

Chapter 6: Personality

Objectives of this Chapter

- On the completion of this section the students will be able to:
 - define personality in their words
 - identify the kinds of personality theory
 - explain the ultimate goal of personality theory
 - discuss central assumptions of each theory of personality

- identify sub theories under some types of personality theories
- explain the underlining assumptions of each of the sub theories of personality
- identify the methods of assessing personality in each personality theory.

Definition

- Dwaretzky (1988) defined personality as “The organization of relatively enduring characteristics unique to an individual as revealed by individual’s interaction with his/her environment”
- It is a consistent behavior of an individual that remains fairly stable under varying conditions.

- To a psychologist personality is the whole person.
- It encompasses such behavior as:
 - intelligence,
 - motivation,
 - learning,
 - emotion,
 - abnormality,
 - cognition, and
 - even social interactions

- In describing someone's personality, we might refer to any of these behaviors.
- We might say that someone is:
 - intelligent, -humored,
 - friendly, -eager to learn,
 - good, -abnormal.

How is Personality Studied?

- Historically, investigators of personality have attempted to study people by grouping them into types (according to their behavioral differences).

Theories of Personality

- Once these personality types had been described, however, researchers began to question *as to what created the personality in the first place.*
- In the attempt to answer this question, many personality theories are developed.
- Each of these theories attempts to explain why certain personality

The Theory of Personality Type

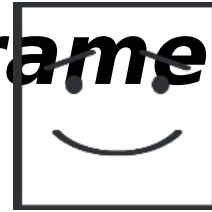
I. Hypocrites' Theory of Personality Type

- Hypocrites (460-377 B.C) was Greek physician.
- According to him, there are four personality types namely,
 - melancholic temperament,
 - phlegmatic temperament,
 - sanguine temperament, and
 - choleric temperament.

A. Melancholic temperament

- Persons with such temperament said to be sad individuals.
- This type of temperament is said to be the result of too much black bile from kidney

B. Phlegmatic temperament

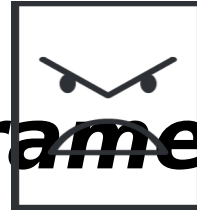


- Persons with such temperament are listless/tired, submissive, indecisive, calm/introverts.
- They live to please others, avoid conflicts, accomplish tasks on time,
- Resulted from much body phlegm/mucus

C. Sanguine Temperament



- People with such temperament are content and optimistic about their future. Such personality type is said to be the result of too much blood/red bile from heart



D. Choleric temperament

- Individuals with this temperament are easy to anger.
- This temperament is said to be the result of too much yellow bile from liver

N.B. These body fluids were collectively called *humors*.

II. **Sheldem's Theory of Personality Type**

- According to **Sheldem**, individuals are classified on the basis of a correlation between physique (body type) and personality.
- The three physiques are:
 - endomorph,
 - mesomorph, and
 - ectomorph.

A. Endomorph

- Such persons are:
 - broad or thick in proportion to height,
 - round, and
 - have fairly weak (soft) muscles and bones.
- They are said to have overdeveloped digestion.

- The corresponding temperament is *viscerotonic*, which means:
 - relaxed,
 - sociable, and
 - loves to eat.
- Such individuals may find vigorous sports unconformable and thus may avoid them

B. Mesomorph

- People with such appearance are characterized by a predominance of muscle and strong bone as in the athlete.
- The corresponding temperament is *somatonic*, meaning:
 - energetic,
 - assertive, and
 - courageous.
- Individuals with this temperament may excel in sport and frequently take part in sport activities.

C. Ectomorph

- People with physical appearance are relatively thin, long and fragile.
- They are physically weak with large brain and sensitive nervous system.

- The corresponding temperament is *cerebrotonic* which means:
 - restrained,
 - fearful,
 - introversive,
 - and artistic.
- Such people may learn at an early age that they are weaker than others do and consequently may become fearful and introverted.



