مولانا آزاد نیشنل اُردو یونیورسٹی
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# COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION, BHOPAL
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# Personalities and its Theories

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**MANUU-COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION**
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**Objectives**

Reading this module, the student will able to

1. Describe the meaning, nature and concept of personality

2. Understand the various influencing factors of personality

3. Comprehend the type and traits theories of personality

**Meaning and Definition**

The term personality derived from the Latin word "*Persona*" which means "mask". Earlier times Greek actors used to wear masks to hide their identity on stage. This dramatic technique was later perceived by the Romans people to indicate the persons of those who appear to others hiding his psychological identity, not as one actually is. It is very clear from our day to day experiences that the same individual on a given period acts as very glad at the marriage ceremony and very sad at the funeral ceremony. Here he is wearing a mask of gladness and sadness. Psychologists define personality in different ways, but they agree upon the two basic features of personality; uniqueness and characteristic pattern of behaviour. Personality is the combination of unique psychological traits that influence an individual's specific pattern of behaviour across various situations and over a period of time. Personality is a dynamic state, not fixed. it is regular and progressive change that happen in the individuals due to social interaction

**Definitions**

There are many definitions available for the concept of personality. Some of the important definitions are given below.

Watson, J. B (1930). "*Personality as the sum total of activities that can be discovered by actual observation over a long enough period of time to give reliable information*".

Jones, A. J. (1930) defines personality in a simple term. According to him, " Personality Consists of following.

 a) The way look

 b) The way dress

 c) The way talk

 d) The way you walk

 e) The way act

 f) The skill with which you do things

 g) Your health"

Mc Dougall, J.W (1932) *"Personality is a synthetic unity of all mental features and functions in their interplay"*.

Cattel, R.B. (1967) "*Personality is that which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation"*.

The most important definition for personality is considered as the definition given by Allport, G.W (1937). Before defining the term personality, he analysed 53 definitions already available for personality, on the basis of his analysis he defined "*Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those-psycho physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment"*.

**Nature of personality**

a) Personality is what one is

b) Personality includes everything about a person

c) Personality of each individual is unique

d) Personality is dynamic and not static

e) Personality functions as a unified whole

f) Personality is the product of both heredity and environment

g) Personality is continually adjusting itself to environment

h) Personality is always striving for certain ends

i) Personality is self consciousness-we do not attribute personality to animals

j) Personality is influenced by school environment

k) Personality is social

l) Personality is more than what we see on the surface

m) Personality can be assessed and developed

**Important Element of personality**

Personality of an individual consists of different elements of various aspects of one's life situations. The degrees of contribution of each element strengthen the personality of an individual. The Important contributing element of the personality of an individual is listed below.

a) Physical appearance of the individual

b) Intelligent behaviour of the individual

c) Emotional temperaments s/he exhibits

d) Sociability characteristics of the individual

e) Character of the person

**Factors influencing Personality**

As we understood from the above discussion personality is the totality of the behavioural as well as the personal characteristics of the individual. There are many factors which influence the development of the personality of an individual. The factors can be broadly classified into following categories**.**

1. Hereditary factors

2. Psychological factors

3. Environmental factors

**Hereditary Factors**

Hereditary factors are the most important factors which influence the personality of the individuals. Heredity means the characteristics or attributes which are transmitted from the ancestors of the individuals. It includes biological aspects of the person such as physical structure, body build, attractiveness, physical appearance, height and weight, body colour, hair, eyes, genetic disorder, transitive diseases, Intelligence etc. These all definitely determine the personality of the individuals.

**Psychological factors**

The second category describes the psychological factors that determine the personality of the individuals. Mental health of the individual is the most important psychological factor that determines his personality. The other psychological factors are the emotional maturity, emotional intelligence, aspirations, aptitude, attitude, interest, motivations, creativity, thinking, reasoning ability, temperamental traits, moral intelligence, memory, attention, adjustment ability etc.

