

Stages in personality development



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Personality is a complex hypothetical construct that has been described in many ways. In daily life we may come across many people, it's the fact that we wonder why some people are quiet and passive while others are loud and aggressive. The word personality is best to describe it. Personality is a set of qualities that distinguish an individual from others in manners, attitude, behavior and qualities that make the person stand out from the crowd. Personality cannot be determined by only the outlook or appearance of a person but also by the ways an individual reacts and interacts with others. It also reflects the psychological system of a person.

Personality factors rely on genetics as well as the stimuli in which an individual organism is born and raised up. The physical appearance, bone structure, stature, gender, and energy level are ruled by hereditary material or genetic variation. Personality traits such as shyness, fear, aggression, actions and attitude are also attributed to genetics and DNA heredity. The culture in which a person is brought up, social circles such as friends, and family, colleagues etc are some of the environmental factors that influence the personality of an individual.

Moreover, there are many other researches conducted by various scientists over personality traits and variations of personality from one individual to another. For example, when an employer goes for an interview and a company wants a perfect applicant for their work, they will not look at his practical skills but also the overall personality factor plays an important role. So there are many theories on personality discussed such as Big Five, psychodynamic, personality measures which revolve around the personality

of individual discussing the each and minute factors about the personality of an individual.

Psychodynamic Approach

“ Our unconscious mind determines our Behavior”

Sigmund Freud proposed this personality development theory. According to him a person's personality is developed in the first 6-7 years of his/her childhood.

According to this theory our personality has three parts

Consciousness: The memories and moments about which we are aware of.

Unconsciousness: About which we have no idea/unawareness.

Preconscious: Where the memories are in our unconscious but can be brought into our consciousness with a little effort

Major Components

Id

Ego

Superego

Id (pleasure principle): The unconscious portion of the personality that contains basic impulses and urges

By Freud's point of view he described id as the unconscious part of personality, in which two kinds of 'instincts' takes place. Eros the life instincts. They promote positive and constructive behavior and also reflect a
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source of energy which is called libido or psyche energy. The id operates on pleasure principle.

Ego (reality): The part of personality that mediates conflicts between and among the demands of the id, the superego and the real world.

It basically operates on the reality principle i. e. it satisfies the id about its immediate satisfaction and unreasoning demands imposed by the society's norms and rules. According to Freud, the healthy person has his ego as the strongest part of his personality.

Superego: The component of personality that tells people what they should and should not do.

When the child learns about the rules and regulations or values of the society they tend to adopt them, this is known as internalizing. This is the time the Superego develops. It is based on the moral principle as it tells us whether something is right or wrong.

Stages in personality development

Freud suggested that Childhood develops during childhood in a series of psychosexual stages. Failure to resolve conflicts & problems that appear at a given stage can leave a person fixated or stuck, i. e. unconsciously preoccupied with area of pleasure associated with that stage. This fixation can be seen in adult characteristics.

Oral Stage: The first of psychosexual stages, in which mouth is the center of pleasure and conflict. Because mouth is used by the child for eating and

exploring so it is the centre of pleasure at this period. Child's first year is the oral stage.

Anal Stage: Occurring during the 2nd year of life in which concentration of pleasure shifts from mouth to anus. According to Freud this stage occurs as a result of the demand for toilet training. If the training is too harsh or starts too early it can produce a kind of anal fixation that appears in adulthood as stinginess or preoccupation with neatness. If toilet training is late or too lax, however, the result could be another kind of anal fixation, which is reflected in adults who are disorganized or impulsive.

Phallic Stage: The most controversial stage of personality development occurs between the ages of three and five. When the child's focus of pleasure shifts to the genital area. Freud emphasized on male psychosexual development he called this stage phallic stage (phallus is another word for penis). During this stage a boy experiences sexual desires, in other words the child's superego develops in this stage.

The Oedipal complex occurs in the phallic stage of psychosexual development between the ages of three and five. This is a very important part of the stage where the sexual identity is formed. The analogous stage for girls is known as the Electra complex in which girls feel desire for their fathers and jealousy of their mothers. This is a similar situation as the above case but with daughter replacing the son and the father taking the place of the mother. Another pattern which is developed in a boy in which he has affection for his mother and sexual desires and wants to eliminate his father's competition for her attention known as the Oedipus complex. The super ego helps to

discourage this complex by making the child learning about society, norms and ethics.

