

Personality Theories: An Overview

**M. Vaidehi & ** Paturi Samuel Raju*

** Research Scholar, Department of Education, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India*

*** Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India*

Introduction

It is currently thought of as a complex structure that an individual builds over the course of his life as a result of his experiences. It is a dynamic framework that is influenced by a collection of experiences he has had with his bodily and psychical entity. It is distinctive since it is made up of several crucial abilities that have emerged as a result of exposure to various contexts since conception. It has many dimensions. The fundamental understanding that everyone is similar in some aspects and different in others, forms the foundation of personality. Numerous definitions of personality have been put forth. However, the following definition is accepted by most modern psychologists: The psychological mechanisms that determine an individual's distinctive behaviour and thought patterns are dynamically organised within the person as their personality. In order to distinguish one individual from another based on merit, their personality is a special integration of their traits. The sum of a person's distinguishing behavioural and mental traits makes up their personality (Andrew M. Colman, 2009, p. 565). A person's personality is the set of distinctive thoughts, feelings, and actions that sets them apart from other people and endures through many circumstances.

Definitions of personality:

According to Allport (1937), personality is the dynamic organisation of the psychophysical system within an individual that determines his particular responses to his environment. "Personality is that which provides a prediction of what a person will behave in a particular scenario," write Kakkar (2007, p. 100) and R.B. Cattell (1970). "Personality" is defined as "the more or less stable and enduring organisations of a person's character, temperament, intellect, and physicality, which dictate his distinctive adaptability to the environment" by Upadhyaya & Singh (2007) and Eysenck (1971).

Nature of Personality

In daily life, the word "personality" is used by everyone. In psychology, personality is defined as a person's distinctive and generally consistent pattern of behaviour, which holds true throughout time and in many contexts. Different approaches have been taken by psychologists while studying personality. The trait viewpoint makes an effort to categorise personality in terms of different traits. The traits can occasionally be arranged into clusters. Types are the name given to these groups. For instance, two different forms of personality qualities are extraversion and introversion.

The psycho-dynamic viewpoint highlights our unconscious demands, conflicts, and the impact of earlier developmental stages on our life. The fundamental ideas of this viewpoint were offered by renowned psychologist Sigmund Freud. The significance of the social and cultural environment is highlighted by the socio cultural perspective. According to this view, social interaction and adherence to cultural and societal standards help us develop our personalities and behavioural patterns. The humanistic viewpoint highlights each person's tremendous capacity for freedom and development. It is an upbeat viewpoint that stresses the good things in life and the possibilities.

Personality = Temperament + Character

Personality = Temperament + Character

Our nature, or how we are wired, or our inborn traits are referred to as our temperament. One can observe distinct variations on the human theme even at birth. For instance, some new-borns are innately cautious while others are innately assertive.

Character describes our acquired (or nourished) traits, our "custom settings," and the coping mechanisms we have developed from birth. Our qualities and vices together make up our character. For instance, a person of good character has great integrity, but a person of terrible character does not. A good sense of character is helpful.

Characteristics of Personality:

- It is special.
- It demonstrates insecurity.
- It contains every aspect of a person.
- It occasionally experiences collapse and disarray.
- It is the result of both environment and heredity.
- The growth and development of personality are influenced by learning and experience acquisition.
- It is measurable and can be articulated.
- It is a psychological Concept

Approaches to the Study of Personality:

- Type approach
- Trait approach
- Psycho analytic approach
- Humanistic approach

THEORIES OF PERSONALITY:

From the Greek idea of personality based on body fluid to C. Rogers, C. Jung, S. Freud, G. Allport, R. Cattell, H. Eysenck, L. Goldberg, and J. L. Holland, many personality theorists have proposed numerous definitions of personality. They have proposed a number of personality-defining elements.

TYPE THEORY:

The central principle of the trait or factor theory is that personality may be described by features that people possess (Allport, 1937; Cattell, 1965; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1968; Jung, 1921). These traits are thought to be equal to propensities to behave in a certain way. It is considered that characteristics are persistent, enduring, and consistent under a variety of conditions. For instance, it makes sense to think that people who have what they need to thrive are typically outspoken and competitive. The Big Five is a five-dimension personality model, put forth by Lewis Goldberg and is based on the theories of character theorists like Cattell. Numerous studies have been conducted and personality psychology experts' attention has been brought to this five-dimension personality model.