Ectomorph

Mesomorph

Endomorph

N.B. -The problem with this theory is the possible subjectivity of the observer and raters. That is, because many people think of:

- fat individuals as jolly,
- thin ones as restrained (self-controlled),

and

- muscular ones as athletic, raters may emphasize these characteristics regardless of subject's actual behavior.

-Hence, the observed correlation between the body type and the behavior could be due to this bias instead of assumed cause-effect relationship between the two.

III. Jung's Theory of Personality Type

- Another modern theory of personality type was developed by Carl Jung (1875-1961), a Swiss psychiatrist.
- He classified people into two types- introverts and extroverts:

A. Introverts

- Introverts are:
 - socially withdrawn (tend to avoid social contact),
 - emotionally reserved, and
 - self absorbed individuals.

B. Extroverts

- Extroverts are outgoing and try to interact with people as often as possible; they are also generous and focus on external events.

N.B. The weakness of the personality type theories is that it oversimplifies the complex nature of people. That is, people may behave differently under different situations and as a result it was found so difficult to type individuals.

The Trait Theories

- A trait is distinguishing quality, property, or attribute of person that consistently displayed.
- It is a predisposition to respond to many types of stimuli in the same manner.
- It includes words (adjectives) that describe others and us all time.
- These trait words (adjectives) are listed below. (*Dworetzky, 1988*)p.417)

Moody	Passive	Thoughtful	Excitable
Sociable	Touchy	Talkative	Active
Anxious	Careful	Sober	
Outgoing	Restless	Peaceful	
Responsive	Rigid		Pessimistic
Controlled	Easygoing	Lively	Changeable
Reserved	Reliable	Carefree	
Unsociable	Impulsive	Optimistic	Calm
Even-tempered			

I. Allport Trait Theory

- According to Allport, each person has certain consistent aspects or “predisposition to respond to environmental stimuli in certain ways” (Dworetzky, 1988).
- One might make one person angry might make another laugh because of the way the two people are predisposed to respond (due to their personality difference).

- Allport recognized that traits differ in the degree of **endurance** and **generality** i.e. some are more endurable/acceptable and general than the others.
- Accordingly he identified three classes of traits:
 - Cardinal traits,*
 - Central traits, and*
 - Secondary traits.*

A. Cardinal Traits

- Cardinal traits are most general and enduring ones.
- For a trait to be cardinal, it must be overriding factor in person's life.
- E.g. Hitler was overridden by hatred.
- Cardinal traits are observed only in few people

B. Central Traits

- Central traits are far more common, less enduring, and less general than cardinal traits.
- They are basic units that make up personality.
- That is, they are behavioral or personality tendencies that are highly characteristics of a given individual and easy to infer.
- Only few central traits, perhaps, five or ten, can give accurate description of an individual.

C. Secondary Trait

- Secondary traits are what we call attitudes.
- They are far less enduring and less general than are central traits and are not crucial as central traits for describing personality.
- They are not demonstrated often because they are related to only a few stimuli and few responses.

- **N.B.** The drawback of Allport trait theory is that it holds the view that no two people have similar traits. But still there are many people with similar traits.

II. Cattell's Trait Theory

- R. Cattell (1950) emphasized the need for statistical analysis such as factor analysis to isolate different traits, though absolute isolation is impossible.
- He wanted to know how traits are organized and how they are related to one another
- In his work he classified personality traits into two, namely surface traits and source traits

A. Surface Traits

- These are the traits that can be identified through simple observation

B. Source traits

- These traits are those that can be identified only through factor analysis.

- According to Cattell, personality can be reduced to 16 source traits, which are recently more reduced to 5 traits by researcher.
- These are:
 - emotional stability,
 - extroversive,
 - openness,
 - agreeableness, and
 - conscientiousness.

These traits are more important than the surface traits.

N.B. One of the problems with trait theory is that it can not make clear which traits are the most enduring and general.

- Many personality traits may be situation dependent.
- E.g. A person who is dominant in some situation may be submissive in others.

