



OriginalArticle

**Socialization of Gender Roles
Attitude: A Study on Adolescents
and their Parents of
Lahore, Pakistan**

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Abstract

Parenting is an effective socialization institute and parents are critical in shaping their children's belief on gender roles. In the present study an attempt has been made to analyze the gender difference in parenting practices and its impact on the attitude of socializing the gender roles among children. Applying the approach of positivist, this study is quantitative and cross-sectional surveys were conducted. A sample of parents N=500 and their children N= 500 were taken from a stratified random sampling in multi-stage technique among the families residing in Lahore, the most populous city and district of Punjab, Pakistan. Gender Roles Attitude Scale (GRAS), with the author's prior authorization and a self-created Gender Socialization Parenting Scale (GSPS) were used to collect data. Data was analyzed using the statistical procedures of ANOVA, MANOVA and frequencies/percentages. The results showed that the girls were more attitudinal about egalitarian gender roles than girls. Parenting practice 'role model' was also found to influence the socialization of attitude traditional gender roles among the children. A comprehensive strategy for gender sensitive parenting in cooperation with social organizations such as civil society, teachers, religious scholars, media, parents and children is suggested.

Keywords: gender, gender socialization, parenting practices, gender roles attitude, egalitarian, traditional

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Introduction

The socialization of attitudes towards gender roles is a crucial step for teenagers as they grasp society's expectations regarding gender. Gender is learned in early childhood and comes from various "socializing agents" including family, friends, school and, yes, media (Kimmel & Davis, 2019). Parenting is considered the most crucial factor that can encourage children to develop pro-social behaviors (Maccoby, 2002), although there are many components that influence children's interests, behavior and decision making. Thus, the family context is considered to be a critical one in forming early experiences about gender that constitute adolescents' knowledge of gender (Bem, 1981). Besides, the parenting practices involve a number of essential perspectives namely parents' skills and perceptions (Jeynes, 2010). The changes in physical, mental and sexual development that occur during adolescence can also fuel attitudes about gender roles, affecting their life for years to come (Kågesten et al., 2016). The influence of the parent and family on gender socialization in early childhood has been studied as it relates to children's involvement in sport (Farkas & Leaper, 2014), family chores (McCabe, 2015), media, social media norms (McCabe, 2015), gender stereotypes (Rhodes, 2015), and other social and cultural factors (Leaper & Farkas, 2014). Parents can be said to be role models and they pass on values and beliefs, which means that their social behavior will affect the perception of the children on gender roles (Leaper, 2002). Parents may express their values in indirect ways through their thoughts and actions, which might have an impact on a child's development and sense of gender identity (Yale Acev, 2012). Furthermore, pro-social skills include sharing and cooperation as well as constructive behaviors like being empathetic and caring, parents and family influence the development of these abilities, which are related to children's performance in school and other areas (Durlak et al., 2011). This illustrates the connection between parents' attitude towards gender and their children's attitude towards their gender (Tenenbaum & Leaper, 2002). The views about being male or female that children develop are largely influenced by their parents and are unlikely to change in adulthood (Howard, 2000). It was found that educated mothers, working mothers and mothers and fathers sharing the same responsibilities in the house and decision-making are important in creating equal gender roles (Kulik, 2005). Based on the social learning theories, it is logical to assume that a child who sees a non-traditional relationship may have lower gender stereotypes (neutral gender attitudes), and a child from a traditional relationship may have more traditional gender attitudes. Furthermore, equality in the way home duties, care work, jobs, decision making and gender attitudes are delivered is likely to result in more egalitarian behaviour

among children (Mchale et al., 2003). The purpose of the study is to find out what are the parenting practices which influence the attitude of gender roles (traditional vs. egalitarian) of children (adolescents) of Lahore in Pakistan.

