

SOC 105-001

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The Looking Glass and Existential Function of the Social Pertaining to Self-Image

In the realm of sociology, there is an intricate relationship between the looking glass self and the existential function of the social, revealing how the self-identity is presented to others. The looking glass concept is the idea that a person's sense of self is shaped by feedback and social interactions. Meanwhile the existential function is the how of finding purpose and identity but also through feedback and social interactions. This includes purpose, meaning, actions, and way of thought. The correspondence between the looking glass self and the existential function of the social impacts the social interactions and feedback to an individual's trajectory of one's life.

Individuals develop based on how other people perceive the person, which involves interpreting and reflecting on others' perceptions to incorporate in personal self-image. Think about looking into a mirror. Often when this happens a person might think this is how others view the personal self. Therefore, that concept is developed to be a natural trust because if this is how everyone perceives the self, it must be true. This is how the looking mirror concept develops. Similarly, if a neighbor addresses a person's traits to a person, that person will start to view themselves in that manner which is the idea of existential function of the social. Though these ideas are different they have a similar effect. Both are able to make the person think about the self-image based on the perception of others. From there, people often hold on to the adjectives used and that becomes a part of their identity. So now what? A person has a choice to hold onto that feedback

are disrespectful because they can't stop interrupting when someone is speaking, that person now evaluates what was said. Perhaps from there, that person may be more attentive and a better listener due to that feedback. That demonstrates the existential function of the social while the reflection and thinking part of the statement demonstrates the looking glass self. Together, these concepts affect the actions, purpose of the actions, and the meaning behind as a part of self-identity.

Though the looking glass concept and the existential function of the social meaning seem similar there are quite a few differences between the two. The looking glass is more of a personal psychological idea that requires a great amount of personal reflection. This can be demonstrated in a cognitive and emotional matter. To this, the looking glass is heavier on the idea of personal perception on self-image. On the other hand, the existential function of social meaning is heavier on the idea of societal perception on self-image. Existential function is more sociological based rather than an emotional, cognitive, psychological concept. The idea of the looking glass is also more detailed and specific while the existential function is a broader concept. The looking glass is often based on specific feedback, like letting someone know they are charming, graceful, respectful, mean, or arrogant. Existential function has broader concepts due to the fact that it often comes from the idea of societal norms. An example of this can be rules, religion, guidelines. One example that comes to mind is when in elementary school, normally kids walk in a single file line, which comes from an expectation and emphasizes that if everyone is following the rule, it should be followed even if it isn't verbally expressed. This is an example of expectation in the realm of existential function of the social as everyone in the class or society is following what is expected of them. While the looking glass concept focuses on specific and

societal norms and expectations. These concepts have different interplay in regard to personal and collective perceptions about the overall self-image

While the looking glass self-concept and the existential function of the social meaning idea have a similar journey of self-image through feedback and societal matters have similar overall concepts, they have different scope and execution of finding self-purpose and meaning. Regardless of their similarities and distinctions, both concepts influence a person's identity and behavior, signifying the corresponding parts between societal and personal factors. Oftentimes one can be more prominent than the others. Looking glass concept can be easier to practice as that is more intimate and personal whereas existential function can be harder to achieve as it takes humility and digging deeper. Though self-image is crucial in one's life there is importance in not getting to self-absorb in one direction or the other. This means not looking too much into personal perception or societal perception. Understanding how these work as well as the significant impact of the concepts, reveals the greater value insights into the nature of human identity and finding purpose and meaning within society.