Latency period: The Fourth of his psychosexual stages, in which sexual impulses are settled down. As the youngster focuses on education, same-sex peer play, and the development of social skills.

Genital Stage: The last of the personality development stages, which starts during adulthood, when sexual desires appear at conscious level. Freud said they last for the rest of the life. Genitals again become the focus of life.

Evaluation

Positive Features

- Influenced the human thinking about medicine, literature, religion, sociology and anthropology
- Psychotherapy techniques have been improved with a help of this theory.
- Development of many personality assessment tests like projective test have the been supported by this theory.

Negative Features

- His theory is basically based on case studied of few individuals. As conclusion drawn from a case study may not apply to people in general.
- Not helpful in understanding people in other cultures because Freud's thinking represented personality of people living in western European and North American region.

- Moreover his theory is not very scientific his concepts definition of id, ego and superego and other concepts lack the precision required for scientific measurement and testing.

Personality Assessment

Assessing Personality

Psychologist describe people's personalities using information from four main sources

Life outcomes (level of education, income, or marital status)

Situational tests (laboratory measurements of behavioral, emotional, and psychological reactions to conflicts)

Observer ratings (judgments about a person made by family or friends)

Self-reports (responses to interviews and personality tests)

Personality tests offer a way of gathering self-report information, the data gathered from these methods is used for many purposes, including diagnosing psychological disorders, predicting dangerousness, selecting new employees and mostly in military selection nowadays

Objective Personality Tests

Interviews

It consists of items that are related to the person or candidates feelings, thoughts or behaviors. For e. g. What are your hobbies?

Types of Interviews

Open ended: Interviews in which questions are tailored to the intellectual level, emotional state and special needs of the person being interviewed.

Structured: Interviewer asks a fixed set of questions about specific topics in a particular order.

NEO-PI-R (Neuroticism, Extraversion Openness Personality Inventory, Revised)

It is designed to measure the big five personality traits. One innovated feature of this test is

Private version: This version asks for respondent's self assessments.

Public version: This version asks a person who know the respondent to rate him or her on various dimensions.

Neo-PI-R is quite reliable and people's score on its various dimensions have been successfully used to predict a number of behaviors

MMPI (Minnesota Multiphase Personality Inventory)

When the aim of personality testing is to diagnose psychological disorders the commonly used personality test is MMPI.

This 566 item true false test was developed during 1930's at the University of Minnesota by Stark Hathaway and J. C. McKinley. It has been revised and updated since then to become MMPI-2.

The best known objective personality test is the MMPI. This test was created primarily to measure psychopathology. It contains several validity scales to

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determine if the client is responding to the questions accurately and truthfully, and it also contains ten basic clinical scales. Hundreds of additional scales have been created for the MMPI to measure virtually every personality trait and emotion conceivable. The MMPI was recently revised; the MMPI-2 is now the more commonly used edition. The MMPI is interpreted by looking at scale elevations and configurations. Although limited interpretation can be done by computer programs, a skilled psychologist is needed to make accurate interpretation which takes into account a person's background and other test data.

Projective Personality Tests

Test consists of unconstructed ink stimuli that can be perceived and responded to in many ways.

Following are some Projective personality test

Rorschach Inkblot Test

TAT(Thematic Appreciation Test)

WAT(Word association test)

HTP(House Tree Person)

Rorschach Inkblot Test

Proposed by Swiss psychologist Hermann

The Rorschach test consists of ten patterns some in black and others in colored ones. The respondent is asked to tell and then explain what he understands from it. Scoring is determined by following.

What part of the blot respondent responds to?

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What type of details colors or other features appear to determine each response?

Content of responses (seeing animals , landscape and or body parts)

Popularity or commonness of responses

TAT (Thematic Appreciation Test)

Developed by Henry Murray and Christina Morgan.

The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), in which the patient tells stories about pictures, the Sentence Completion test. The TAT provides information about important themes in a person's life or the content of their thinking, whereas the Rorschach provides information about the process and form of a person's thoughts.

It is used to measure need for achievement and other needs for power and affiliation.

The respondent or candidate will see this picture for few moments may be 30 sec and then. He would write a story out of the picture and after analysis of this picture his/her personality would be determined.

HTP (House-Person-Tree)

The house-tree-person test can be an effective way to evaluate children, people with brain damage and people with a limited ability to communicate for personality disorders. A projective personality test, the house-tree-person test requires the test taker to draw a house, a tree and a person. The test is then used as a measure of self-perception, outlook and sometimes brain

damage. Interpretations of the test are subjective, and based loosely on a set of basic principles.

