in the same way transmission of values also take place by means of the child observing and taking part in family customs and caste rituals. Dubois (1978) has given a very comprehensive account of the various customs and ceremonies which play a significant role in the inculcation of cultural values.

In the Hindu metaphysics, the second stage occupies an important and indispensable place among the four *ashramas*. It is at this stage that the pursuit of wealth (*artha*) and of sensual pleasure (*kama*) is not only legitimate but is viewed as a duty and social obligation on the part of the maturing individual. Thus, in their value structures, Hindus recognize the indispensability of the pursuit of practical affairs, but they do so only in relation to the broader scheme of values of emotional restraint and a life of detachment from worldly concerns.

Thus these traditional ceremonies, major and minor performed within the circle of the family, give ritual reassurance that the child belongs; they consolidate the child's and the adult's belief that family ties are the most moral, durable and reliable of all social relations. This "widening world of childhood employs religious tradition, ritual, family ceremony, social sanction and psychological pressure to shore up family and caste relationships against outsiders and against the future. From the beginning, participation of individual preferences and ambitions to the welfare of the extended family and *jati* communities" (Kakar, 1978).
The Role of Religion in Transmission of Values

In the Hindu way of life, religion has played a leading role in the indoctrination of the ideal values of Dharma, Karma and Moksha. Just as the family plays a significant part in the development of social values, religion becomes the main agency for the intergenerational transmission of the Hindu moral philosophy. These religious values are implemented through the teachings of religious heads with the help of religious texts, and through the narration of stories and parables by members of the extended family.

In the process of development, every child is repeatedly told that his dharma is to accept the existing standards of his subculture. Dharma, the Hindu philosophical tradition, is variously translated as law, moral duty, right action or conformity with the traditional way of life (Kakar, 1978). All religious and social agencies preach that one should carry out his duty as well as he can, that constitutes his swadharma and it is only by doing his duty that one can gain spiritually and ultimately attain moksha. Obedience to one's dharma emphasizes a life of contemplation, renunciation, sacrifice, emotional restraint and austerity.

According to Hindu belief, in society at any time all classes are present, and everyone is inevitably in his right class and life task. It is, therefore, one's dharma to do one's lot, for the culture assures that rebellion involves a disrespect for the law of karma, and that any activity, it fulfilled in the spirit of swadharma leads to moksha. The doctrine of karma is an inexorable moral law which states that the human soul will receive absolute certainty, the rewards and punishments due to it for its actions. This belief in karma is bound to the belief in cyclical time and cosmic causation. It offers
an explanation and strong justification for the unequal distribution of goods fortunes and suffering. As such, causation assumes fatalistic tinge. Further, karma determines the caste into which an Hindu is born, and the functions which he must as a consequence perform. And karma is itself created by the performance or non-performance of these functions, rather than by the possession or non-possession of personal qualities.

These concepts of *dharma* and *karma* inculcate the values and endurance, contentment, submission and withdrawal in the growing child he is repeatedly told that these characteristics are necessary precursors of spiritual perfection leading to *moksha*, which, as posited by Hindu culture, is the chief goal of religious life. *Moksha* has been defined in many ways as self-realization, transcendence, salvation, a release from worldly involvement, or from the cycle of births and rebirths. As described in the texts, *moksha* can be understood to mean that a person who has attained this state has gained an all pervasive awareness of the self or 'I' and at the same time has a similar feeling of 'I' in the selves of others, an empathy amplified to the point of complete identification.

**Education and Value Transmission**

Education as a transmitting agent is simultaneously oriented to the cognitive, affective, social and value integration aspects of the personality of the child. At the cognitive level, it seeks to impart and social level, it aims to develop in the individual the ability to cope with emotions and to adjust to environmental demands. A good part of the groundwork for these development are started in the early, familial experiences of the child, and as such educational institutions only continues the on-
going enculturation processes. In all such institutions, the communication of values is part of both the cognitive and the social relationship oriented processes.

The Indian system of education, today, gives primacy to the cognitive goals; the other goals are not neglected entirely. But whereas specific courses laid down to ensure that the cognitive development is attended to, the development of social-relational and value as the student's personality are left to chance. This was not entirely so in traditional India. Education was organized largely under religious auspices. It consisted largely of learning the scriptures and the various schools of philosophy. It was open only to the high casts, and, among them, it was primarily the Brahmins who took advantage of it. As such, a direct and conscious efforts was made to inculcate the religious and social value of the Hindu way of life.

In the modern context, it has generally been that the system of values communicated, particularly at the higher stage, are accepted by the educated to different degrees in different aspects of their lives. The on-going multifaceted processes of evaluation that the take place in the school setting, both by the teachers and the child himself, contribute to inculcation in a certain way. Through the processing of evaluations, the child learns society's values and in this way his self is transformed. The child comes to know himself as a particular kind of social being, one who may aspire to certain kinds of future opportunities but not to others. Thus, the learned values in the educational setting affects his occupational life. The least affected sphere is the personal-familial values, which at times may come into conflict with his learnt aspirations as against traditional held, group-oriented life tasks.
For educational institutions of make significant contribution to the inculcation of values, certain factors are important. These are "the clarity and directness with which the content of education deals with these values, the extent to which the teachers stand committed to those values and practice them in relation to students and in their own lives, the student's own background and the alignment of their material interests and, finally, the extent to which life in the larger, society seems to support the practice of these values" (Gore, 1977).

