

# Personality psychology

Psychology



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Chapter 1 Vocabulary Trait Descriptive Adjectives — Words that describe traits, attributes of a person that are reasonably characteristic of an individual and perhaps even enduring over time. Personality — The set of psychological traits and mechanisms within the individual that are organized and relatively enduring and that influence their interactions with and adaptations to, the environment (including intrapsychic, physical and social environment). Psychological Traits — Characteristics that describe ways in which people are unique or different from or similar to each other. Average Tendencies — Tendency to display certain psychological traits with regularity. Psychological Mechanisms — Similar to traits, except that mechanisms refer more to the processes of personality. Within the Individual — The important sources of personality reside within the individual — that is, people carry the sources of their personality inside themselves — and hence are stable over time and consistent over situations. Organized — The psychological traits and mechanisms for a given person are not simply a random collection of elements. Rather, personality is organized because the mechanisms and traits are linked to one another in a coherent fashion. Enduring — The psychological traits are generally consistent over time, particularly in adulthood, and over situations. Influential Forces — Personality traits and mechanisms influence people's actions, views of self, views of the world, interactions with others, feelings, selection of environment, goals and desires, and how we react to our circumstances. Person-Environment Interaction — A person's interactions with situations including perceptions, selections, evocations, and manipulation. Perceptions — Refer to how we "see" or interpret an environment. Selection — Describes the manner in which we choose situations — such as our friends, hobbies college classes, and

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careers. Evocation — Refers to the reactions we produce in others, often quite unintentionally. Manipulations — Refers to the ways in which we attempt to influence others. Adaptation — Inherited solutions to the survival and reproductive problems posed by the hostile forces of nature.

Environment — Environments can be physical, social, and intrapsychic (within the mind). Which aspect of the environment is important at any moment in time is frequently determined by the personality of the person in that environment. Human Nature — The traits and mechanisms of personality that are typical of our species and are possessed by everyone or nearly everyone. Individual Differences — Every individual has personal and unique qualities that make him or her different from others. Differences between Groups — People in one group may have certain personality features in common, and these common features make them different from other groups. Nomothetic — The study of general characters of people as they are distributed in the population, typically involving statistical comparisons between individuals or groups. Idiographic — The study of single individuals, with an effort to observe general principles as they manifest in a single life over time. Domain of Knowledge — A specialty area of science and scholarship, where psychologists have focused on learning about some specific and limited aspect of human nature, often with preferred tools of investigation. Dispositional Domain — Deals centrally with the ways in which individuals differ from one another. As such, the dispositional domain connects with all the other domains. In the dispositional domain, psychologists are primarily interested in the number and nature of fundamental dispositions, taxonomies of traits, measurement issues, and questions of stability over time and consistency over situations. Biological

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Domain — The core assumption of biological approaches to personality is that humans are, first and foremost, collections of biological systems, and these systems provide the building blocks for behavior, thought, and emotion.

Intrapsychic Domain — This domain deals with mental mechanisms of personality, many of which operate outside the realm of conscious awareness. The predominant theory in this domain is Freud's theory of psychoanalysis.

Cognitive-Experiential Domain — This domain focuses on cognition and subjective experience, such as conscious thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and desires about oneself and others. This domain includes our feelings of self, identity, self-esteem, our goals and plans, and our emotions.

Social and Cultural Domain — Personality affects, and is affected by, the social and cultural context in which it is found. Different cultures may bring out different facets of our personalities in manifest behavior. The capacities we display may depend to a large extent on which is acceptable in and encouraged by our culture.

Adjustment Domain — Personality plays a key role in how we cope, adapt, and adjust to the ebb and flow of events in our day-to-day lives. In addition to health consequences of adjusting to stress, certain personality features are related to poor social or emotional adjustment and have been designated as personality disorders.

Good Theory — A theory that serves as a useful guide for researchers, organizes known facts, and makes predictions about future observations.

Theories — Are based on systematic observations that can be repeated by others and that yield similar conclusions.

Beliefs — Personally useful and crucially important to some people, but they are based on leaps of faith, not on reliable facts and systematic observations.

