

A Review of the Self-Identity Development Status of Adolescents

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Abstract. Nowadays, the mental health problems of adolescents have received widespread attention from society, among which the issue of adolescent identity crisis is particularly important. However, there is still a lack of research on the influencing factors of adolescent identity development. This article reviews existing literature and examines how family, social environment -- including internet influence and hedonistic trends -- and career expectations collectively shape self-identity. This article analyzes that family factors are significantly positively correlated with adolescent identity, and social factors also contribute to the development of psychological identity. The formation of self-identity can lay the foundation for future career identity. To foster healthy identity development, this study proposes the following suggestions: the development of adolescent identity requires families to have a better understanding and tolerance of their children, schools to increase the diversity and fun of the curriculum, media science popularization guidance, community assistance in publicity, and professional assistance and regulation from psychological workers.

Keywords: Teenagers, Identity, Family Education

1. Introduction

The term self-identity originates from Erikson's exposition on identity development. Adolescence is a critical period in an individual's growth process, during which they need to transform their childhood identity into a coherent and personally meaningful identity. Self-identity is an individual's subjective feeling and experience of consistency and continuity in their abilities, values, and outlook on life during the process of self-development, which can help individuals better understand themselves [1]. At present, the psychological community defines self-identity as two dimensions: exploration and commitment. Through the combination of these two dimensions, adolescent identity is divided into four states: identity completion, identity delay, identity premature closure, and identity diffusion [2].

During adolescence (around 12-18 years old), teenagers gradually develop a stable understanding of who they are, what role they play in society, and what their values and goals are by exploring the relationship between themselves and society. The establishment of this identity will have multidimensional and profound impacts on the lives of adolescents. Positive identity helps adolescents find a stable self-coordination during the changing adolescence, thereby gaining a sense

of direction and control in self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, academic development, and other aspects. Identity confusion can lead to confusion, anxiety, and even deviation from their normal life choices.

This study systematically reviews existing achievements and categorizes them, presenting the context and core issues of adolescent identity research, providing a theoretical basis and direction for future exploration, and helping to promote the in-depth development of research in the field. Research is beneficial in helping parents, teachers, and the general public understand the developmental patterns of adolescent identity, breaking cognitive biases, and creating a more favorable social atmosphere for adolescent growth. In addition, targeted improvement methods have been proposed in the study, covering individual strategies, family advice, school programs, etc., providing practical guidance for solving adolescent development problems.

2. Analysis of influence factor

At the stage 12 to 18, teenagers begin to choose life values, goals as their lifelong internal support. If goals can be set during this period, it will help reduce psychological conflicts, help to face up to self-concept and cultivate values, making their physical and mental development smooth. An integrated self will also help their learning and career development, increase their opportunities and help them achieve their goals. Conversely, when teenagers fail to effectively integrate their experiences and beliefs, they will become confused about their self-identity, feel lost, lack life goals, which leads to the formation of negative self-concepts and increases the probability of wrongful behaviors [3].

2.1. Family

With the emergence of "involution", most parents are investing more in education, but their anxiety levels are increasing. As children's academic workload gradually increases, the traditional evaluation mechanism not only intensifies competition but also weakens students' practical exploration abilities. Research shows that traditional family competitive pressure is not conducive to the development of students' non-cognitive skills, which may exacerbate negative emotions such as hopelessness and anxiety, thereby hindering their physical and mental growth [4]. Under the psychological pressure of a competitive learning environment, teenagers accept social norms, and psychological crises can easily make them feel confused and disoriented. However, parents yearn for their children's growth, and their anxiety is gradually transmitted to them through negative parenting methods and poor parent-child communication relationships. This undoubtedly increases the psychological burden on students again, hindering their self-identity development and the formation of positive personality traits [4].

Among the factors that affect the establishment of self-identity in adolescents, the parenting style of parents is one of the most important factors [4]. The emotional warmth provided by parents is a key factor in promoting healthy self-identity among adolescents. The emotional warmth provided by parents is more effective in predicting adolescents' self-identity status than their rejection, overprotection, and overly competitive attitudes. This indicates that adolescents are prone to self-doubt and may lose their expectations for the future when their academic performance declines. They will gradually pay more attention to themselves and crave more recognition from the outside world. Parents' rejection can hinder children's personality development and reduce their ability to perceive and experience positive things. Because children feel that their parents neither appreciate nor approve of them, it is very difficult for them to have a positive self-identity, which will

eventually lead to a decline in self-awareness and self-worth. This is undoubtedly a huge blow to children.