Personality type is a psychological classification of different types of people. Sometimes personality traits are separated from personality characteristics, which are a more concentrated collection of behavioural tendencies. Types are seen to involve qualitative differences between individuals, whereas features could be regarded as quantitative inequalities. For instance, type theories suggest that introverts and extroverts are two quite different types of individuals. Extraversion and introversion, according to trait theories, are two ends of the same continuum, with most people falling somewhere in the middle. Type theory experts in psychology include Jung, Kretschmer, and Hippocrates.

HIPPOCRATES:

The predominance of any one of the fluids in one's body gives him unique temperamental characteristics leading to a particular type of personality

KRETSCHMER'S CLASSIFICATION:

Personality types	Personality characteristics
Pyknic (Having fat bodies)	Sociable, Jolly, Easy going, Good natured.
Athletic (Balanced body)	Energetic, Optimistic and Adjustable. Unsociable,
Lepto somatic (Lean and thin)	Reserved, Shy, Sensitive, and Pessimistic.

SHELDON:

Sheldon classified human beings in to three as

- -Endomorphic
- -Mesomorphic and □ -Ectomorphic.

Endomorphic type (SHELDON'S CLASSIFICATION)

Somatic description	Personality characteristics
Persons having highly developed viscera but weak somatic structure (similar to pyknic in Kretschmer)	Easy going, sociable and Affectionate.
Balanced development of viscera and somatic structure (athletic)	Craving for muscular activity, self-assertive, Loves risk and adventure
Weak somatic structure and undeveloped viscera (lepto somatic)	Pessimistic, Unsociable and Reserved.

CARL GUSTAV JUNG:

- Jung effectively divided everyone into two groups.
- Extrovert and Introvert
- In his thought, he took desire into consideration.
- He made the analogy between it and the urge or vital force that underlies all human endeavours, including sexual gratification.
- Libido is the source of life, according to Jung.
- It can change a person into a writer, scientist, artist, or mathematician as needed in his search for self-actualization.
- Libido has both internal and external movement. This flow determines the personality type to which the individual belongs.

INTROVERT:

- A person who has an inward-flowing libido or vital force is an introvert.
- When seeking to create their lives, introverts search inward and within for the solutions they seek.
- For instance, philosophers, writers, and scientists.
- Thinkers tend to spend a lot of time alone.
- They are unaffected by the environmental facts and physical stimulus.

EXTROVERT:

- A person, who exudes libido, or life force, is said to be an extrovert.
- By pursuing activities of the material world, they attempt to make their lives more apparent.
- They are adept at responding to the circumstances of their environment.
- They take part in social life.
- They are more focused on leaving a good impression on others.
- Their conduct is impacted by the stimulation of their bodies.
- A few examples include politicians, social workers, lawyers, insurance agents, and salespeople.
- An individual need not be purely extroverted or introverted.
- Both personality traits are often present, but one stands out more and identifies a person as a particular type.
- Anytime one wishes, they can alter their orientation.

EXTRAVERTED INTROVERTED:

A person might seem to fit a certain stereotype at times, but this may not always be the case.

Jung connected the introvert and extrovert tendencies of a person with four major behavioural functions.

- -Thinking
- -Feeling
- the sensation
- -Intuition

TRAIT THEORIES OF PERSONALITY:

- One's personality is made up primarily of traits.
- One can identify traits by monitoring how they behave in various contexts.

GORDON. W. ALLPORT:

- The original proponent of the characteristic approach for characterising highly distinctive personalities
- The fundamental elements of personality are traits.
- Throughout our development, everyone of us acquires characteristics.
- Allport identified three categories of qualities, including-Cardinal qualities
- Central characteristics
- The basic characteristics that are so pervasive in a person's disposition that they influence all facets of their behaviour and characteristics are known as cardinal features.
- In each person, there are just one or two fundamental characteristics.
- Cardinal traits take precedence over other traits and sway the entire personality in their direction.