Scientific Standards for Evaluating Personality Theories — comprehensiveness, heuristic value, testability, parsimony, and

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compatibility and integration across domains and levels. Comprehensiveness — One of the five scientific standards used in evaluating personality theories. Theories that explain more empirical data within a domain are generally superior to those that explain fewer findings. (Explains most or all known facts) Heuristic Value — An evaluative scientific standard for assessing personality theories. Theories that steer scientists to important new discoveries about personality are superior to those that fail to provide this guidance. (Guides researchers to important new discoveries) Testability — The capability to render precise predictions that scientists can test empirically. Generally, the testability of a theory is dependent upon the precision of its prediction. If it is impossible to test a theory empirically, the theory is generally discarded. (Makes precise predictions that can be empirically tested) Parsimony — The fewer premises and assumptions a theory contains, the greater its parsimony. This does not mean that simple theories are always better than complex ones. Due to the complexity of the human personality, a complex theory—that is, one containing many premises—may ultimately be necessary for adequate personality theories. (Contains few premises or assumptions) Compatibility and Integration across Domains and Levels — A theory that takes into account the principles and laws of other scientific domains that may affect the study's main subject. For example, a theory of biology that violated known principles of chemistry would be judged fatally flawed. (Consistent with what is known in other domains; can be coordinated with other branches of scientific knowledge)

Chapter 2 Vocabulary Self-Report Data (S-Data) — Information a person verbally reveals about themselves, often based on questionnaire or interview. Self-reported data can be obtained through a variety of means,

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including interviews that pose questions to a person, periodic reports by a person to record the events as they happen, and questionnaires of various sources. Structured and Unstructured — Self-report can take a variety of forms ranging from open-ended questions (unstructured) to forced-choice true or false questions (structured) personality tests. Likert Rating Scale — A common rating scale that provides numbers that are attached to descriptive phrases, such as 0= disagree strongly, 1= disagree slightly, 2= neither disagree nor agree, 3= agree slightly, 4= agree strongly. Experience Sampling — People answer some questions, for example, about their mood or physical symptoms, every day for several weeks or longer. They are contacted at random intervals to complete the measurements. It differs from traditional self-report methods in being able to detect patterns of behavior over time. Observer-Report Data (O-Data) — The impressions and observations of others make of a person whom they come into contact with. For every individual, there are dozens of observers who form such impressions. Observers may have access to information not obtainable through other sources, and multiple observers can be used to assess each individual. Inter-Rater Reliability — Multiple observers gather information about a person's personality, and then investigators evaluate the degree of consensus among the observers. When different observers agree with one another the degree of inter-rater reliability increases and when observers disagree the reliability decreases. Multiple Social Personalities — Each of us display different sides of ourselves to different people—we may be kind to our friends, ruthless to our enemies, loving towards a spouse, and conflicted towards our parents. Our social personalities vary from one setting to another. Naturalistic Observations — Observers witness and record events

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that occur in the normal course of the lives of their participants. Naturalistic Observations offers researchers the advantage of being able to secure information in the realistic context of a person's everyday life. Test Data (T-Data) — A common source of personality-relevant information comes from standardized tests (T-data). In these measures, participants are placed in a standardized testing situation to see if different people react or behave differently to an identical situation. (SAT's) Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) — A noninvasive imaging technique used to identify specific areas of brain activity. As parts of the brain are stimulated, oxygenated blood rushes to the activated areas, resulting in increased iron concentrations in the blood. Projective Techniques — A person is presented with an ambiguous stimulus and is then asked to impose some order on the stimulus, such as asking what a person sees in an inkblot. What the person sees is interpreted to reveal something about his or her personality (Rorschach inkblot Test). Life-Outcome Data (L-Data) — Information that can be gleaned from the events, activities, and outcomes in a person's life that are available to public scrutiny. Marriages and divorces are a matter of public record and personality psychologists can secure information about clubs, speeding tickets, and ownership of a gun. Reliability — The degree to which an obtained measure represents the "true" level of the trait being measured. Personality psychologists prefer reliable measures so that scores accurately reflect each person's true level of the personality characteristic being measured. Repeated Measurement — A way to eliminate the reliability of a measure. There are different forms of repeated measurement, and hence different versions of reliability. If two tests are highly correlated between the first and second testing, yield similar scores for most people,

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then the resulting measure is said to have a high test-retest reliability.

