

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY II

Unit V

PERSONALITY

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PERSONALITY- DEFINITION

Personality can be defined as the characteristic patterns of behaviour and modes of thinking that determine a person's adjustment to the environment.

The term characteristic in the definition implies some consistency in behaviour. It means that people have tendencies to act or think in certain ways regardless of the situation.

Behaviour is the result of interaction between personality characteristic and the social and physical conditions of the situation.

A complete description of an individual personality would include many factor, intellectual abilities, motives acquired in the process of growing up, emotional reactivity, attitudes, beliefs, and moral values.

TYPE THEORIES OF PERSONALITY

Type theories refers to a class of individual grouped together based on certain common characteristics.

Classifying people into types is one way to predict others behaviour and anticipate how they will act in the future.

Thus type theories focus on people's personal characteristic.

1. HIPPOCRATES'S FOUR TEMPERRAMENT TYPES

Hippo crates, a Greek physician now known as father of medicine, grouped people into 4 temperament types based on body fluids. (About 400 BC).

1. SANGUINE People of this type Are cheerful vigorous confidently optimistic. They have more blood in their bodies.

2. MELANCHOLIC People of this type are depressed and morose. They have black bile in their bodies.

3. CHOLERIC People of this type are hot-tempered. They have more yellow bile in their bodies.
4. PHELEGMATIC People of this group are slow-moving, and calm unexcitable. They have more phlegm in their bodies.

2. SHELDON'S BODY TYPES

Sheldon and Kretschmer attempt to classify people into their types based on their body builds. They are

1. ENDOMORPH A short plump person was said to be sociable, relaxed and even-tempered.
2. ECTOMORPH A tall thin person was characterized as restrained, self-conscious and fond of solitude (isolation).
3. MESOMORPH A heavy set, muscular individual was described as noisy, callous and fond of physical activity.

3. JUNG'S PERSONALITY TYPES

Swiss psychiatrist CARL JUNG, divided all personalities into INTROVERTS and EXTRAVERTS.

1. INTROVERTS The introverts tend to withdraw into himself particularly in times of emotional conflict and stress, shy and prefers to work alone.
2. EXTROVERTS The extraverts under stress seeks the company of others, very sociable, and prefers job that led him to directly deal with people.

4. TYPE A AND TYPE B PERSONALITY

During recent years two specific personality types are known to be associated with increased or decreased likelihood of coronary – artery disease.

1. TYPE A Type A persons are hard-driving, competitive, live under constant pressure, seek recognition take on multiple activities with deadline to meet, alert, complete, efficient. Under stressful conditions they become hostile impatient, anxious and disorganized.
2. TYPE B Type B person are easy going, noncompetitive placid, unflappable, a little dull and likely to live longer.

5. EYSENCK'S HIERARCHICAL THEORY

Eysenck identified the major components of personality as a number of personality types. Each type is made up of certain personality characteristics. Each one of these characteristics

can be broken down into certain habitual-response patterns that apply to several situations. Each of these habitual-response patterns can be broken down further into specific responses within specific situations.

This progression from broad global types down to specific, situation bound responses is what makes Eysenck approach a HIERARCHICAL THEORY.

TRAIT THEORIES OF PERSONALITY

Trait may be defined as the characteristics that lead people to behave in more or less distinctive and consistent ways across situations.

ALLPORT'S TRAIT THEORY

Allport believed that individuals are unique and this uniqueness could be described well in terms of the individual's traits or personal dispositions at three levels of generality.

LEVEL 1. CARDINAL TRAITS

Allport defined cardinal traits as those that are so dominant that nearly all of the individual's actions can be traced back to them.

For example Christ like, machiavellian, kennedyesque, Nixonian and Gandhian.

Each term describes a trait so broad and so deep in its impact that it overshadows the influence of other traits in the same individual. Allport believed that most people have no true cardinal traits.

LEVEL 2. CENTRAL TRAITS

For most, who are without cardinal trait, central becomes crucial. He described central traits as characterizing an individual's behaviour to some extent but not in such a complete way as cardinal trait. It would be rare for an individual to have 10 or 12 such central traits (e. g. Trait mentioned in a letter of recommendation)

LEVEL 3. SECONDARY TRAITS

These are traits that are influential but only within a narrow range of situations. (for e. g. Like coffee. Tea. Etc.)

Allport recommended that cardinal central and secondary traits be used assemble what he called psychological life histories. Information about these traits come from materials produced by the individuals themselves – materials such as letters, diaries or personal journals.

SINGLE – TRAIT APPROACHES

Some theorist focused on single trait. For example JULION ROTTER described locus of control.

LOCUS OF CONTROL

It is the degree to which we believe that we cause or control the events in our lives. It is of two types.

1. INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

If we believe that we are the cause of most events, we have a highly internal locus of control

2. EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

If we believe that most events are caused by luck, fate, or powerful others, we have a highly external locus of control.

PSYCHOANALYTICAL THEORY OF PERSONALITY

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory has three major parts. It is

1. A theory of structure of personality, in which the ID, the EGO, and the SUPER EGO are the principal parts.
2. A theory of personality dynamics, in which conscious and unconscious motivation and ego defense mechanisms play a major role.
3. A theory of psychosexual development.

PERSONALITY STRUCTURE

Freud constructed a model of personality with three interlocking part, the ID the EGO, and the SUPER EGO.

