

# Comaprative analiysis of trait and type theories of personality essay sample

[Psychology](#), [Personality](#)



Personality is an individual's unique thoughts, feelings and behavior that persist over time and different situations. It is unique set of traits that remain unchanged over a long period of time. Personality theorists attempt to describe how individuals remain consistent in their thoughts, feelings and behaviors, and how they differ in their personalities

Type/Constitutional/Biological Theories of personality:

Greek physician and philosophers Hippocrates and Galen claimed that a person's temperament depends on relative quantities of four humors, or fluids, in the body—blood (sanguine) and cheerfulness, phlegm (phlegmatic) and calmness, black bile (melancholic) and depression, yellow bile (choleric) and irritability.

Gall and Spurzheim related bumps and depressions on the skull to personality traits in their theory of phrenology.

William Sheldon related physique to temperament. According to his somatotype theory the soft, spherical endomorph is likely to be sociable and affectionate; the hard, muscular mesomorph is likely to be aggressive and courageous; and the linear and fragile ectomorph is likely to be restrained and happy to be alone.

German psychiatrist Ernst Kretschmer wrote a frail, rather weak (asthenic) body build as well as a muscular (athletic) physique were frequently characteristic of schizophrenic patients, while a short, rotund (pyknic) build was often found among manic-depressive patients.

Friedman and Rosenman gave Type A and Type B theory, that relates type to the disease.

Trait/Dispositional Theories:

Trait theorists try to describe basic behaviors that define personality and they assume that we each have relatively stable personality characteristics or dispositional attributes, called traits.

Gordon Allport defined traits into three categories: cardinal traits, central traits and secondary traits. This interpretation emphasizes that all traits are interdependent sets of attributes which come together to produce an effect on behaviour.

Cattell has reduced the list of personality traits into a small manageable number by using factor analysis. He established a 16-personality factor test and identified source and surface traits.

More recently, trait psychologists Paul Costa and Robert McCrae have developed a five-factor model of personality, nicknamed, " The Big Five" that includes the traits of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

Comparative Analysis:

1. Type is visible while trait is however invisible but can be manifested in the behaviour. 2. People can't always be assigned to a specific category; we see people who are sometimes choleric, sometimes melancholic, energetic and

sociable, or artistic and fond of eating. It seems to make more sense to talk about the degree of a trait that someone possesses. 3. Type of personality is combination of traits.

4. In type theories, the type is rather generalized term, while trait is like a continuum where each trait has its own significance, 5. Type theories are the earliest while Trait theories are one of the latest ones. 6. There are almost no assessment is used based on type theory as these are less efficient, while trait based assessments are psychometrically very sound and widely used in recruitment purpose. 7. Although type theories are not so much in use, it does show just how far back people have attempted to explain the different personalities of the people they see around them.

However, whilst Hippocrates may have been incorrect about fluids influencing our personality, there is some degree of validity to this theory. We now know today that hormones circulating in the blood can drastically affect the type of personality someone displays.