**Response Sets** — The tendency of some people to respond to the question on some basis that is unrelated to the question content. Sometimes this is referred to as noncontent responding. One example is the response set acquiescence or yea saying. **Noncontent Responding** — The tendency of some people to respond to the question on some basis that is unrelated to the question content. One example is the response set acquiescence or yea saying. **Acquiescence** — A response set that refers to the tendency to agree with the questionnaire items, regardless of the content of those items. (aka yea saying) **Extreme Responding** — A response set that refers to the tendency to give endpoint responses such as strongly agree/disagree and avoid the middle part of the response scale, such as slightly agree/disagree or indifference. **Social Desirability** — Social desirable responses refer to the tendency to answer items in such a way as to come across as socially attractive or likeable. People responding in this manner want to make a good impression, to appear to be well adjusted, to be a “ good citizen”. **Forced-Choice Questionnaire** — Test takers are confronted with pairs of statements and are asked to indicate which statement of the pair is more true of them. Each statement in the pair is selected to be similar to the other in socially desirability, forcing participants to choose between statements that are equivalently socially desirable (or undesirable), and differ in context. **Validity** — Refers to the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure. There are five types of validity face, predictive, convergent, discriminant, and construct. **Face Validity** — Refers to whether the test, on the surface, appears to measure what it is suppose to measure. **Predictive Validity** — Refers to whether the test predicts criteria external to the test. (aka criterion

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validity) Convergent Validity — Refers to whether a test correlates with other measures that it should correlate with. Often evaluated simultaneously with discriminant validity. Discriminant Validity — Refers to whether a test correlates with other measures that it should not correlate with. Often evaluated simultaneously with convergent validity. Construct Validity — Defined as a test that measures what it claims to measure, correlates with what it is suppose to correlate with and does not correlate with what it is not suppose to correlate with. Theoretical Constructs — Chapter 3 Vocabulary Lexical Approach — The approach to determining the fundamental personality traits by analyzing language. For example, a trait adjective that has many synonyms probably represents a more fundamental trait then a trait adjective with few synonyms. Statistical Approach — Having a large number of people rate themselves on certain items, and then employing a statistical procedure to identify groups or clusters of items that go together. The goal of the statistical approach is to identify the major dimensions or “coordinates” of personality map. Theoretical Approach — The theoretical approach to identifying important dimensions of individual differences starts with a theory, which then determines which variables are important. The theoretical strategy dictates in a specific manner which variables are important to measure. Lexical Hypothesis — The lexical hypothesis-on which the lexical approach is based-states that important individual differences have become encoded within the natural language. Over ancestral time, the differences between people that were important were noticed and words were invented to communicate about those differences. Synonym Frequency — In lexical approach, synonym frequency means that if an attribute has not merely one or two trait adjectives to describe it, but rather six, eight or ten

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words, then it is a more important dimension of individual differences. Cross-Cultural Universality — In the lexical approach, cross-cultural universality states that if a trait is sufficiently important in all cultures so that its members have codified terms within their own language to describe the trait, then the trait must be universally important in human affairs. In contrast, if a trait term exists in only one or a few languages then it is only locally relevant. Factor Analysis — A commonly used statistical procedure for identifying underlying structure in personality rating or items. Factor analysis essentially identifies groups of items that covary (ie go together or correlate) with each other, but tend not to covary with other groups of items. Factor Loading — Indexes of how much of the variation in an item is “ explained” by the factor. Factor loading indicate the degree to which the item correlates with or “ loads on” the underlying factor. Sociosexual Orientation — According to Gangestad and Simpson’s theory of sociosexual orientation, men and women will pursue one of two alternative sexual relationship strategies. The first mating strategy entails seeking a single committed relationship characterized by monogamy and tremendous investment in children. The second sexual strategy is characterized by a greater degree of promiscuity, more partner switching, and less investment in children. Interpersonal Traits — What people do to and with each other. They include temperament traits (nervous/sluggish/excited), character traits (moral/dishonest), material traits (miserly/stingy), attitude traits (spiritual/pious), mental traits (clever/perceptive), & physical traits (healthy/tough). Adjacency — In Wiggins circumplex model, adjacency indicates how close the traits are to each other on the circumference of the circumplex. Those variables that are adjacent or next to each other within <https://assignbuster.com/personality-psychology/>