Excessive parental protection often hinders the development of children's autonomy - not only does it make it difficult for them to adapt independently in various environments, but it also impedes the construction of their self-identity. Relevant studies have pointed out that this excessive protection has a negative influence on children's self-esteem and psychological state, but it shows a significant direct positive effect on their psychological adjustment ability. Because children will notice that their parents do not appreciate and recognize them enough, it is difficult for them to establish a positive self-cognitive framework. Eventually, this leads to blurred self-awareness and a weak sense of self-worth. Moreover, if children are constantly trapped in their parents' predetermined expectations or value orientations and get caught in excessive inner conflicts and self-competition, they will also have difficulty forming a clear academic self-concept and will be unable to make objective and precise cognitive judgments about themselves [4].

In addition, co-parenting plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' self-identity. Studies have shown that when both parents adopt a unified and positive co-parenting approach, it can make the family more harmonious and connected, making teenagers feel safer and experience more warmth within the family environment [5]. On the contrary, a lower level of positive parent-child coexistence behavior may reduce family intimacy, intensify family conflicts, and affect the development of teenagers' self-awareness and self-identity [5]. In addition, adolescents' perceptions of their father's emotional warmth, mother's emotional warmth, and their own self-identity are positively correlated with college adaptation. Research shows that there is a positive correlation between parents' parenting attitudes and children's self-identity [6]. There are also studies showing that positive parent-child coexistence behavior by parents is significantly positively correlated with adolescents' self-identity, which helps them establish a strong sense of self-awareness [7]. However, excessive family protection can lead to an identity crisis among teenagers, making it difficult for them to adapt and develop a sense of self-identity.

In summary, family factors (including parental relationships, attitudes and methods towards children's education, etc.) have a significant impact on adolescents' self-identity. The results indicate that there is a significant positive correlation between parents' positive co-parenting behavior and adolescents' self-identity, which helps adolescents establish self-identity. On the contrary, excessive family protection can lead to a lack of autonomy among adolescents, hindering their ability to adapt to the environment and form a sense of self-identity. Individuals with high self-identity have clearer self-awareness and stronger self-awareness, and can better mobilize psychological resources when facing psychological crises caused by parental anxiety and excessive competition.

2.2. Society

2.2.1. Network

"Everyone is surfing the Internet every day and every moment" has become the new normal, and the Internet has become an important place for young people. China is currently in the era of "Web 2.0", and application media such as Weibo, WeChat, and mobile applications are increasingly becoming the main platforms for contemporary college students to learn, live, and communicate. With the development and growth of network technology, young people are also facing new practical difficulties when going online [8]. On the one hand, the diversity and convenience of the Internet provide more space for teenagers to make independent choices. The virtuality and anonymity of the Internet can also enhance teenagers' willingness to express themselves and promote the development

of their self-identity [8]. On the other hand, the virtuality, anonymity, and randomness of online communication weaken the interactive ability of teenagers in real life, while also reducing their sense of responsibility and self-discipline [9]. On the one hand, the Internet has the advantages of rich content and convenient search, which provides more diverse choices for teenagers and enables them to accumulate more knowledge. The Internet is a unique personal space that creates an atmosphere where teenagers can freely express themselves and enhance their interest in expression. On the other hand, online communication has the characteristics of unreality and anonymity, which weakens teenagers' desire for social interaction in the real environment and gradually makes them lack an objective understanding of themselves [10]. This will greatly promote young people to solve problems independently, and help promote the development of identity among young people. Some students use online social platforms to receive positive feedback, enhance their social self-esteem and sense of happiness, and also help alleviate their stress and promote their physical and mental growth.

On the contrary, excessive reliance on networks and artificial intelligence can affect the development of one's subjective initiative [10]. Research has shown that there is the closest correlation between self-identity and adolescents' excessive use and addiction to social networks, while the severity of self-identity confusion is positively correlated with the degree of internet addiction among college students [10]. The impact of self-identity on social network addiction is partially mediated by self-esteem. Most of the recognition of personal efficiency and personal value among teenagers comes from their perception of others' opinions of them. Negative feedback in social networks can lower the self-esteem and happiness of adolescents, thereby affecting the formation of adolescent identity.

2.2.2. Hedonism

Nowadays, a hedonistic lifestyle is very common among young people in society. The hedonistic behavior among students has attracted widespread attention. This hedonistic lifestyle and personal behavioral tendencies are generated through social interactions between individuals, to pursue happiness, freedom, and enjoy life. Teenagers who prioritize hedonism tend to prioritize overconsumption, entertainment activities, and self-image in their social environment.