**Family factors**

Family environment is one of the important nurturing determinants of the personality. Family environment can be classified into three, celebrate, cemetery, Warfield. Celebrating a family environment means the family where all the members are living in very happy and joyful situations. Cemetery family environment indicates complete silence in family situations. Rare verbal communications happen among family members especially between father and mother. Warfield environments illustrate the 'cloudburst' in family situations. Family situations are fully background with quarrel and arguments. These three environments produce different types of personality for their nurturing child. The other elements of family factors are listed below.

1. Discipline: protection and rejection etc
2. Number of children
3. Value placed on the sex of the child
4. Step parents
5. Nuclear or joint family
6. Accommodation in the house
7. Parent's ambition and interests
8. Eco-political religious and social status of family

**Environment**

Besides the biological, psychological and family factors there are other outside elements which influence the personality of the individuals. It includes the neighbourhood, community, peer group of the person brought up. Cultural environment of the individual

lived. The political, Religious, Social as well as Mass media environment are other important surroundings of the individuals which influences the personality of the child. More over the school curriculum, school discipline, teacher personality are also responsible for drawing the personality of the individuals.

**Type theories of personality**

In earlier times it was practiced that the personality of the people are described in terms of their body type, blood types, fluids in the body etc. Some important type theories are discussed below.

**Ancient Indian Classification (Ayurvedic)**

In ancient India, Ayurveda classified human beings based on the presents of combination of the elements of nature in their body. Ayurveda advocates that the entire universe living and non living is made up of five elements: air, fire, water, earth and ether (space), collectively called "Panchamahabhutas". Human body contains these elements as its constituents. However the combination of elements is different in every individual. Some are loaded with a combination of air and ether, others may have increased amounts of the combination of water and fire etc. The presence of such combinations of the elements in the human bodies may group them into distinctive body types with a definite pattern of physiological and psychological characteristics illustrated below.

**Ayurvedic Classification of Personality type**

**1. Vata**

Vata is the first category of the personality type described in Ayurveda. It constitutes the body with the dominance of the natural elements such as air & ether (space).

The Physiological/Somatic characteristics of Vata are given below.

1. They are slightly built or considerably small body

2. Low chest width

3. Dull and dark hair, eyes

4. Dry, rough and chapped skin

5. Suffering stiff join, rheumatic problems and constipation

The personality characteristics of Vata type people are listed below.

1. They are restless with active minds

2. Hesitant and emotionally insecure

3. Low memory, Depressed and reserved

4. Good artist and enjoy travelling

5. Solitary and rebellious

**2. Kapha**

Kapha is the second category of the personality type described in Ayurveda. It constitutes the body with the dominance of the natural elements such as water & earth.

The Physiological/Somatic characteristics of Kapha are given below.

1. They are big boned and overweight people

2. White and smooth complexion body

3. Lustrous and wavy hairs

4. Wide and attractive eyes

5. Suffering from sinus problem, lethargy and nausea

The personality characteristics of Kapha type people are listed below.

1. They sleep more

2. Speak rationally and move slowly

3. Calm and loyal

4. Emotionally secure

5. Romantic

6. Seeing Sentimental dreams

**3. Pitta**

Pitta is the third category of the personality type described in Ayurveda. It constitutes the body with the dominance of the natural elements such as fire & water.

The Physiological/Somatic characteristics of Pitta are given below.

1. They have average body type

2. Ruddy complexion and red hair with moles

3. Tendency become premature grey and bald

4. Sharp eyes

The personality characteristics of Pitta type people are listed below.

1. They are strong, argumentative and precise in their view and activity

2. Sharp and critical thinking

3. Have Good leadership qualities

4. They will be passionately angry at their worst

5. Enjoy sports, politics, hunting etc.

**Hippocrates four Humours theory**

According to Hippocrates the human body contains four basic fluids or humours. Each of the humours is also associated with a particular temperament. The humours are blood, yellow bile, phlegm (mucus) and black bile. The Personality of an individual depends on the humour which is predominant in his/her body. He paired body humours with personality temperaments in the following way.