- For instance, humour, scepticism, hastiness, indifference, etc.
- For a person's personality to be described, they must have the cardinal traits.
- central qualities
- The few attributes that are frequently utilised to characterise a person are known as central traits.
- For instance, integrity, goodness, submission, openness, domination, etc.
- To comprehend one's personality, one only needs to be aware of five to ten essential qualities.
- The core elements that give each person's personality its individuality are a combination of a few central attributes and certain cardinal traits.
- Only a limited number of circumstances call for secondary qualities to be present.
- They do not have the same level of dominance as cardinal and central features.
- There may be characteristics in people that are less universal and constant. These are regarded as typical characteristics.
- I have ultimately discovered a total of 4541 psychological qualities for defining human behaviour, based on Allport and his colleague Odbert's (1936) analysis of roughly 18,000 lexicon phrases to characterise traits.

The following were important, according to Allport.

- Ideas for putting one's personality into words. They do;
- Functional independence
- A customised method for personality research
- Character development is irregular in nature
- Functional Independence
- This refers to the achievement of autonomy over (the functioning of) a behaviour regardless of its necessity or intended use.
- This implies that an action or practise that was formerly performed with a purpose may subsequently become autonomous.
- Once a certain need has been met, a behaviour may later just serve itself.
- For instance, after lowering cholesterol, continuing to walk for exercise becomes a habit.
- Even after tension has been reduced, sleeping to control it becomes habitual.
- A customised method for personality research
- Instead of discovering the overarching principles governing human behaviour, Allport preferred an individualised approach to researching human nature, known as the ideographic approach.
- He stressed the individual's distinctiveness.

- Character development is irregular in nature
- The development of one's personality does not continue into maturity.
- It is a distinct and abrupt development.
- The functions of the present cannot be determined by the past.

Criticism:

It is complicated to divide qualities into cardinal, central, and secondary traits.

The past and the present are inextricably interwoven.

It does not specifically address the analysis of growth and development patterns.

RAYMOND. B CATTELL:

- Cattell's work entails the definition of core personality traits and the creation of tools to assess these traits.
- It emphasises the role of both environment and heredity in the maturation and development of personality.
- He gave pertinent, situational, motivational factors including impulses, sentiments, attitude states, and roles some thought.
- One of the cutting-edge theories based on the trait approach is this one.
- He is an American researcher of British descent.
- In 1946, he collected 17,000 characteristics.
- Then, he cut it down to 171 words by getting rid of synonyms and antonyms.
- Due to their interrelation, he then condensed it into 35 distinct groupings, which he referred to as surface features.
- Again after elimination in terms of interrelation he identified the sixteen basic dimensions which he called Source traits.
- These 16 fundamental source characteristics were called factors.
- These elements were viewed by Cattell as the foundations of personality.
- These defining features can be used to define and assess a person's personality.

Cattell's sixteen factors of personality (16PF)								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
reserved								outgoing
less intelligent								more intelligent
affected by feelings								emotionally stable
submissive								dominant
serious								happy-go-lucky
expedient								conscientious
timid								venturesome
tough-minded								sensitive
trusting								suspicious
practical								imaginative
forthright								shrewd
self-assured								apprehensive
conservative								experimenting
group dependent								self-sufficient
uncontrolled								controlled
relaxed								tense

A characteristic, according to him, is a personality structure that can be derived from conduct in many contexts.

He listed four different categories of traits:

-Common traits

-Unique traits

-Surface traits and

-Source traits **Common Traits:**

- The traits found widely distributed in general population like honesty, aggression and cooperation.

Unique Traits:

- Traits unique to a person such as temperamental traits and emotional reactions **Surface Traits:**

- These can be recognised by manifestations of behaviour like curiosity, dependability and tactfulness.

