

The structure of personality psychology essay



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Everyone is created unique and special in their own way. Everyone has a personality of their own that is developed throughout one's life. To effectively and efficiently teach and ensure that each learner grasps the concepts, the teacher needs to understand each student and their personality.

Personality can be defined as the pattern of behaviour that is enduring, distinctive thoughts, emotions and behaviours that differs from every individual and is used to adapt to the world. The personality of a person is formed with nature and nurture playing an integral role. With reference to the work of Child Dennis (2007: 410), posited that " personality involves knowledge of the total organization of humans" A classroom is not just a cognitive habitat but consists of intricate personal interactions which deeply affect the learning and teaching processes. In classroom there are so many different personalities and characters that one must understand personality so as not to discourage the students because they are different.

According to Buskist William (1990: 496), " personality is a particular pattern of behavior and thinking prevailing across time and situations that differentiates one individual from another." [1] No two persons think alike, everyone is different in attitudes, interest, learning abilities as well as thoughts. The personality of each individual develops through their genetics composition as well as their interaction with the environment. Plomin et al (2002: 392) stated that from " a sample of 24, 000 twins his evidence points to genetic factors accounting for 40 percent of the variance and environment factors the remaining 60 percent. This means that the influential environmental factors are experienced by the twins independently of each other". [2]

The researchers intent to highlight the structure of personality, personality theories, big five factors of personality, personality and the school environment and type A behaviour of students and teachers so that the researchers can emphasis the need to promote education on personality in schools and in the society so that everyone can accept each other with their differences.

THE STRUCTURE OF PERSONALITY

Personality according to Freud is made up of the Id, ego and superego. They involve in the process of shaping the individuals mind. According to Buskist William (1990: 505), “ the unconscious mind is a perceptual battleground in which the Id, ego and superego are engaged in unending conflict.” “ The result form the battle cause everyone to behave or react differently forming and showing a different personality. According to Freud the Id is the pleasure principal that seeks gratification and the instincts are: food, sexual pleasure and aggression.”[3]The adolescents are often hungry and teachers would find them eating in class, fighting to get justice they think they deserve rather than complaining to the teachers. To deal with these behaviour teachers need to understand the students personalities.

The ego involves cognitive thinking which allows reasoning, reality and process information about the environment. The ego links the individual and the environment and self awareness. According to Santrock (1994: 31), Freud states that the Id is an absolute ruler, owed complete obedience; it is spoiled, willful, impatient and self-centered. The ego has the job of getting things done; it is tuned into reality and is responsive to societys demands. The superego is concerned with right and wrong; its role is to tell the greedy

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Id that nobler purposes should be pursued. The superego is the moral part of the self.[4]

According to Santrock (1994: 33)[5]Defense Mechanisms which are unconscious methods by which the ego distorts reality to protect itself from anxiety are:

Repression is a powerful and pervasive defense mechanism since it works to push unacceptable Id impulses out of awareness and back into the unconscious mind.

Rationalization is the psychoanalytic defense mechanism that occurs when the real motive for an individual's behaviour is not accepted by the ego and is replaced by a sort of covert motive.

Displacement occurs when the involvement of unacceptable feelings from one object to another, more acceptable object.

Sublimation occurs when a useful course of action replaces an unacceptable one.

Projection occurs when we attribute our own shortcomings, and faults to others.

Reaction formation occurs when we express an unacceptable impulse by transforming it into its opposite.

Regression occurs when we behave in a way characteristic of a previous developmental level.

COMPARING PERSONALITY THEORIES

INNATE VS. LEARNED FACTORS

The question is; which factors affect the personality more innate or learned?

Both of these factors are important in the development in an individuals personality. In the study of fraternal twin who were separated at birth proves that both twin were very different. They had the same genetic composition but their environment was different. One of the twins was in a wealthy environment with everything and the other in a poorer environment and they both turned out so different all because of the environment they were exposed to. The environment or society you belong to will influence your personality since you will be groomed and taught what that society feel is right or wrong. The richer family will provide moral, emotional support, financial security which all human beings need as stipulated by Abraham Maslow in the theory of hierarchy of needs. However, a different society or a poor society will think differently and react differently. If you change the persons environment they will adapt to the new environment and change their personality to adapt to their present environment. It is simply our human nature of survival.

According to Santrock (1994), Skinner and social learning theorist believe “ personality is behaviour that is environmentally determined.” However, humanistic theories believe that “ personality is influenced by experience and can be changed and people have innate ability to self actualized.”[6]It can be seen that both heredity and environment plays an important part in an individuals personality development.