*Hippocrates classification of personality types*

| *Dominance of fluid Type in the body* | *Personality type* | *Temperamental Characteristics* |
|---|---|---|
| Blood | Sanguine | Cheerful, optimistic, happy, hopeful and accommodating, active |
| Yellow bile | Choleric | Irritable, strong with active imagination, excitable |
| Phlegm(mucus) | Phlegmatic | Cold, calm, slow, or sluggish and indifferent, apathetic |
| Black bile | Melancholic | Bad tempered, dejected, sad, depressed, pessimistic,, deplorable and self involved, brooding |

**Sheldon's Classification (Somatotype/Body Build)**

Sheldon (1942) described personality types in terms of their body build or somatotype. He believed that physical structure of the body is the determinant factor of the personality characteristics of the individual. He assigned each individual to one of the following three categories based on the person's somatotype.

*Sheldon's Classification of personality types*

| *Personality Type* | *Somatic description* | *Personality Characteristics* |
|---|---|---|
| Endomorphic | Person having very fat, soft and round body (abdomen part) | Relaxed, sociable, found of eating, affectionate |
| Mesomorphic | They have rectangular, muscular and strong body | Physical people filled with energy, adventurous, courage and assertive tendencies |
| Ectomorphic | They have fragile, thin and long type body | They show signs of brainy, artistic, and introverted |

**Kretschmer's Classification (Constitutional Type)**

Ernest Kretshmer a German psychologist, who classified human beings on the basis of their physical constitution. He attempted to establish a relationship between personality characteristics and body build of the individual. He classified human beings in the following way.

*.Kretschmer's Classification of personality types*

| *Personality Types* | *Personality Characteristics* |
|---|---|
| Pyknic (person having fat body) | Sociable, jolly, easy going, and good nurtured |
| Athletic (muscular or balanced body) | Energetic, optimistic and adjustable character |
| Leptosomatic (Lean and thin body) | Shy, temperamental, reserved and pessimistic |

**Jung's Typology**

Carl G Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist, attempted to classify human beings on two behavioural dimensions such as Extrovert and Introvert. This classification is made in accordance with their behavioural characteristics exhibited by the individuals in their social as well as personal situations. The detailed description of each type is given below.

*Extrovert*

Extroverted people are more outward oriented. They try to establish good relationships with other people. They feel bored sitting inside the room and being alone. They deal with people intelligently in social situations. They are conventional, outgoing, social and friendly. They are free from unnecessary worries. Social workers, politicians, business executives may be typed as extroverted people.

*Introvert*

In contrast to the extrovert people, Introvert people always try to withdraw themselves in social situations, especially when they faced emotional conflicts and stress in their environments. They are shy, avoid situations to interact with other people, and enjoy the loneliness. Scientists and philosophers are more likely to exhibit these behavioural characteristics.

**Trait theories of personality**

Trait means the mode of behaviour of an individual which is manifested in a number of life situations consistently. It is the general behavioural pattern of a person that he/she exhibits in most of their life situations. Example: if a person is basically honest; s/he used to respond in an honest way in their life situations where they can also exhibit dishonesty, it is because of the trait (honest) s/he has. Such as shy, lazy, dull, dependent, etc are also examples of traits.

*"Allport defines trait as a neuro psychic structure having the capacity to render many stimuli functionally equivalent, and to intimate and guide equivalent (meaningfully consistent) forms of adaptive and expressive behaviour"*. More clearly we can understand that trait is a response/act pattern of an individual in the same way in various situations which is developed through his past life experiences. Trait approaches assume that the

personality of an individual is a combination of different behavioural traits that can be discovered through continuous and objective observation of his behaviour.

**Allport theory**

According to Gorden W Allport uniqueness of every individual is the chief characteristics of human beings. Each and every person responds in different ways to the same situation. For example; imagine an individual got a purse from a bus. How s/he will respond to the situation. Whether s/he will try to enquire the owner of the purse for give back to her/him or become happy for getting money unexpectedly etc. Consider the same incidents with many individuals. We are sure that people would respond differently depending on the traits they have. Because no two people are alike, no two individuals respond in the same way to identical stimuli. Individuals differ on the basis of their traits, their traits direct their actions. These traits motivate human beings to behave the way they do. Allport characterised traits by the degree to which they govern personality. Allport distinguished traits into three levels.