Source Traits:

- These are the underlying structures or sources that determine behaviour such as dominance, submission, emotionality, etc.
- Cattell used this 16 factors for the measurement of personality by devising a personality inventory known as Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factors Inventory (16PF) consisting of suitable multiple choice questions

Criticism:

- Excessive emphasis on overt behaviour
- It projects static picture of human functioning
- It did not use the factor analytic approach to identify higher order factors

PSYCHODYNAMIC THEORY:

Sigmund Freud was perhaps the most significant proponent of the psychodynamic hypothesis (1933). The emphasis on a thorough analysis of the full person and the focus on unconscious reasons are two features that set the psychodynamic approach to personality apart from other approaches. According to Freud, the tripartite personality structure is comprised of the id, ego, and superego. The id is thought of as the mechanism for seeking pleasure and symbolises the unconscious instinctual core of personality. The ego, on the other hand, stands for the personality's rational, conscious, and reality-focused side. The superego is a person's conscience; it is the internalized moral standards of society that have been instilled in them through parental guidance and socialization. Freud believed that a person's unconscious sexual and aggressive drives were important behavioral variables. Human aggression is one possible application of this strategy.

BEHAVIOUR THEORY:

The behaviourist school was created by B.F. Skinner (1938). (1938). The "mutual interaction of the person with their surroundings" is emphasised by this approach. These theories, which explain personality in terms of responses to external stimuli, have been significantly impacted by the contributions of I. P.

Pavlov and John. B. Watson, the fathers of American behaviourism.

COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY:

According to the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), behaviour is not just a result of hidden motivations (as in psychoanalytic theory) or innate tendencies. Human conduct instead depends on social learning and the gravity of the circumstance. A person acts in accordance with her taught behaviours and the limitations of her surroundings. The influence of personality traits or unconscious motivations on conduct should be minor if the contextual circumstance is prominent. Social reinforcement and modelling are two of the main ways that people learn. Learning by observation is referred to as modelling, or imitative behaviour. Based on the idea that rewarded behaviours are likely to be repeated, social reinforcement is used. Social

reinforcement, according to Martens (1975), is any verbal or nonverbal communication that occurs between two people and has the potential to strengthen a reaction.

HUMANISTIC THEORY:

The idea of self-actualization lies at the core of the humanistic personality theory (Maslow, 1998; Rogers, 1961). The human body has an inbuilt desire or propensity to improve itself, to realise its potential, and to take action to improve and more fully realise oneself. Not just the event itself, but also how the experience is interpreted by the individual, shapes the person. Seeking congruence between one's experiences and one's self-concept is the process of self-actualization.

Conclusion

All personality theories stress the importance of experiences, particularly childhood experiences, in shaping and influencing personality. They differ, of course, in the precise dynamics of how experiences contribute to personality development and change. Whereas the effects of experience take center stage in personality theories, physiological factors are normally given only a secondary role. Though some theories mention heredity and other biological factors (Eysenck's theory in particular), the classic theories have mostly ignored biological sources as contributors to personality. The personality theorist attempts to describe what all humans have in common (human nature), what some have in common, and the uniqueness of each individual (individual differences). A comprehensive explanation of personality would specify the relative importance of genetics, traits, sociocultural determinants, learning, existential– humanistic considerations, unconscious mechanisms, and cognitive processes.

References

- Adler, A. (1925). *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Allport, G. W. (1937). *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Bandura, A. (1968). A social learning interpretation of psychological dysfunction. In P. London & D. Rosenhan (Eds.), *Foundations of abnormal psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Cattell, R.B. (1965). *The scientific analysis of Personality*. Baltimore: Penguin Books.
- Child IL. (1968) *Personality in Culture*. In EF Borgatta, WW Lambert (Eds.), *Handbook of personality theory and research*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Erikson, E. (1982). *The life cycle completed*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Eysenck, H. J. (1991). Dimensions of personality: 16, 5 or 3? Criteria for a taxonomic paradigm. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 12(8), 773–790.
- Freud S. (1923-1925). The resistances to psycho-analysis. In the Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIX: The Ego and the Id and other works 1961; 211-224.
- Hall, Calvin, S. and Lindzey, G. (1978) *Theories of Personality*. John Willey and Sons, New York.
- Jung, C. G. (1960). *The structure and dynamics of the psyche*. Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Vol. 8. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University.
- Maslow, A. H. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being* (2nd ed.). Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.
- Sheldon (1942). *Diversity of temperament*. New York; London: Harper & Brothers. Archived from the original on February 24, 2012 – via University of Delhi.
- Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and human behavior*. Macmillan.