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WAT (Word Association Test)

Words are shown in particular sequence set by the psychologist to analyze the candidates' personality and to catch his/her natural responses. It is mostly used in hiring or recruitment in government services mostly for e. g. Army (ISSB Tests) and in CSS exams.

Practical Application of Personality Tests

All the above mentioned tests are used and practiced in many fields nowadays. There are not only used to tackle psychological disorders in patients but in many institutions for hiring recruiting employees. Following are some practice examples of Projective Personality Tests.

ISSB tests used by Pakistan Armed Forces for the recruitment in Army/Air Force/Navy

CSS (Civil Superior Services) exam uses projective personality test along with objective personality test.

In hospitals and healthcare sectors by psychologists to diagnose Patients

And many other fields.

Neo Freudians:

Freud's work created much controversy among professionals in the developing field of psychology. Neo Freudians were the followers of Sigmund

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Freud. These neo Freudians agreed with Freud that unconscious conflict were important to understand the personality of the individuals, but they emphasis on the role of the instinctual impulses of sex and aggression in motivating behavior.

Karen Horney:

While Horney acknowledges and agreed with Freud on many issues, she was also critical of him on several key beliefs. She is also known as neo-Freudian. According to Horney people use three strategies to deal with their anxiety:

- By moving toward people and adopting a self compliant solution
- Going against people and adopting an aggressive solution
- Moving away from people and detaching oneself from them

Carl Jung:

He was Swiss psychiatrist, an influence thinker and the founder of analytical psychology. He was one of the students of Freud. However he divided the unconscious into two groups personal and collective unconscious.

He gave the following ideas:

Introversion and extraversion: Introversion consists of people how enjoy solitary activities like reading while extraversion consists of people that thrive in groups.

Collective unconscious: It is shade by all people and it is collective memory of human experience. It includes archetypes, which is model, personality o behavior of a person inherited by primitive images of that human race.

Trait theories:

Attempt to learn what trait makes a personality and how they relate the actual behavior of one of one individual to another. This trait theory proposes that individual personalities are comprised of wide dispositions. A trait can be cognition of resembling rigid characteristics that forces an individual to act in various ways

Trait:

“ A characteristic pattern of behavior”.

A trait is a basic building block of personality that is consistent throughout the lifespan of individual.

All ports trait theory:

Identifies basic characteristics of an individual behavior. Psychologist Gordon Allport (1961) categorized trait into three basic levels. It includes:

Cardinal traits

Central traits

Secondary traits

Cardinal traits:

“ These are the trait which completely rules an individual’s whole life”.

People are specifically known for this trait. May be their behavior or act remain embedded in other people mind. This trait is very rare.

Example

Mother Theresa is well known for her goodness

Albert Einstein is known as genius

Osama-bin-laden is known as terrorist

Central traits:

“ General characteristics that we uses to behave in a certain way across most situations”.

Qualities that a person uses to depict another person. Quality may differ from an individual to another individual

Example:

If some is generally shy most of the time then the shyness would be considered a central trait of that person. Further example includes the behavioral attitude of a person as kind, sincere, outgoing.

Secondary trait:

“ These traits are those that only come out in certain situation”.

These are those characteristic that are less accordant and based on specific situation.

Example:

A person become tensed when a surprise quizzes is announced.

For someone who is aggressive across most situations then the secondary trait for this person would be aggression

Han Eysenck's trait theory:

Han Eysenck's (1995) found that personality is composed of three major dimensions: extraversion, neurotism, and psychoticism

Extraversion:

The extraversion dimension relate to the degree of sociability. Personality traits that involves energy director outwards, such as being easy going lively, or excitable.

The factors which influence the extraversion personality of an individual:

- tough mindedness
- impulsiveness
- tendency to be outgoing
- desire for novelty
- performance enhanced by excitement
- preference for vocations involving contact with other people
- tolerance for pain

Introversion:

Personality trait that involve energy directed inward such as being:

- calm and peaceful
- tender mindedness
- introspectiveness
- Seriousness
- performance interfered with by excitement
- easily aroused but restrained

- inhibited
- preference for solitary vocations
- sensitivity for pain

Neurotism:

The neurotic dimension encompasses emotional stability. The factors included in this:

- Below-average emotional control
- will-power
- capacity to exert self
- slowness in thought and action
- Suggestibility
- lack of persistence
- tendency to repress unpleasant facts
- lack of sociability

Psychoticism:

It refers to degree to which reality is distorted.