**A) Cardinal traits**

These are the most powerful and pervasive traits. These traits dominate a person's whole life. Few people possess cardinal traits. That people live flooded with that trait.  When they do things , we often think of them primarily in terms of those traits. For example. Altruism is a cardinal trait in the personality of Mother Theresa, Quest for knowledge can be seen in -Albert Einstein, and social justice is the cardinal trait vested in- Mahatma Gandhi

**B) Central traits**

The personality of most people are characterised by five or more central traits rather than a single cardinal trait. These are the kind that might be included in a letter of recommendation such as punctual, honest, obedient, sincere, hardworking etc. Central traits are called building blocks of personality. Suppose if we say about any individual that s/he is very honest, regular, sincere, that is because s/he is functioning as per respective central traits.

**C) Secondary traits**

These are the least important traits among the three, because they affect relatively narrow aspects of human beings' lives. Some people give more importance to these types of secondary traits in their life, but don't have a relevant impact on their personality. Preference for wearing a particular branded shirt, reading western novels, eating only chocolate etc are the examples for secondary traits.

**Cattell's classification (Factor theory)**

Raymond B Cattell classified the traits into four. According to him behaviour of an individual is determined by the interaction of traits and situational variables. He defined traits as a structure of the personality which can be inferred from the specific behaviour of the individual in different situations.

1) *Common traits*

Common traits are the traits which all individuals have to some degree irrespective of whether they are cruel or kind. For example every person holds some degree of truthfulness, anger, cooperative mind etc

2) *Unique traits*

Unique traits are the traits that form a peculiar pattern within the individual. These traits are unique to a person. Unique patterns brand an individual as he is temperamental, helping, aggressive, cooperative etc.

3*) Surface trait*

Personality of an individual is determined by traits which are possessed by him. Some traits are hidden and some of them are open or can be easily recognised by the overt manifestation of the behaviour of the person. Surface traits fall under this category. For example curiosity, dependability, tactfulness, timidity (shy and nervous), boldness etc are the surface traits.

4) *Source traits*

Source traits are the underlying structure or sources of the personality that determine the behaviour of the individual. These are the building blocks of personality. It exists at a deeper level of the personality and are the causes of behaviour in different dimensions

over a period of time. For example dominance, submission is the example of source traits. A person holding dominance traits means that he tends to lead all social situations where he is indulged. Cattell identified 16 source traits that comprise the basic structure of the personality and has developed a personality test to measure them. Hence it also called factor theory of personality

. They are following.

1. "Warmth

2. Reasoning

3. Emotional stability

4. Dominance

5. Liveliness

6. Rule Consciousness

7. Social boldness

8. Sensitivity

9. vigilance

10. Abstractness

11. Privateness

12. Apprehension

13. Openness to change

14. Self reliance

15. Perfectionism

16. Tension"

**EYESENCK'S HIERARCHICAL THEORY**

It was the H.J.Eysenc, a German-born British psychologist who synthesised the type and trait approaches of personality. He defined type as a group of interrelated traits, which means that having several similar traits within the individual creates him as a particular type. Based on their traits, they behave in a particular manner or branded them as a particular type, such as psychotic, neurotic etc. This reflects their personality. According

to Eysenck each personality type is the net result of the behaviour organization at four hierarchical levels which are given below.

1) *Specific response level*

A trait starts from the particular response to any single stimuli. For example a child who smiles at a stranger or s/he blush at strangers. Both are the specific responses to stimuli. It constitutes the lowest level in the hierarchy.