Literature review

Both local and international studies were reviewed to know the parenting practices and its influence on attitude towards gender roles among children. A survey of Lahore, the second largest city of Pakistan was conducted, where there are various educational institutions with varying socio-economic status. There were 816 young students in the study. The findings indicated that 40.3% of the differences in aggressive behaviour between students could be accounted for by the extent to which parents were not open, and 48.2% of the differences in how secure students felt could be explained by the extent to which parents were warm and could guide. The study points to the need to develop positive parenting practices, which involves raising awareness among parents, strengthening their understanding and perspectives. Parent communication and parental beliefs can enhance the current parenting style and decrease the risk of developmental problems in children (Raza et al., 2020). Hussain et al., (2015) investigated how families transmit gender stereotypes in Pakistani culture and how these families define gender roles. Gender stereotypes and roles were interwoven and shaped by social and cultural contexts that emerged in structured situations and relations, mainly within the family. The research revealed that the socialisation of boys and girls, as well as the differences in the home environment, father and mother engagement with their children, current parenting practices and reducing risk are all important factors in the development of gender roles. In a similar research, 358 white families from working and middle-class backgrounds in the U.S. took part, which included mothers, fathers, and their first two kids. Families were divided into three categories according to their attitudes towards gender: traditional, equal and those who were traditional yet had children with equal attitudes. The ANOVA results revealed that these family types are related to the socioeconomic status of the family, the time spent by both mother and father in household duties and the time they gave to their children. Marks et al (2009) said that conflicts in the family were worse in traditional families. Kilsby (2014) discovered that girls and boys were socialised to conform to the roles of feminine and masculine, and that there was a narrow definition of culture expectations. Men were considered as the leaders and carers, to provide protection and take decisions while women were regarded as wives and mothers and in charge of the home management. They were not very social. In a few situations, mothers were perceived to care for only their sons,

but not daughters and mothers and fathers were both perceived to take responsibility when the children reached the age of early teens. Another study examined the impact of parents' backgrounds on gender roles and work differences. It included 134 parents and 134 teenagers from Israel. Mothers were discovered to be more likely to communicate with their children, fathers were found to be more likely to act in the more traditional roles. Parents' and mothers' levels of education significantly influenced their attitudes towards gender roles as well as their children's attitudes and the mothers' working status. Full-time working mothers and higher educated fathers were more likely to be found in more progressive families. Parents' attitudes towards these issues were also influenced by their country of origin, their religious outlook and the number of children in the family (Kulik, 2002). The socioeconomic involvement study revealed that the views on gender roles of girls and boys are very different, with the girls' equal views turning out to be 58% compared to the boys' 19%. A multivariate linear probability model indicated that the probability of equal beliefs of gender roles was 31% higher for girls who were at least 10th grade and 15% higher for boys who were at least 10th grade than for boys and girls who completed only primary education. Further, girls who were in a social group had a 5% greater probability of having an egalitarian attitude and boys who did not attend had a 6% greater probability of having an egalitarian attitude. Girls' egalitarian feelings were affected by television but not those of the boys. In order to achieve equality in society, both men and women should adopt progressive gender roles (Streatfield et al., 2023). Cordero-Coma, Esping-Andersen (2018) propose that children can develop egalitarian beliefs and behavior by observing and learning from their parents' beliefs and behaviors on equality. An even stronger effect is found for boys whose mothers have more education. It is recommended that more equitable parenting styles and attitudes be encouraged to reduce the gender disparity in domestic chores particularly among younger children. The findings of studies on parents' gender role socialization of their sons and daughters have been mixed regarding the ambivalent parental attitudes toward gender and their children. Given this mixed picture, further careful research is needed on the impact of parents' divergent perspectives of gender on their children's socialization. The literature examined shows that there are conflicting perspectives on whether traditional or equal parenting practices impact children and teens' attitudes towards gender roles. Parenting plays a significant role in child development and thus, the present study was conducted to determine the effect of parenting practices on the gender roles attitude of children in the culture of Pakistan.

Operational definitions of variables

Egalitarian gender roles:Equal gender roles include actions and views that encourage equal men and women's participation in all aspects of life.

Gender roles attitude:The attitude and thought regarding the acts and behaviours that society relates to girls and boys belong to the beliefs on gender roles.

Gender roles: Gender socialization helps children to identify actions, behaviors, and roles that are distinctively their gender's. These are socially constructed roles, which are associated with gender.

Parenting socialization practices:Parenting socialization practices refer to the specific strategies and approach used by parents in raising their children..

