

Personality Intro

What do we mean when we say personality? A combination of long-lasting and distinctive behaviours, thoughts, motive, and emotions that typify how we react and adapt to other people and situations.

An individual's consistent patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving

Theory of Personality An organized attempt to describe and/or explain how personalities develop and why personalities differ

Personality Intro (cont)

Early approach to explaining personality: Phrenology was proposed in the late 1700s by a German doctor (Franz Gall). The approach was based on the assumption that we can measure personality by assessing the pattern of bumps on a subject's skull. This method was widely used in the Victorian era.

Assessing Personality

Traits relatively enduring characteristics that influence our behaviour across many situations.

Psychologists Allport, Cattell, Eysenck have dedicated their careers to this cause.

Allport Identified 18 000 traits so 4 500 in 3 levels

Cattell Grouped related traits & analyzed their influence

Assessing Personality (cont)

Eysenck 2 factor models focus on introvert - extrovert

5 Factor Model (Image) 5 Fundamental personality traits

- Stable across time /
- Culturally universal / Explain most behaviours

Over 18 000 traits have been identified. These have been grouped according to similarities and ranked according to influence. One trait that is thought to be largely influential in personality is extraversion - introversion.

Personality Trait Theory Benefit: Cross Cultural validity / Assist in research on psych disorders / Reduces focus from 18000 traits to 5

Assessing Personality (cont)

Personality Trait Theory Limitation: Not all aspects of personality addressed (Moral behaviour) / Situation & Context influence on personality not addressed.

Personality Assessment Tools Projective Tests / Objective Tests

Projective Tests Provides ambiguous stimuli (Express the unconscious forces)

Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) - Ambiguous photo: Writing the story for the photo / Expressing inner feelings & Interests.

Research has shown that personality is largely driven by unconscious forces (underlying individual motivations). We can't directly discover what is in the unconscious, but we can use tools to indirectly access this part of the mind



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