

Introduction to personality paper 1

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



INTRODUCTION TO PERSONALITY PAPER 1 Introduction to Personality Paper
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2012 INTRODUCTION TO PERSONALITY PAPER 2 Introduction to Personality
The word personality is one of ancient roots. Based out of the Latin word,
persona, this word was named after a mask or disguise that an actor would
wear for a production (Feist & Feist, 2009). Such a persona would be worn by
an actor in order to portray an appearance for a production that was not
their own. In the current world around us, the word personality has taken on
a new meaning. Rather than display the fictitious appearance of an actor, it
is used to describe the actions and behaviors of an individual based on their
character traits. Personality traits are a complicated web of factors that
make up what we observe as the persona of an individual. When these traits
come together patterns begin to emerge that take shape in the form of
regular individual characteristics (Feist & Feist, 2009). Scientific Approaches
to Studying Personality The study of personality within the science of
psychology is a very complicated process. This is because of the individuality
of personalities. There are as many personalities as there are individuals
within an environment. Each personality is shaded and biased in its own way
due to their human nature. On the topic of human nature within the scientific
study of psychology, there are six factors to consider: Determinism versus
free choice Pessimism versus optimism Causality versus teleology Conscious
versus unconscious determinants of behavior Biological versus social
influences Uniqueness versus similarities Free choice is based on the belief
that behavior is controlled by tangible human command. Determinism
however states that behavior is controlled through the manipulation of the

environment. INTRODUCTION TO PERSONALITY PAPER 3 Optimism follows the avenue of an overall positive mentality and the belief that a fully joyful and complete human existence is within the human grasp. Pessimism believes in the contrary in the thinking that negative aspects of life such as anger and misery are certain to surface (Feist & Feist, 2009). Within the school of thought surrounding causality, it is thought that current behavior is the product of past stimuli and interactions. In opposition, teleology states that current behavior is based on the forethought of future interactions. As the dimensions pass their mid point, the fourth dimension debates the decision making process and its origin in the conscious or subconscious. The second to last dimension addresses nature versus nurture when it comes to personality and decision making. To wrap up the list of dimensions is the debate of the study of individual differences versus collective similarities. These six points are the core basics in which personalities are studied, characterized and defined. Human personality is such a wide and diverse topic that no one category could ever contain it. In a way, each personality is deserving of it's own partition. Because of this, the basic root dimensions of human nature must be the theoretical basis for the study of personalities.

Development of Characteristics and Traits Characteristics and traits are ever evolving within the human personality. They begin immediately after birth and never cease until the end of life. Variables that help shape characteristics and traits can include: Social factors Biological factors Conscious Interpersonal Conflict Subconscious Interpersonal Conflict

The Five Factor Model is a general system put in place to help partition personality traits so that they can be studied and analyzed. The Five Factor Model is also

sometimes referred to as The Big Five INTRODUCTION TO PERSONALITY PAPER 4 (University of Colorado at Boulder, 1991). The Big Five factors of personality were brought forth by Costa and McCrae as a framework for comprehending the connection between the human personality and behavior. The five factors are: Openness (factoring inventive/curious versus consistent/cautious) Conscientiousness (factoring efficient/organized versus laid back/careless) Extroversion (factoring outgoing/energetic versus solitary/reserved) Agreeableness (factoring friendly/compassionate versus cold/uncaring) Neuroticism (factoring sensitive/nervous versus secure/confident) Costa and McCrae were pioneers in attributing these five factors to the development of the human personality over the entire lifetime (University of Colorado at Boulder, 1991). What this means is that the evolution of human character traits over time is mainly caused by biological factors. Costa and McCrae believed that human personalities developed due to time line specific processes such as elevated cognitive processes in early years. In the end, the goal of Costa and McCrae was to define human personality development entirely through the use of environmental factors.

Social Investment Theory The argument over nature versus nurture will be one that is argued until the end of time. The social investment theory makes a bold statement the the ever changing roles within social settings as well as the development of character traits in order to support such roles will in fact be held responsible for the development of a particular personality. An example of this could be an aging person will have many new reliance and need throughout their life. As they are put into new positions with new demands, their personality traits will have to evolve and grow. Social

investment theory addresses standardized changes in ones personality throughout different stages in ones life (University of Illinois, 2004).

INTRODUCTION TO PERSONALITY PAPER 5 Freud's Stance on Personality

Development Throughout the history of philosophy and psychology the unconscious has been sought after in order to help help explain the function of behavior or lack thereof. In this regard, Freud's thoughts and beliefs were not revolutionary in origin but they were in practice. This studies went beyond that of speculation and forward into practical application and physical studies. Freud theorized that an individuals personality development could be gauged by forces that endure between unconscious bindings. At its core, Freud felt that personality development was the sum of conflict that arises during developmental stages in ones life in order to refrain from the suspension of subconscious desires (Haverford College, 1997). Conclusion In conclusion, human personalities are a wide spectrum. So wide that many systems have been put into place in order to explain and study such a vast topic. Many factors play into this process such as social, biological, environmental, conscious, and subconscious. Though we, as humans love to compartmentalize the aspects in which we study, it is important to understand the amount of variance that can go into a topic such as human personality. In the end, we must look at personality development as a life long process that begins with nature and ends with nurture. INTRODUCTION

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