Traditional gender roles:Conventional gender roles in a traditional culture lead to traditional roles that are socially constructed and accepted by the people.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical underpinning of the present study is based on the following theories:

Social learning theory: Children's gender identity can be influenced by outside factors, mainly by observing and reacting to influences from their parents and environment. Parents demonstrate gender roles by their occupations, hobbies and everyday actions, which give children good role models of what might be appropriate for their gender. Although there has been progress towards gender equality, the traditional concept of the mother as the career and the father as the provider is still apparent in many families. Positive and negative children learn by modelling, direct instruction and reinforcement which behaviours are socially acceptable for their gender (Bussey& Bandura, 1999; Burn, 1996; Wharton, 2005). In the course of time, they internalize and embody these gender norms within their attitudes and behaviors. **Gender schema theory:** The concept of the gender schema theory is important in understanding children's attitudes towards gender roles. It examines not only when children start to form their concepts about gender but also how their gender identities change in relation to these mental schemas to impact their perceptions and understanding of social norms, events and behaviours in different contexts (Bem 1981). Bem's theory states that people act on the gender schemas that they have learned. For example, parents often feel that their sons are the breadwinners and their daughters are the caregivers. Depending on whether their children are boys or girls, mothers, and fathers can urge them to behave in specific ways (Eckes T, Trautner H, M 2012). To promote gender equality, parents attempt to provide

an environment that does not pass on gender stereotypes (Bem 1983). Equal minded parents are more likely to be more equal in their treatment of children, to divide up household tasks more equally than are traditional parents (Updegraff et al. 1996). From the above theories, it was found that the social values adopted by children and what they see influence the way children learn about gender. It is important to recognize these factors; this present study focuses on parenthood practices that created attitude of gender roles traditional vs. egalitarian among children.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this study is to recognize the important dynamics of attitude towards gender roles that affect children's gender self-perceptions and interpersonal relationships in society. This study explores the impact of parents on their children's gender role attitudes and the changes that occur in gender role attitudes of the children during adolescence, which has implications for the reinforcement or challenge of traditional gender roles. This knowledge can be used to inform education and policy initiatives for gender equality and to challenge the perpetuation of limiting stereotypes among youth. In addition, it demonstrates the importance of targeted parenting behaviors to assist parents in fostering more positive and equal gender perspectives and, in turn, a more accepting and nurturing environment for future generations.

Objectives of the Study

The following were the objectives of the present research:

- To analyze difference in socialization parenting practices between fathers and mothers;
- To explore gender roles attitude among high school students;
- To investigate the effect of parenting practices to shape attitude of adolescents towards gender roles.

Hypothesis of the Study

The following were the hypotheses of the present study:

- H₁:** There is a significant gender difference in parenting practices of parents to socialize their children;
- H₂:** Parenting practices are expected to indoctrinate attitudes toward gender roles in boys and girls whereas girls are expected to hold stronger attitudes than boys;
- H₃:** There is a significant difference in traditional and egalitarian gender roles attitude of children with parenting practices related to role model; social concerns; gender equality.

Method

In current study, positivist approach and quantitative nature was adopted. It was grounded in a cross-sectional survey which compares the impacts of different parenting styles on a child's adherence to gender role attitudes at a specific time.

Population and Sample: There were families from Lahore, the second most populated city and provincial capital of Pakistan. Sample size for this study was estimated using the Yamane formula (1973) and comprised of N=250 families, each with N=500 parents (250 mothers, 250 fathers) and N=500 children (250 daughters, 250 sons) from the same family. Multistage stratified random sampling was used to select the participants.

Sampling Procedure: Lahore city was divided into six strata and 24 schools were selected (2 from each Stratum, 1 girls high school and 1 boys high school) from the list of public high schools for girls and boys of Lahore city. They could be found in Lahore's Directorate of Secondary Education. Randomly, based on the criteria of inclusion in the study, school children (girls & boys) aged 14-18 years and parents (mothers & fathers) of school children aged 14-18 years, parents of those who have siblings (aged 14-18) and school children (sisters & brothers aged 14-18) were selected as study participants.