Factors of psychoticism trait include:

- Poor concentration
- poor memory
- Insensitivity
- lack of caring for others
- Cruelty

The Big Five Personality Model

As a result of thorough research on personality trait theories, the big five theory was created. This model includes five core traits which cooperate in order to form a single personality. These include:

Extraversion

Extraversion includes the ability to be active, chatty, cheerful, upbeat, outgoing

Openness to experience

Tendency to be creative, thoughtful, peculiar

Agreeableness

Tendency to be kindhearted, easygoing, friendly, helpful

Conscientiousness

Tendency to be punctual, reliable organized

Neuroticism

Tendency to become emotionally unstable. This includes excessive worries.

Social cognitive learning approach:

Bandera's theory:

“ Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action.”

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-Albert Bandura, Social Learning Theory, 1977

Bandura argued that people learn by watching others behave around them this concept is known as observational learning or modeling there are three basic social learning concepts that form a person's behavior. These concepts are explained below:

Observational learning:

Bandura explained observation learning with the help of his famous experiment bobo doll experiment in which he let children observe an adult acting aggressively towards a bobo doll. Later when the children were allowed to play with the doll they demonstrated the same aggressive behavior.

Intrinsic reinforcement:

According to Bandura environment was not the only factor that developed a person behavior. He said that intrinsic reinforcement was also a very important factor in developing a person's behavior. Intrinsic reinforcement means internal rewards like pride, sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. This helped connecting learning theories to social cognition theories.

The modeling process:

In this process the model (person performing an act) and the learner (person observing) play a vital role. This process consists of the following steps:

Attention:

To learn something a person needs to pay attention on it. Distractions can hinder learning.

Retention:

Retention means the ability to store information. To pull up this information after some time and act on it is vital for learning.

Reproduction:

Once a person has paid attention to the model and has retained information, it is vital for a person to perform the observed behavior.

Motivation:

Finally, in order for learning to be successful, a person has to be motivated to imitate the behavior that has been modeled. Reinforcement and punishment play an important role in motivation. While experiencing these motivators can be highly effective. For example, if you see another student rewarded with extra credit for being to class on time, you might start to show up a few minutes early each day.

Walter Mischel's theory:**Behavioral signatures:**

Mischel's analysis revealed that person behavior depends upon the situation. The behavior of a person has if ~ then relation with the situation.

Cognitive affective units:

Mischel gave five variables that interact with the situation to determine the person's behavior. These are explained Below:

Encoding strategies:

It is how people interpret information that forms their behavior. Two people may react differently to the same situation for example a person may react angrily when insulted while another person may just ignore the insult.

Competencies and self regulatory strategies:

These are people's belief in what they can do. People acquire a set of capabilities even in the absence of actual performance. For example a bright student may believe that he can do excellent in GAT test even though he has never even taken that test.

Expectancies and beliefs:

What people expect after an action. Expectancy is not constant and they keep on changing.

Goals and values:

People are more goals directed. Values goals and interest are among the most stable cognitive affective units for example patriotic values may last for a life time as they are connected with positive emotions about one's homeland.

Affective responses

It includes feelings and emotions as well as the affects that accompany physiological reactions.

HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVE

The humanistic perspective focuses on the positive image of what it means to be human. Human nature is viewed as basically good, and humanistic theorists focus on methods that allow fulfillment of potential.

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Abraham Maslow proposed that an individual is motivated by a hierarchy of needs. Basic needs must be met before higher ones can be satisfied.

Arranged in order from lowest to highest, the needs are

- physiological
- safety
- belongingness and love
- self-esteem
- realization of one's full potential

Maslow also believed that the achievement of self-actualization is often marked by peak experiences, feelings of incredible peace and happiness in the course of life activities.

Carl Rogers, used the theory of self-concept, which he defined as an organized pattern of perceived characteristics along with the values attached to those attributes. He also assumed that within each individual there is a biological drive toward growth of self-concept, which can ultimately lead to self-actualization. Rogers believed that while children's self-concept is developing, they may internalize conditions of worth, judgments about the kinds of behaviors that will bring approval from others. He felt that, to promote growth and development, parents and authority

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figures should give a child unconditional acceptance and love, which allows a child to develop self-acceptance and to achieve self-actualization. To help his clients get back on the road to self-actualization, he developed a therapeutic approach called client-centered therapy, in which the therapist offers the client unconditional positive regard by supporting the client regardless of what is said. The warm, sympathetic therapeutic environment allows the client to be freed of internalized conditions of worth and to resume the self-actualization process.