CONSCIOUS VS. UNCONSCIOUS

According to Freud in Buskist William (1990: 505), “ personalities are determined by both conscious and unconscious powers, with the unconscious exerting considerable influence on the conscious.”[7]Therefore repressed ideas, thoughts and wished influence our conscious way of thinking and behaviour. Also repressed ideas and thoughts can surface in dreams and mistakes of speech known as Freudian Slips.

The Conscious mind hold things we are fully aware of, that we can think and rationalize while the unconscious mind is the bulk of the mind. The mind suppresses the things we dont want to remember like pain, hurt, conflict, abuse and things we hid from the world that we hid it so far we ourselves do not remember. According to Freud, “ our deeply repressed experiences in infancy and early childhood determined what our personality will be in adulthood. While psychoanalytical theorist argues that individuals are unaware of our personality development.”[8]Students are different and they all have different personality and to understand their needs teachers need to understand personality. Students in our classroom have pain and hurt deep within them causing them to behave reserved or misbehave and the teacher without studying the child plaster a label as “ indiscipline, pest, dunce” without understanding or thinking about what is causing this child to behave this way.

INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL DETERMINANTS

The internal dimensions of personality according to Freud are the Id, ego and superego whiles the external determinants being cognitive and social learning. People are prisoners of their past since the problem may have hurt

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the person's ego before when a similar problem arises the individual struggles with low self-esteem and low self-confidence. Also the cognitive development, social learning and moral guidance help to make decisions rather than overacting with the Id but the superego controls all the extreme actions and it helps both the internal and external determinants to harmonize.

According to Freud (1933: 69):

The poor ego...feels hemmed in on here sides, threatened by three kinds of danger to which, if it is hard pressed it reacts by generating anxiety...Thus the ego, driven by id, confined by the superego, repulsed by reality, struggles to master it economic talk of bringing about harmony among the forces and influences working in and upon it, and we can understand how it is that so often we cannot suppress a cry: " Life is not easy!"[9]

THE BIG FIVE FACTORS OF PERSONALITY

Some individuals have a high level of intellect or gifted while some students are slow learners. Some students are social and interact while others are reserved and quiet, some are funny and jolly while some are sad and depressed and these are all personalities of people. Everyone deals with situations differently since everyone is being guided differently by their superego. Everyone is taught different values depending on their culture. According to Child (1998), Eysenck's big five are " Neuroticism-Emotional Stability, Introversion-Extraversion, Openness-Convergence, Agreeableness-Antagonism and Conscientiousness-Undirectedness." [10]

Extroversion

Agreeableness

Conscientiousness

Neuroticism

Openness to experience

Low Scorers

Loner

Quiet

Passive

Reserved

High Scorers

Joiner

Talkative

Active

Affectionate

Low Scorers

Suspicious

Critical

Ruthless

Irritable

High Scorers

Trusting

Lenient

Soft hearted

Good-natured

Low Scorers

Negligent

Lazy

Disorganized

Late

High Scorers

Conscientious

Hard-working

Well-organized

Punctual

Low Scorers

Calm

Even-tempered

Comfortable

Unemotional

High Scorers

Worried

Temperamental

Self-conscious

Emotional

Low Scorers

Down-to-earth

Uncreative

Conventional

Uncurious

High Scorers

Imaginative

Creative

Original

Curious

Table 1: 1 The dimensions of personality according to Eysencks (1916)[11]

<http://alleydog.com/images/eysenek-wheel.gif>

Figure 1. 1 Eysencks Wheel of Personality <http://alleydog.com/images/eysenek-wheel.gif>

Temperament according to Galambos and Costigan (2003) as cited by Santrock (2005: 192), “ is an individuals behavioral style and characteristic way of responding and it is the foundation of personality.” There are three types of temperament:

Easy Child: this child is generally in positive mood, quickly establishes regular routines, and adapts easily to new experiences. Difficult Child: this child reacts negatively to man situation and is slow to accept new experience. Slow-to-warm-up child: this child has a low activity level, is somewhat negative and displays a low intensity of mood.[12]

With reference to the table and the wheel the researchers have experience with students who behave in all these ways. However, it is seen that not all the time the trouble students are poor performers but sometime the more privilege students have greater pain from pressure and high expectations that they behave differently at home and in school. They can be stable at home and at school the complete opposite and need love and attention. Students when away from home they want to be themselves and live a little and teachers need to help them by showing them how to behave an help them understand life during the period of Adolescence, that they are going through. At this point, students are forming an identity and developing a personality that will define who they are as individual. It is important that teachers understand personality, their own personality so that they can <https://assignbuster.com/the-structure-of-personality-psychology-essay/>

tolerate others so the students will imitate them and tolerate their peers in the classroom and this knowledge about personality can help students to avoid conflict and confrontation among peer because they will understand that everyone is different and is part of our society.

