

Self-understanding and Self-identity

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Identity or social identity refers to people's self-understanding.

It is important for the individual as a social actor to understand him- or herself and his or her own feelings and competencies for engaging in social activities. People learn about themselves from engaging in contextual challenges. They develop a self-understanding which makes them able to engage in social life. In late modern societies where 'individual' individualisation have become a must it seem more necessary then ever to have a sensible self-understanding to be able to engage as a competent actor in social processes. In the development of late modern societies, and especially in the 1960's the concept of identity became very popular. Identity formation was seen as a necessary psychological goal for all individuals. Today the identity perspective is often described as social identity. Social identity points to identity as formed in social life and as part of a relation between individual and social life. Therefore individualisation and self-understanding describes the social perspective of individual functioning and identity and social identity the psychological perspective. (SM)

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