2) *Habitual response level*

Here the similar responses are repeated in parallel situations. The child who could smile at strangers can make friendship easily with others while the child who blushes or looks reserved retains their hesitancy with talking to others. At this stage the traits become their habit. It constitutes the habitual response level of behaviour organization. For example, Hesitancy in talking to strangers, easily making friendships with others, inability to easily strike friendships etc.

*3) Trait level*

Trait level is the third stage in the hierarchy. At this stage the habitual act of any individuals which have similarities are organized to form groups called traits. For example the children who formed the habit of sitting aloof, hesitancy to talk with others, tendency of withdrawing from responsibilities, no social relations can be organized as a particular group, can be named the trait as shyness. Another example is friendly.

4*) Type level*

The fourth level is the organisation of these traits into a general type. A type is defined as a group of correlated traits. Traits which are similar in nature given birth to a definite type. Traits like persistence, rigidity, shyness etc have been grouped into a type termed as introversion. Hence a child holding the traits like persistence, rigidity, shyness look like a reserved and this type of child can be called an introvert.

**Personality dynamics**

Eyesenc clearly explained that human behaviour and personality is build up through four hierarchical stages starting from specific response level to the definite personality type. He derived three basic personality dimensions through the hierarchical organization of

behaviour. These three basic dimensions refer to definite personality types with high and low ends of each dimension. Through the personality scale people can identify their personality score and thereby the extent of their personality on various points between the two dimensions. The dimensions are discussed below.

*1) Introversion-Extroversion*

First dimension of personality dynamics is the Introversion- Extroversion type. The high end of this dimension includes the highly extrovert. This type of person looks like more sociable, outgoing, impulsive, optimistic and jolly people. The lower end includes highli introverted people. These people behave like reserved, disciplined, reflective and well ordered.

**2) Neuroticism**

Second dimension is neuroticism. Here we can see two types of people, one is emotionally stable another is emotionally unstable. Emotional instability indicates the lower end of the dimension. These types of people are called neurotic; they look like moody, sensitive, anxious and restless or tense people. At the upper end of the dimension is Emotional Stability. The people with stable emotions are called non neurotic. They behave in most situations in a stable, calm, carefree, even tempered and dependable way.

*3) Psychoticism*

Eysenc illustrated psychoticism as the third dimension in his personality dynamics. The people high on this dimension tend to be lonely, stone hearted, egocentric and opposed to accepting social norms. The people at the low dimension found to be more empathic, less adventurous and bold in their decision.

## Point to be remembered

**Personality:** Personal identity of the individual derived from hereditary, familial as well as environmental factors.

**Traits:**  Mode of behaviour; Relatively permanent response of the individuals to stimuli in various situations

**Cardinal traits:** Most pervasive and dominant traits which uplift an individual to self actualisation

**Type** Branding people in accordance with the organized alike traits having by individuals

**Extrovert** Type of people whose energy flow to outwards the society

**Introvert** Type of people whose energy flow to inwards himself

# Unit questions

**Objective Questions**

**1**. "Personality is the dynamic organisation within the individual" who quotes this?

(1) Cattel (3) Watson

(2) Allport (4) Eysenc

2. Most powerful and pervasive trait; that determines one's life

(1) Central traits (2) Cardinal traits

(3) Secondary traits (4) Tertiary traits

3. A person with soft and fat body is called as

(1) Ectomorphic (2) Leptomorphic

(2) Endomorphic (4) Mesomorphic

4. The traits which build a basic structure of the personality

(1) Surface traits (2) Unique traits

(2) Common traits (4) Specific traits

**Short Answer Questions**

1. Define the term personality?

2. Distinguish between Neuroticism and psychoticism

3. What do you mean by traits? Cite examples

4. Illustrate Jung's typology

5. Describe the Sheldon classification of personality

6. Explain the Cattel's classification of Personality

**Essay Questions**

1. Critically explain Allport trait theory of personality? How far is the theory justifiable in defining personality?

2. Do you think that heredity and environment would make any influence on the personality of a child? Comment.

3. Explain Eysenc's hierarchical theory of personality and personality dynamics

4. How the type theorist are differ from trait approach, give evidence

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