PERSONALITY AND SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

A classroom is not just a cognitive habitat, but consists of intricate personal interactions which deeply affect the learning and teaching process.

Personality characteristics play an important role when it comes to the learning process and the attitudes and perceptions of learning. Every student views learning differently since their parents and teachers would try to convince them that learning is beneficial to them in the future. Some students are interested in learning one way while others are not motivated by when teachers utilize multiple intelligence methods students will find what stimulates their interest and will become interests.

According to Child and Smithers (1971) reviewed and cited by Child (2007: 403):

Variations in performance are not entirely a question of intellect, motivation or thinking skills, but may depend on the personal attributes which can enhance or inhibit the quality of that performance.

In the classroom and in the teaching profession there are individuals with Type A behaviour personality and they can be difficult individual so that is why it is often a problem that some students and teachers just cannot get along because they don't understand each other personality or even realize they have a Type A behaviour.

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After the work of two American Heart Specialist Friedman and Rosenman 1974 was reviewed, endorsed and cited in Child (2007: 403) the characteristics of Types A behaviour are:

Tries to do or think of two or more things at once, (b) Cannot sit doing nothing-feels guilty when not working, (c) Develops ticks, facial movement (eyebrow raising), (d) has a ' thing about punctuality, (e) gets impatient watching others doing a job he or she thinks can be done better, (f) plays to win- even when playing with children, (g) drums fingers impatiently, (h) does lots of arm waving when talking, (i) hurries others along who are speaking, (j) tries to steer conversations to her or his own interests, (k) tries to pack a lot of work into little time, (l) shows no interest in aesthetic aspect of surroundings (m) gets very cross in queues, (n) has the motto ' if you want something done properly, do it yourself and (o) pushes other people hard at work

Students with this kind of behaviour do not usually get along with their peers since they want everything perfect and bossy. If the students are aggressive and dominant then they will be fidgety and argue with the teachers and be disruptive to prove their points. Also, it is can be very alarming if teachers have that types of behaviour since they can be ' cold, detach and no-nonsense person with no lenience who the students will fear and this can cause students to underperform since they do not understand what is requires of them from the teacher. These persons will have a high self-esteem and confidence and will work hard and be professions. The students will be hard working striving for only A. This type of behaviour cause stress,

frustration and aggression that is not good for the students or the teachers health.

Summary

Personality can be defined as the pattern of behaviour that is enduring, distinctive thoughts, emotions and behaviours that differs from every individual and is used to adapt to the world.

A classroom is not just a cognitive habitat, but consists of intricate personal interactions which deeply affect the learning and teaching process.

The unconscious mind is a perceptual battleground in which the Id, ego and superego are engaged in unending conflict.

Defense Mechanisms which are unconscious methods by which the ego distorts reality to protect itself from anxiety are: Repression, Rationalization, Displacement, Sublimation, Projection, Reaction and Regression

Both heredity and environment plays and important part in an individuals personality development.

The cognitive development and social learning and moral guidance help to make decisions rather than overacting with the egos but the superego controls all the extreme actions and it helps both the internal and external determinants to harmonize.

Eysencks big five are: Neuroticism-Emotional Stability, Introversion-Extraversion, Openness-Convergence, Agreeableness-Antagonism and Conscientiousness-Undirectedness.

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Three types of temperament: Easy Child, Difficult Child and Slow-to-warm-up child.

Variations in performance are not entirely a question of intellect, motivation or thinking skills, but may depend on the personal attributes which can enhance or inhibit the quality of that performance

Type A behaviour personality can cause a person to be difficult to deal with and understand.

Conclusion

The researchers can confidently conclude that this was the most informative and beneficial researcher that they have ever pursued: understanding personality

From the readings the researchers believe that there is still so much yet to uncover about personality. Understanding personality opens the eyes of an individual to accept and tolerate the behaviours, attitudes and cultures of others. The researchers being teachers looked at how the concept of personality can influence their attitudes and behaviours when dealing with the adolescents. Understanding the personalities and difference will help teachers to interact better with the students and also they are better able to counsel the students into tolerating each other and to help students and teacher to better deal with situations. Personality studies will never come to an end because each person is different, complex and sophisticated in their own way.