Example:-

The humanistic perspective believes that people seek value, meaning, and creativity in all they do. It understands that people have goals, and that reaching these goals is very important. It also understands that individuals are able to make choices that affect them and others, and so those choices carry with them a sense of responsibility

BEHAVIORAL PERSONALITY THEORY

Behavioral psychology, also known as behaviorism, is a theory of learning based upon the idea that all behaviors are acquired through conditioning.

Advocated by famous psychologists such as John B. Watson and B. F.

Skinner, behavioral theories dominated psychology during the early half of the twentieth century. Today, behavioral techniques are still widely used in therapeutic settings to help clients learn new skills and behaviors.

Behaviorists explain personality in terms of the effects external stimuli have on behavior. It was a radical shift away from Freudian philosophy. This school of thought was developed by B. F. Skinner who put forth a model which

emphasized the mutual interaction of the person or “ the organism” with its environment. Skinner believed children do bad things because the behavior obtains attention that serves as a reinforce. For example: a child cries because the child’s crying in the past has led to attention. These are the response, and consequences. The response is the child crying, and the attention that child gets is the reinforcing consequence. According to this theory, people’s behavior is formed by processes such as operant conditioning. Skinner put forward a “ three term contingency model” which helped promote analysis of behavior based on the “ Stimulus - Response - Consequence Model” in which the critical question is: “ Under which circumstances or antecedent ‘ stimuli’ does the organism engage in a particular behavior or ‘ response’, which in turn produces a particular ‘ consequence’?”

Richard Herrnstein extended this theory by accounting for attitudes and traits. An attitude develops as the response strength (the tendency to respond) in the presences of a group of stimuli become stable. Rather than describing conditional traits in non-behavioral language, response strength in a given situation accounts for the environmental portion. Herrnstein also saw traits as having a large genetic or biological component as do most modern behaviorists.

Ivan Pavlov is another notable influence. He is well known for his classical conditioning experiments involving dogs. These physiological studies led him to discover the foundation of behaviorism as well as classical conditioning

BEHAVIORAL PERSONALITY THEORY:-

People try to learn according to their own behavior. People learn to shape their behavior either positively (in which they get reward) or negatively (in which they get punishment).

According to the theories of Skinner and Rotter about the behavioral personality:-

It is in human nature that we behave in such a way that we shall get reward for our behavior and our personality gets shaped automatically in that way because behavior and personality depends on each other. Skinner and Rotter also argued that our behavior and personality depends on our environment and if we want to change our behavior then we should change our social environment first.

COGNITIVE SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY OF PERSONALITY:-

In this theory, people are influenced from others behavior and by watching others, people change their personality according to them!

For Example: Albert Bandura in 1960 stated that when someone sees others getting a reward for a particular behavior then he gets impress from that person and he himself try to convert his personality according to that person to attain a reward. We can say that people are more likely to imitate those with whom they identify. Bandura famously illustrated social learning by showing children a video of a girl punching a doll; presented later with a doll, the children behaved in similarly aggressive ways.

HUMANISTIC PERSONALITY THEORY:-

In Humanistic Personality Theory, people try to develop their personality according to their needs regardless to their environment.

Abraham Maslow argued about the humanistic needs,

First stage is the survival for humans because we are born with certain needs. Without meeting these initial needs, we will not be able to continue our life. This first level consists of our “ physiological needs” , or our basic needs for survival. Without food, water, sleep, and oxygen, nothing else in life matters.

Secondly, when they meet their basic needs then they search for their security to live a secure life and convert their personalities according to that situation.

Thirdly, humans begin to search someone for love and affection for example friendship. They want someone special to whom they could share their feelings and spend time.

The fourth portion includes the self-esteem needs. It means, we strive to get success in our life to get respect from others and to move upward in career, to gain knowledge about the world and to work in the sense of high self-worth.

Fifth stage is “ self-actualization”, this stage is difficult to realize for some people. It's about what we have got in our life and where do we stand in this world. It means no longer feel ashamed and guilt in life but to accept what we have in our lives.

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