Data collection instruments: A self-designed Gender Socialization Parenting Scale (GSPS) was used for data collection. Items are split into three sub scales: societal concerns (7 items), role model (7 items) and gender equality (7 items) for a total of 21 items. Parents responded to each item on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree; 5 = strongly disagree) for both sons and daughters, ages 14–18 years. The internal consistency or mean dependability of the GSPS scale is shown by Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.76$. In this research, the Gender Role Attitude Scale (Zeynelo Älu & Terzio Älu, 2011) was used with the permission of the authors. High school students filled up two aspects of the scale: egalitarian [A] and traditional [D] gender roles (Maj = 15.87, SD = 0.06). Every statement of both the preceding two sub scales was translated in Urdu and rechecked by an English-Urdu translator who had experience in gender studies. The internal consistency of the egalitarian gender role subscale (Cronbach alpha = 0.78) and traditional gender role (Cronbach alpha = 0.78) were moderate and the overall internal consistency was high (Cronbach alpha = 0.92).

Procedure: Data are collected from teachers and students with permission

from the high school authorities. Confidentiality of the information they would be providing in the questionnaire was also assured and it was stated that the information would only be utilized in an educational perspective. Ethical issues were also taken into consideration in the daily questionnaire collection and the respondents were commended for their prompt participation and patience in providing family information. Public secondary school teachers from Lahore, both male and female, were selected and a questionnaire was sent to them for their children in the age group of 14 to 18 years old. Similarly, children attending high schools for girls, boys picked and requested to fill questionnaires from both parents, and one sibling (14-18 years old). The questionnaires were administered by daily visits to the schools and households of the participants.

Data Analysis: A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to test the differences in the mean of the four dependent variables, which was followed by a univariate ANOVA analysis. Other data analysis techniques involved one-way and three-way ANOVA, simple percentage and frequency analyses.

Descriptive of Demographics

Selected demographic parameters of parents included gender, age, family system, and household income. Parents' ages were set at 45-60 years. Family structure is incorporated in this study as a variable for it influences the way of socialization of the parents. This entails 26.2% of nuclear households and 23.8% of joint families. For study reasons, extended family was not included in this group. The sample was divided into three income categories, of which the majority (48.8%) was in the 50,000 Pakistani rupee or more per month category, 22.8% in 25,000 to 50,000 Pakistani rupee per month, and 28.4% in 76,000 to 100,000 Pakistani rupee per month. Thus, it is definitely a representative of the working and middle class of Pakistan. Also, it was noted that 46% of the mothers who took this survey were employed and 54% were housewives. Similarly, 50% males and 50% girls aged 14 to 18 participated in the study.

Results

Table I: Two-way Mixed Factorial ANOVA for Role and its Interaction with Gender

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	P	Partial η^2
Within-Subject Effects						
Role	19456.92	1	19456.92	495.65	.00	.50
Role $\times$ Gender	90916.23	1	90916.23	2316.00	.00	.82
Error	19549.35	498	39.26			
Between-Subject Effect						
Gender	108139.20	1	108139.20	2546.01	.00	.84
Error	21152.05	498	42.47			

* $p < .05$

A significant main effect of gender was consistent with gender roles, $F(1, 498) = 2546.01$, $p < .00$, $\beta^2 = .84$, demonstrating that girls' ($M = 43.21$, $SD = 16.02$) attitudes were much better than boys' ($M = 22.41$, $SD = 6.78$). Gender roles had a significant main impact, $F(1, 498) = 495.65$, $p < .000$, $\beta^2 = .50$, with attitudes towards traditional gender roles ($M = 37.22$, $SD = 21.62$) being greater than attitudes toward egalitarian gender roles ($M = 28.40$, $SD = 3.62$). Gender and gender roles showed a significant interaction, $F(1, 498) = 2315.99$, $p < .00$, $\beta^2 = .82$. Post-hoc Tukey analyses showed that girls ($M = 29.26$, $SD = 3.31$) attitudes toward egalitarian gender roles were significantly ($p < 0.001$) higher than boys' ($M = 27.53$, $SD = 3.72$), and girls' children's attitude toward traditional gender roles were significantly ($p < 0.001$) higher than boys' ($M = 17.28$, $SD = 5.06$).