However, although this lifestyle may seem attractive, it can have adverse effects on personal development. Teenagers who embrace hedonism may neglect personal responsibility, exhibit poor self-control, and struggle to form a coherent and stable self-identity. A study found that adolescents have a higher level of hedonistic lifestyle, indicating that they are more inclined to focus on pursuing personal enjoyment and satisfaction [11]. Meanwhile, teenagers' self-identity belongs to a lower category, indicating that they have difficulty establishing a stable and clear self-identity. These findings suggest that adolescents who prioritize short-term pleasure often face challenges in establishing a strong self-identity. Therefore, it can be concluded that the intensity of hedonistic lifestyles among teenagers is negatively correlated with the development of their self-identity [11].

2.3. Occupation

The development of artificial intelligence and renewable energy is reshaping the market, driving the growth of many technical or professional jobs, while also leading to a decrease in demand for certain other positions, such as graphic designers. In this constantly changing environment, having a strong sense of self-identity becomes crucial, especially for individuals entering the professional field.

Research has shown that there is a significant positive correlation between self-identity and professional identity [12]. Students may not be able to form a mature self-identity, leading to confusion in establishing their own values, career positioning, social roles, and ideals and beliefs. Therefore, forming self-identity has a significant impact on the career development of young people. Improving students' learning environment and strengthening interns' self-identity cultivation can help interns enhance their professional identity. In order to enhance self-identity, interns need to continuously strive in a constantly changing learning environment.

In addition, further research has explored and concluded that the professional identity of young university teachers is slightly higher than the average level, with the highest score in the dimension of professional value and the lowest score in the dimension of professional belonging; There are individual differences in the professional identity of young university teachers in terms of gender, teaching experience, marital status, fertility status, and professional title [12].

3. Suggestion

The formation of adolescent identity is the result of the interaction between multiple systems such as family, school, and society. Currently, teenagers are facing challenges such as digital shock, excessive academic competition, and the collision of diverse values. These challenges make their identity formation more likely to fall into a state of "prolonged procrastination" and "greater confusion".

In this regard, all sectors of society need to work together. In terms of family education, parents should set a good example, transform from "controllers" to "companions", guide children to establish basic self-esteem, accept themselves, and maintain family harmony. They should not use the excuse of 'this is for your own good' to make decisions for their children, but should respect their interests and exploration.

Schools should pay more attention to the process of self-identity formation among teenagers, shifting from a "performance-oriented" model to a "growth-oriented" model, and organizing practical activities such as inviting experts to hold science popularization lectures to help students better understand themselves. Teenagers should popularize professional psychological knowledge through online short videos and social bulletin boards to broaden their horizons and help them understand the importance of self-identity. Psychologists can use professional tools to assess the psychological state of adolescents, develop intervention plans based on different psychological conditions, and provide psychological counseling services to individual students to address their core issues. They can also enter schools and spread psychological knowledge through science popularization speeches and interactive activities with teenagers. Psychologists can further study the direction of adolescent self-identity formation, such as the impact of practical operations on adolescent self-identity development, in order to provide scientific guidance for future development. The core responsibility of a psychologist is to "provide a framework for teenagers to explore themselves", neither making choices for them nor leaving them confused, but providing professional support to help them gradually clarify "who I am" and "where I am going" during the exploration process, ultimately forming a stable and positive self-identity, laying the foundation for their adaptation to society as adults.

In short, whether it is family tolerance, school diversity, media guidance, or policy support, they should ultimately aim towards one goal: to give teenagers the courage to say 'this is me' and move forward confidently based on this self-awareness.

4. Conclusion

This article analyzes the influencing factors of adolescent identity. Conclusion: Family factors have a significant impact on adolescent self-identity, and co-parenting plays a key role in shaping adolescent self-identity. On the one hand, the internet enhances the social self-esteem and sense of happiness of teenagers, and also helps to relieve students' stress and promote their physical and mental growth. On the other hand, excessive dependence on the internet can affect the development of their subjective initiative. The hedonistic lifestyle may seem appealing, but it can hurt personal development. There is a significant positive correlation between self-identity and professional identity. Overall, the construction and development of adolescent identity cannot be separated from the influence of family and society, which also lays the foundation for future career identity. Families, schools, and society should cooperate in multiple ways to help young people solve the crisis of identity and achieve identity development.

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