the model are positively correlated. Bipolarity — In Wiggins circumplex model, traits located at opposite sides of the circle are negatively correlated with each other. Specifically this bipolarity is useful because nearly every interpersonal trait within the personality sphere has another trait that is its opposite. Orthogonally — Discussed in terms of circumplex models, orthogonally specifies traits that are perpendicular to each other on the model are unrelated to each other. In general the term “orthogonal” is used to describe a zero correlation between traits. Five-Factor Model — A trait taxonomy that has its roots in the lexical hypothesis. The first psychologist to use this term was Warren Norman, based on his replications of the factor structure suggesting the following five traits: Surgency (extraversion), Neuroticism (or emotional instability), Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience (or intellect). Extraversion — The first fundamental personality trait in the five-factor model, a taxonomy which has proven to be replicable in studies using English-language trait words as items. Some of the key adjective markers for Extraversion are: talkative, gregarious, assertive, adventurous, open, sociable, forward, outspoken. Social Attention — the goal and payback of surgent or extraverted behavior. By being the center of attention, the extravert seeks to gain the approval of others and, in many cases, through tacit approval controls or directs others. Agreeableness — Is the second of the personality traits in the five-factor model, a model which has proven to be replicable in studies using English-language trait words as items. Some of the key adjective markers for Agreeableness are: good-natured, cooperative, mild/gentle, and not jealous. Conscientiousness — The third of the personality traits in the five-factor model, which has proven to be replicable in studies using English-language

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trait words as items. Some of the key adjective markers for Conscientious are: responsible, preserving, fussy/tidy, and scrupulous. Emotional Stability — The fourth of the personality traits in the five-factor model, which has proven to be replicable in studies using English-language trait words as items. Some of the key adjective markers for Emotional Stability are: calm, composed, poised, and not hypochondriacal. Openness — The fifth of the personality traits in the five-factor model, which has proven to be replicable in studies using English-language trait words as items. Some of the key adjective markers for Openness are: creative, imaginative & intellectual. Those who rate high in Openness tend to remember their dreams more and have vivid, prophetic, or problem-solving dreams. Combinations of Big Five Variables — " Traits" are often examined in combinations. For example two people high in extraversion would be very different if one was extroverted neurotic and the other was extraverted but emotionally stable. Personality-Descriptive Nouns → — As described by Saucier, personality-descriptive nouns differ in their content emphases from personality taxonomies based on adjectives and may be more precise. The eight big factors he discovered included: dumbbell, babe/cutie, philosopher, lawbreaker, joker, and jock

Chapter 6 Vocabulary Genome — The complete set of genes an organism possesses. The human genome contains 20, 000 to 30, 000 genes. Genetic Junk — The 98% of the DNA in human chromosomes that are not protein-coding genes; scientists believed that these parts were functionless residue. Recent studies have shown that these portions of DNA may affect everything from a person's physical size to personality, thus adding to the complexity of the human genome. Eugenics — The notation that the future of the human race can be influenced by fostering the reproduction of persons with certain

