

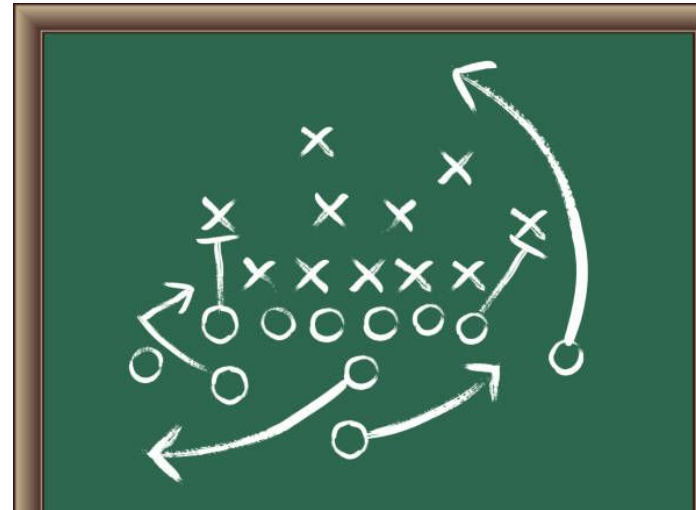
Communication Theory of Identity

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Gameplan:

- Introduction to Communication Theory of Identity
- Explanation of Study and Discussion Questions
- Understanding of Study of Identity



What is Communication Theory of Identity?

Communication Theory of Identity: Captures the complex, fluid, and multilayered nature of identity by articulating a “layered” perspective of identity in which communication is conceptualized as identity enactment or performance rather than merely a cause or result/effect of communication (Hecht et al., pg. 223) .

Four Layers of Identity:

Personal Identity: Denotes how an individual defines themselves. “Who am I?”

Relational Identity: Who are you in relation to others. Familial, Romantic, Friendships, Professional

Enacted Identity: How we perform or express our identity to others

Communal Identity: How society defines identity and identities

Discussion Questions:

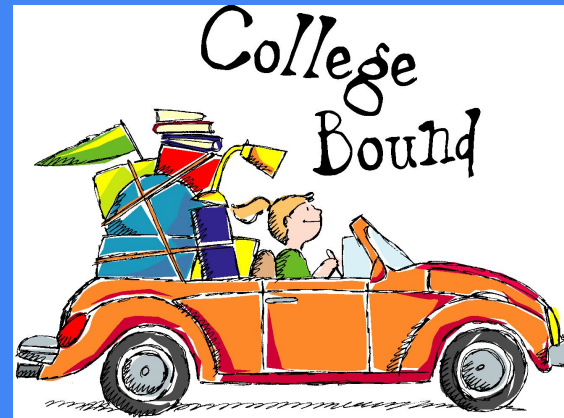
How does your enacted identity change based on your relational identity and the communal identity of particular situations? Explain.

How has transitioning from living at home for highschool to being at St. Norbert for college shaped or altered your four forms of identity?

Study on Communication Theory of Identity: Dissonance, detachment and college student identity: an exploration of identity gaps in the emerging majority student

Aim of the study:

- Examine the uncomfortability of individuals when transitioning from highschool life to college due to feelings of inadequacy and face changing identities.
- Focuses on the relational and personal identities



Method:



- Small Midwestern first semester students
- Occurs over a 3 year period
- 49 participants
- Open ended interview questions (45 minutes)

Results:

- Many students experienced dissonance in their transition to college resulting in identity gaps
- Lack of understanding of the college experience sparked a personal-relational identity detachment
- Family members:
 - Felt they did not know the student (family member) anymore
 - Refused to accept their modification in the family role.
- Friendships:
 - Detachments due to the choice to continue down different paths
 - Rejection through difference in norms leading to inability to relate
 - Rejection of new identities or responsibilities

Discussion Questions:

Do you share any of the experiences found about the detachment of identities when transitioning to college? Explain.

How could an individual attempt to bridge these detachments of relational identities with their friends and family?

Direct Quotes:

“I lost a few family members, so being a first-generation college student it just seems like people don’t understand like your lifestyle in the community. You have to like better yourself. And you know engage in a higher education. So they want you to steal like, you know, do bad things that you used to do or always jump when they want you to jump. And that didn’t work for me so I had to do a lot of isolating myself from family” (Goode et al., pg. 84-85).

‘Well for me the ‘in crowd’ is all my friends that are not doing anything. Being pregnant. Sitting, sitting around waiting for a check or waiting on child support or something of that nature ... So I’m not a part of that crowd. I’m outside of that crowd ... I was being dragged down by association” (Goode et al., pg. 85)

Who am I? Alan Watts

<https://open.spotify.com/track/10AvPUYmVapS2Amp2TVsE2?si=e693301af4d04f87>

Bibliography

Goode, J. R., Radovic-Fanta, J., & Cipra, A. (2020). Dissonance, detachment and college student identity: An exploration of identity gaps in the emerging majority student. *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*, 22(1), 80–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17459435.2020.1853205>