Here it must be remarked that in the present context a confusing rapidity and disorderly sequence of all round changes have beset the structure of Indian society, the family and the educational setting. The religious figures that originally provided role-models are slowly receding into the background and their influence as agencies of value transmission is also becoming minimal. Sinha (1979) in his analysis of choice of role-models and heroes which today's youth are emulating, found that the hero-image and models for the younger generation are more varied and unstable. Today's youth is more exposed to mass media and peer group culture which defines the models to be emulated. While the choice of the older generation was largely limited to the figures and personalities about whom they had heard from their elders in the form of stories and legends or read in the books which projected more or less clear-cut roles for them, the youth of today are emulating models who themselves stand for no clear-cut values. Although today's youth agrees that qualities like patriotism, statesmanship, humanitarianism, social reform make their role-models great, yet these qualities could hardly be said to reside in many of the heroes chosen as their models. This multiplicity and diversity of role-models and the prevailing value ambiguity has led to divergence of values amongst the old and the young, and is
making it difficult for the young to adopt and accept as their models, the members of the older generation.

Further, the break-up of the joint family and the economic pressure on the unitary family has led to the elders presenting an ambiguous facade to the younger generation. The consequence of this role-ambiguity and ambiguity of values shows itself in the developing intergenerational differences which is assuming tensional character in many spheres of social life. Modern youth is turning more and more to peer group culture, political ideologies and to the mass media from where to draw its models.

The Peer Group

The family and the educational setting as agencies of value enculturation are organized primarily by adults. The peer group as a transmitting agency is made up of members who have about the same age status but have varying degrees of prestige and power. The values and norms of individual members of the peer group may differ for each members comes from different familiar background, and may be from different subcultures in terms of caste and class. The child participating in his peer group thus gets his first experience of egalitarian types of relationships, and the subcultures of the peer group may provide the individual a world of standards that is apart from and, perhaps, in opposition to that of his familial background values. As new emotional ties and identification models emerge, and as the peer group defines the cultural heroes of its time, the adolescent internalizes these values and patterns of behaviour.
Peer group membership hampers the automatic and passive acceptance of values disseminated by society and by adults. This is especially true of adolescents. Adolescence is the period of critical inquiry. This is the time when they become actually aware of the contrast between values expressed by adults and those implicit in their actual behaviour. The sensitive adolescent may, then reject the formally espoused values, or act mainly in accordance with what he judges to be the covert values. In either case, conflicts with adults and representatives of hide-bound traditional ways of society is likely to result.

Transmission through Mass Media

Unlike the other agencies, the mass media, does not directly involved interpersonal interaction. Nevertheless, they are ordinarily seen in group settings and family and peer groups have a considerable influence in guiding exposure to, and generally defining, their content. The mass-media, by their content alone, teach many of the ways of a given society. The communications imparted through the mass media teach the individual the norms, status position and institutional functions. The recurrent themes and stories present values and ideals associated with particular statuses and sexes, and as such play a crucial role in the value transmission.

In the Indian context, films are in important media of value transmission, both religious and social. "No other medium dictates the demeanour of women, as desired by men, with greater effect than the commercial Indian cinema. The portrayal of the stereotypes, which rigidly divides the 'good' women on the one hand, and the 'vamp' on the other cannot be dismissed as purely hackneyed prejudices, for however naïve and harmless the distinctions may appear, they contain the ingredients necessary to
perpetuate the imbalance between men and women, and save male sexual politics" (Kasbkar, 1979).

Similarly, the abounding number of folk songs and folk tales which form the folklore of India, become an important agency of value transmission. The oral tradition of India in the form of ballads, folk songs and couplets sung by women in different parts of the country can be drawn together to sketch a portrait of important social ideals. Women's folk songs reveal the painful awareness of inferiority as can be seen in this north Indian song:

   Listen, O Sukhma, what a tradition has started!
   Drums are played upon the birth of a boy,
   But at my birth only a brass plate was beaten.

   (Lewis, 1958).

The role of myths and legends, especially those of religious derivations in defining and integrating the traditional element and the common features of identity and society cannot be overestimated. The Krishna myths highlights the main themes of Indian inner life. Lord Krishna represents the ideal male and ideal son. His associations with his adopted mother have come to be viewed as the ideal bond between mother and son. In the same vein, the stories of Nal and Damayanti, Savitri and Satyawan, and innumerable other legends highlight the important religious and social values of the Hindu way of life. Here, a special reference to Indian literature as also contributing to the transmission process would not be superfluous. Popular writers of each succeeding generation - Premchand, Rabindranath Tagore and Sarat Chandra - have contributed in their own way towards the enculturation and transmission of the all pervading values of the Hindu culture.
With these basic concepts and frameworks we shall look at some of the literature with media in focus. The literature review would be divided in two parts. One part which would trace the media studies and issues as covered in the western perspective. And the second part would cover the media within an Indian perspective. The studies will be looked at from the point of view the concepts and issues described in chapter one.