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traits, and discouraging reproduction among persons without those traits or who have undesirable traits. Percentage of Variance — Individuals vary or are different from each other, and this variability can be partitioned into percentages that are related to separate causes or separate variables. Heritability — A statistic that refers to the proportion of observed variance in a group of individuals that can be explained or accounted for by genetic variance. It describes the degree to which genetic differences between individuals cause differences in some observed property, such as height, extraversion, or sensation seeking. The formal definition of heritability is the proportion of phenotypic variance that is attributable to genotypic variance. Phenotypic Variance — Observed individual differences, such as in height, weight, or personality. Genotypic Variance — Genetic variance that is responsible for individual differences in the phenotypic expression of specific traits. Environmentality — The percentage of observed variance in a group of individuals that can be attributed to environmental (monogenetic) differences. Generally speaking, the larger the heritability, the smaller the environmentality, and vice versa. Nature-Nurture Debate — The ongoing debate as to whether genes or environment are more important determines a personality. Selective Breeding — One method of doing behavior genetic research. Researchers might identify a trait and then see if they can selectively breed animals to possess that trait. This can occur only if the trait has a genetic basis. For example, dogs that possess certain desired characteristic, such as a sociable disposition. Might be selectively bred to see if this disposition can be increased in frequency among offspring. Traits that are based on learning cannot be selectively bred for. Family Studies — Family studies correlate the degree of genetic overlap among family

members with the degree of personality similarity. They capitalize on the fact that there are known degrees of genetic overlap between different members of the family in terms of degree of relationship.

**Twin Studies** — Twin studies estimate heritability by gauging whether identical twins, who share 100% of their genes, are more similar to each other than fraternal twins, who share only 50% of their genes. Twin studies, and especially studies of twins reared apart, have received tremendous media attention.

**Monozygotic (MZ) Twins** — Identical twins that come from a single fertilized egg (or zygote, hence monozygotic) that divided into two at some point during gestation. Identical twins are always the same sex because they are genetically identical.

**Dizygotic (DZ) Twins** — (also called fraternal twins) — Twins who are not genetically identical. They come from two eggs that were separately fertilized. Such twins share only 50% of their genes with their co-twin, the same amount as ordinary as brothers and sisters. Fraternal twins can be of the same sex or opposite sex.

**Equal Environments Assumption** — The assumption that the environments experiences by identical twins are no more similar to each other than are the environments experienced by fraternal twins. If they are more similar, then the greater similarity of the identical twins could plausibly be due to the fact that they experience more similar environments rather than the fact that they have more genes in common.

**Adoption Studies** — Studies that examine the correlations between adopted children and their adoptive parents, with whom they share no genes. These correlations are then compared to the correlations between the adopted children and their genetic parents, who had no influence on the environments of the children, differences in these correlations can indicate the relative magnitude of genetic and environment contributions to

personality traits. Selective Placement — If adopted children are placed with adoptive parents who are similar to their birth parents, this may inflate the correlations between the adopted children and their adoptive parent. There does not seem to be selective placement, and so this potential problem is not a problem in actual studies. Gender Identity Disorder (GID) — According to the DSM-IV, a diagnosis of gender identity disorder requires that two aspects be present simultaneously: (1) cross-gender identification that is strong and persists over time, and (2) persistent psychological discomfort with one's biological sex. A recent study of twins has concluded that there is a strong heritable component in GID. Shared Environment Influences — Features of the environment that siblings share; for example, the number of books in a the presence or absence of a TV and VCR, quality and quantity of food in the home, the values and attitudes of the parent, and the schools, church, synagogue, or temple the parent send the children to. Non-Shared Environment Influences — Features of the environment that siblings do not share. Some children might get special or different treatments from their parents, they might have different groups of friends, they might be sent to different schools, or one might go to summer camp while the other stays home each summer. These features are called nonshared because they are experienced differently by different siblings. Genotype-Environment Interaction — The differential response of individuals with different genotypes to the same environment. Genotype-Environment Correlation — The differential exposure of individuals with different genotypes to different environments. Passive Genotype-Environment Correlation — Occurs when parents provide genes and environment to children, yet the children do nothing to obtain that environment. Reactive Genotype-Environment

Correlation — Occurs when parents (or others) respond to children differently depending on their genotype. Active Genotype-Environment Correlation — Occurs when a person with a particular genotype creates or seeks out a particular environment. Molecular Genetics — Techniques designed to identify the specific genes associated with specific traits, such as personality traits. The most common method, called the association method, identifies whether individuals with a particular gene (or allele) have higher or lower scores on particular trait measure. DRD4 Gene — The most frequently examined gene, which is located on the short arm of chromosome 11. Environmentalist View — Environmentalists believe that personality is determined by socialization practices, such as parenting style and other agents of society.