- In summary, although the trait approach enjoys a certain popular appeal, it remains a descriptive rather than explanatory approach, and it has not done a good job of predicting the wide range of human behavior encountered in different situation (Pervin, in Dworetzky, 1988).

The Psychoanalysis Theory of Personality

- This theory was formulated by S. Freud, who emphasized the hidden or unconscious thought or desire as governing human behavior.
- To study the hidden desire (behaviors) of human beings he developed the techniques like free association and dream analysis (interpretation).

The three parts of Personality

- Freud divided human personality into three parts, namely the:
 - id,
 - ego, and
 - superego.
- According to him id and ego are present at birth while superego develops through experience, with the culture.

A. The id

- It is the aspect of personality concerned with primitive reactions.
- It is a reservoir of instinctive drives (motives) for immediate gratification with little regard for the consequence of action.

- That is, it ruthlessly and relentlessly drives the organisms toward pleasure with no objective knowledge of reality of life. It follows **pleasure principle.**

- ***B. The ego***

- This is conscious part of the personality that regulates the impulses of the id in order to meet the demands of reality and maintain social approval and self – esteem, i.e. it is the way of behaving and thinking realistically.
- It functions according to a **reality principle.**

C. The superego

- It is a part of the personality that represents the internalized ideals, thus providing standards for judgement (conscience) and for future aspiration.
- In other words it incorporates social standard of morality – social and traditional values.
- As a result, it imposes restriction and keeps a person working toward the ideals acquired earlier.

- E.g. When id insists to take the money from the bank, superego imposes strong restriction b/c stealing is socially forbidden (immoral).
- The main function of ego is mediating between the demands of id and superego and reality

Behaviorist Theory of personality

- Fundamentally behaviorists believe that anything not directly observable has no place in an objective science.
- As a result, they do not accept the idea that internal process such as drives and other motivational factors control personality.
- They believe that conditioning is responsible for the development of personality.

- According to them, the complex social interaction and aspects of personality are due to the history of **classical and operant conditioning** unique to each individual.
- Again behaviorists do not consider traits to have root within the person.
- They believe traits are the products of environment forces and learning.

- They argue that some traits seem stable because the environments in which individuals live often are stable for a long period of time.
- According to them, hence, if the environment is sufficiently manipulated, then aspects of personality that have appeared to endure will disappear and quickly will be replaced by others

- Hence, in the views of behaviorist theory, behavior is controlled by stimulus conditions and it is not necessary to form hypothesis about internal process like motives, trait or conflicts.

Social Learning Theory

- The advocates of this theory (like Bandura) argue that personality is shaped not only by environmental experiences on the person but also by the person's ability to influence the environment.
- According to this group, thinking is an important determinant of behavior.

- Personality learning theorists like Rotter believe that most important variable in determining personality are the **person's expectations** concerning future outcomes of behavior and the **value of different reinforcements** that might occur in particular situation.

- In other words, a person's behavior depends on what he/she expects the outcomes of any particular action to be and what those outcomes are worth.
- So social learning theorists do not accept the concept of traits – stable aspect of a personality.

- In summary, behavioral and social learning theorists believe that individual's personality depends upon situations or their expectation.
- On the other hand, trait and psychoanalytic theorists believe that personality is stable across many situations and shaped by underlining predisposition and motivational forces.

Humanistic Approach to personality

- The central focus of all humanistic theories of personality is the concept of self.
- Self refers to individual's own personal internal experience and subjective evaluation of the world.
- They reject the idea that traits or unconscious motivation and conflicts are important forces in the development of personality.

- In stead, they argue that human beings are endowed with **free will** and **free choice**.
- Similarly they reject the idea that environmental forces are the major determinants of personality.
- Humanistic personality theorists also believe that for each person there is no objective world.

- To them, there is only subjective or personal experience of the world, which depends on his/her self – concept, attitudes, and believes.
- They argue that to understand anyone's personality we must know how he/she perceives the world.