Table 1

Two subscales of Gender Roles Attitude Scale in Urdu

Gender Roles Attitude Scale		جنسی کرداروں کے بارے میں رویوں کا پیمانہ
Statement	رد	مساوی جنسی کردار
Egalitarian Gender Roles		
Decision to have a child should be made by both spouses in a marriage. [Modified: A man and woman should decide on their own to get married].	A1	شادی کا فیصلہ دونوں لڑکے لڑکی کو خود کرنا چاہیے۔
Equal fee should be paid to the women and men in professional life.	A2	پیشہ ورانہ زندگی میں خواتین اور مردوں کو مساوی تنخواہ دی جانی چاہیے۔
Widowed woman should be able to live by herself.	A3	بیوہ عورت خود سے زندگی گزارنے کے قابل ہو سکتی ہے۔
Assets should be shared equally when spouses divorce.	A4	میاں بیوی میں طلاق دیتے وقت اثاثوں کو یکساں طور پر بانٹنا چاہیے۔
Equal chances should be enabled to women and men for professional development.	A5	پیشہ ورانہ کے خواتین اور مردوں کو یکساں مواقع فراہم کرنے چاہئیں۔
Domestic work should be shared equally between spouses in the family.	A6	گھر کیلے کام کو گھر میں شریک حیات کے مابین برابر بانٹنا چاہیے۔
Daughters and sons should be benefited equally from the family's economical means.	A7	بیٹیوں اور بیٹوں کو خاندان کے معاشی ذرائع سے یکساں طور پر فائدہ اٹھانا چاہیے۔
Spouses should decide together in the family.	A8	میاں بیوی کو گھر کے فیصلے مل کر کرنے چاہیے۔
Traditional Gender Roles		
The head of the household is man.	D1	گھر کا سربراہ آدمی ہوتا ہے۔
A man's main task in the house is breadwinning.	D2	گھر میں آدمی کا سب سے بڑا کام کمانا ہوتا ہے۔
Woman should not work if the economical situation of the man is adequate.	D3	مرد کی معاشی صورتحال مناسب ہو تو عورت کو کام نہیں کرنا چاہیے۔
Profession implemented by woman and man should be different.	D4	عورت اور مرد کا پیشہ مختلف ہونا چاہیے۔
Men should be preferred in employment applications because of women's fertility.	D5	ملازمت کی درخواستوں میں مردوں کو ترجیح دی جانی چاہیے۔
A girl should obey his father's wishes until she is married.	D6	جب تک شادی نہیں ہوتی لڑکی کو اپنے والد کے احکامات کی تعمیل کرنی چاہیے۔
Man should deal with tasks away from home such as shopping and paying the bills.	D7	مرد کو گھر سے دور کاموں سے نمٹنا چاہیے، جیسے خریداری اور بلوں کی ادائیگی۔
Girls should be dressed in pink while boys should be dressed in blue.	D8	لڑکیاں گلابی پگھٹیں جبکہ لڑکوں کو نیلے رنگ کا لباس پہننا چاہیے۔

Table II: MANOVA for Gender Difference in Parenting Socialization

Practices (N=500)

Variables	Gender	Mean	SD	df
<i>p</i>				
Role model	Fathers	28.41	4.68	3.02
	Mothers	29.48	4.37	

MANOVA Wilks' Lambda = .97, $F(3, 497) = 5.04, p < .00$ * $p < .05$

To examine gender differences in parenting practices, a one-way multivariate MANOVA analysis between groups was conducted. Dependent variables included "social concern," "role model," and "gender equality." The independent variable was gender. There was a statistically significant difference in scores between fathers and mothers for the group dependent variable $F(5,491)=3.10$, $p=0.009$; Wilks' $\lambda=0.97$; partial $\eta^2=0.031$. When the dependent variable's results were considered separately, the "role model" difference was statistically significant ($p=0.012$). Analysis of the mean score difference showed that mothers ($M=37.8$, $SD=6.85$) were more concerned about role model than fathers ($M=16.52$, $SD=2.88$).

Cross-sectional analysis of child parenting practices and attitudes towards gender roles revealed both egalitarian and traditional approaches.

Table III: One-way ANOVA for Gender Roles Attitude of Children with Gender Socialization Parenting Practice of 'role model'.

