

# Self- Concept

- I have healthy body
- I am an attractive person
- I am an honest person
- Religion is my guide in everyday life
- I am a cheerful person
- I hate myself
- I am from a happy family
- I am not loved by my family



# History of self Concept

- William James (1890) – principles of psychology – included a chapter “consciousness of Self”
- James distinguish between two types of self
  1. subjective sense (the “I”)
  2. objective sense (the “me”) – more focused by psychologist for research



# Definition of Self Concept

**“the totality of the individual’s thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object” (Rosenberg, 1979, p.7)**

**Like other belief systems, the self concept includes**

- 1.cognitive**
- 2. behavioral**
- 3. affective component.**



# Cognitive Component: Self Schema

- Self schemas are “cognitive generalizations about the self, derived from past experience, that organize and guide the processing of self-related information”



# Affective/evaluative component: self esteem

“self esteem reflects the perceived difference between an individual's *actual self concept* (who I think I really am) and some *ideal self image* (who I would really like to be).”

William James (1890) expressed the relationship this way.

Self esteem =  $\text{success} / \text{pretension}$

Pretension (ideals against which individuals assess their actual self image)



# Behavioral component: self perception

Darl Bem (1972) influential self perception theory reflects we observe our behavior and the situation in which it took place, make attributions about why the behavior occurred, and draw conclusions about our own characteristic and disposition.

In other words we come to understand ourselves the same way we perceive and understand others.



# You and Me: Understanding of Self

- William James's conception of the self was highly introspective.(looking inside)
- In 1954 Festinger's theory of social comparison, we can not interpret our own actions and feelings without looking outward to the actions and feelings of exhibited by the other people.



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## Western culture

William James was American philosopher- western culture and social thought.

Focused on individual self concept e.g., interpersonal competition, individual achievement, independence

## Eastern culture

Alternative perspective- Eastern culture such as Japan- eastern culture and social thought.

Focused on collectivistic self-concept e.g., intragroup cooperation, interdependence, and collectivistic achievement.



# How does self concept foster

- The **looking-glass self** is a social psychological concept, created Charles Horton Cooley by in 1902, stating that a person's self grows out of society's interpersonal interactions and the perceptions of others. The term refers to people shaping themselves based on other people's perception, which leads the people to reinforce other people's perspectives on themselves. People shape themselves based on what other people perceive and confirm other people's opinion on themselves. The term "looking glass self" was first used by Cooley in his work, *Human Nature and the Social Order* in 1902.
- C. H. Cooley has summed it up in his statement: "I am not what I think I am and I am not what you think I am; I am what I think that you think I am."



# Threat to self concept/ cognitive dissonance theory

- **Cognitive dissonance** is a discomfort caused by holding conflicting cognitions (e.g., ideas, beliefs, values, emotional reactions) simultaneously.
- The theory of cognitive dissonance in social psychology proposes that people have a motivational drive to reduce dissonance by altering existing cognitions, adding new ones to create a consistent belief system, or alternatively by reducing the importance of any one of the dissonant elements that can lead to the change in self concept.



# Difference

## **self —concept**

- Encompasses what people know and believe about themselves.
- All self-knowledge is integrated into a single concept.
- Largely coherent and integrated.
- Conscious

## **self- knowledge**

- Knowledge or understanding of one's own nature, abilities, and limitations; insight into oneself.
- Plenty of material connected together.
- Conscious, unconscious, subconscious



# Difference

## **self-schema**

- Fall under the cognitive component of self concept.
- Beliefs about one's self.
- Information from previous experiences.

## **self-perception**

- Fall under the behavioral component of self concept.
- Perceives one's behavior in environment.