* $p<.05$

Variables	Traditional	SS	df	MS	F	p
Role model	Between Groups	675.03	22	30.68	1.84	.02
	Within Groups	8568.96	477	17.96		
	Total	9244.00	499			

One way ANOVA was used for the attitude towards traditional and egalitarian gender role among children who perform gender specific socialization practices regarding "role model". There was a statistically significant difference between the parenting practices "role model" and attitude of the children to traditional gender roles; $F(22,477)=1.84$, $p=0.012$. The results indicated that parenting practice as "role model" significantly affected the traditional gender roles attitude of the children aged 14-18.

Discussion

This study confirmed the first hypothesis that there was significant difference in "role model" parenting practices between fathers and mothers, with more emphasis on role modeling among mothers. This is similar to earlier research that has long focused on the influence mothers have on their children's social and emotional development (Gottfried et al., 2021). Likewise, the present study's findings align with those which found that

mothers value role modeling and role facilitation more than fathers (Lamb et al., 2023). This difference in “role model” parenting practices may be attributed to the traditional view that mothers, as the primary caregivers in the home, and are responsible for socializing their children’s core values and attitudes. In addition, mothers have generally been found to give more emotional and social support to their children in the form of role models and fathers have been found to give more practical and activity-based support to their children (Martin & Colmar, 2022). Higher scores reflect more egalitarian gender role attitudes, and lower scores reflect more traditional gender role attitudes. The result of the second hypothesis of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in attitude towards gender roles of high school aged adolescents between boys and girls, with girls having higher scores than boys indicating that they have more egalitarian than traditional gender role attitudes. This is similar to prior studies that demonstrate that women and girls are more involved in gender equality negotiations than men (Cuddy et al., 2022). Moreover, the findings reveal that there is a significant interaction between gender and gender roles attitude; indicating that both traditional and egalitarian gender roles attitude significantly affect the response of girls, although they are also found to be more egalitarian in their attitude. This is in line with the study which revealed that girls and women are strong advocates for gender equality, with girls having generally egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles, although, in some cases, they hold traditional views (Leaper and Friedman, 2023). Meanwhile, to analyze the influence of parenting practices on the socialization of both traditional and egalitarian gender roles attitude, the results of this study showed that there were significant difference in role model parenting practice related to the formation of adolescents' traditional gender roles attitude. The parenting practices in the form of "role model" shows the traditional attitude of children to the role of each individual, which shows an important aspect of gender socialization. The results could be explained by social learning theory which assumes that the expressions of gender role of parents directly influence the attitude of children toward gender role. For instance, past research suggests that parents' gender models promote traditional gender norms among adolescents (Kimmel and Messner, 2023). Therefore, this finding can be used as supporting evidence to the influence of parenting practices in relation to role model on the socialization of traditional gender roles attitude in adolescents. Likewise, a recent longitudinal study examined the significant influence of parental role model on the longitudinal development of the attitude of gender roles among adolescence. The study also revealed that children are more likely to have traditional gender normative attitude if their parents are traditional parents

and children are more likely to have egalitarian gender normative attitude if their parents are egalitarian (Leaper and Smith, 2022). Moreover, another research corroborates this research, indicating the role modeling of parent has an impact on adolescent development at any time. Children learn attitudes toward gender norms and form their identity based on their parents' behaviors and attitudes, but these parental expressions can have a significant impact on the formation of children's attitude toward gender roles (Kamiol et al., 2021).

Conclusion and Suggestions

The study demonstrated important assumptions on the role of parenting practices in the development of adolescents' gender roles attitude. It revealed that mothers were more active as role model and they emphasized on emotional and social support indicating the difference in contribution of parents towards gender roles development. In addition, this research revealed that high school girls tended to possess egalitarian and traditional attitude towards gender roles than boys. Implication of social learning theory is significant in the effect of parental role modeling on traditional and egalitarian gender roles, particularly because over time parental behavior is known to have a significant effect on children's attitudes towards gender roles. These findings indicated the need for a balance in parenting practices and further promotion of equality education to develop a gender equal attitude in future generation. Based on the current research findings the following suggestions are offered: The need is to promote an active father's role in shaping children's gender roles attitude.

- It is recommended to formulate gender-equal family policies to promote gender equality socialization.
- There is a need to improve primary and secondary school curricula in a gender-equal manner.
- It is also recommended to promote gender-sensitive media to promote gender equality education by promoting parental role models.
- Support further longitudinal studies on the formation of children's gender roles attitude through socialization.

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