THE ID

The id is the most primitive part. It is a storehouse of a biological based urges, the urge to eat, drink, eliminate and especially to be sexually stimulated.

The sexual energy that underlies these urges is called LIBIDO.

The id operates to PLEASURE PRINCIPLE, that is, the id would satisfy its fundamental urges, immediately and reflexively as they arose, without regard to rules, the realities of life, or morals of any kind.

THE EGO

The id is usually bridled and managed by the ego. The Ego consists of elaborate ways of thinking and behaving which constitute the "EXECUTIVE FUNCTION" of a person.

The ego always satisfying id motive and channels behaviour into more sociably acceptable outlets, it keeps a person working for living, getting along with people and generally adjusting to the realistic of life. Hence ego works on REALITY PRINCIPLE.

The ongoing tension between the insistent urges of the id and the constraints of the reality helps the ego develop more and more sophisticated thinking skills.

THE SUPER EGO

The superego corresponds closely to what we commonly call the conscience.

It consists of prohibitions learned from parents and other authorities.

Super ego also contains EGO IDEAL, a set of positive values and moral ideas that are pursued because they are believed to be worthy.

PERSONALITY DYNAMICS AND LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

PERSONALITY DYNAMICS

According to Freud, There is a lively ongoing interplay among the id, the ego, and superego. In this interplay ego acts as a mediator between the id and super ego. The ego's task of satisfying both id and superego requires a somewhat risky balancing act.

For example if the ego yields to the id's desire for something that is morally forbidden, the superego may punish the ego with feelings of guilty. Thus ego's task involves finding compromise between the id and superego.

According to Freud, behaviour is influenced by biological drives (id), social rules (super ego), and mediating thought process (ego).

LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Freud proposed three levels of consciousness or awareness. They are

1. the consciousness
2. the pre consciousness
3. the unconsciousness.

THE CONSCIOUSNESS

At the conscious level we are aware of certain things around us and of certain thoughts.

THE PRECONSCIOUSNESS

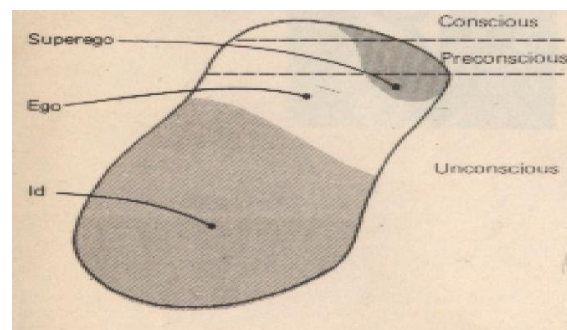
At the preconscious level, there are memories and thoughts that are easily available with moments reflection- for example what we had for breakfast, or our parents names.

THE UNCONSCIOUS

The unconscious contains, memories thoughts and motives which cannot easily call up.

All of the id is unconscious. The ego and superego include material at all levels of consciousness.

COMPONENTS OF PERSONALITY & LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS



Like an iceberg in the deep sea, only a very small portion of our mind is known to us. Most part of it is hidden under the surface and we are unaware of it.

THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS

Ideas and feelings become unconscious because of **REPRESSION**. We repress or banish from consciousness ideas, memories, feelings, or motives that are disturbing, forbidden and unacceptable to us.

The process of repression is itself unconscious and automatic. It just happens whenever the idea or impulse is so painful and anxiety arousing that we must we escape from it. In such cases, our anxiety triggers repression and the unacceptable material is buried in the unconscious. The material we repress is usually something that clashes painfully with our ethical standards or self-image.

According to Freud repressed material does not remain safety tucked away. It continues to operate underground and converts the repressed conflict into neurosis.

Neurosis is disturbed behavior involving anxiety or defenses against. Neurotic symptoms often bear a symbolic relationship to the repressed material that is causing them. So bringing back the repressed ideas is useful to curve neurotic problems.

INDICATORS OF UNCONSCIOUS

According to Freud,

1. Dreams
 2. Slips of tongue and slips of pen and
 3. Mannerisms
- are the ways to know unconsciousness.

Freud described dreams as “THE ROYAL ROAD TO THE UNCONSCIOUS”. In everyday life, unconscious thoughts and forbidden impulses are revealed by accidents and by slips of the tongue or the pen.

PSYCHOSEXUAL STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Freud put heavy emphasis on biological development in general and on sexual development in particular.

From birth onwards we have an innate tendency to seek pleasure especially through physical stimulation of parts of the body that we sensitive to touch, such as the mouth, the anus, and the genitals. Freud referred to these parts as EROGENOUS ZONES. The pleasure derived from touching and rubbing these sensitive zones as EROTIC PLEASURE OR SEXUAL PLEASURE.

PSYCHOSEXUAL STAGE –MEANING

For babies the most sensitive erogenous zone is mouth. With advancing age other body parts become sensitive to stimulation. With each of these shifts in the focus of sexual stimulation come parallel shifts in the dominant psychological issues faced by the person. Thus Freud called each step in this processes a PSYCHOSEXUAL STAGE.

FIXATION- MEANING

Freud says that if a child’s needs at one of the psychosexual stages were either unsatisfied or over satisfied FIXATION would take place. That is the child would show continued attachment to an old stage even after moving on to a new one. As a result, behaviour patterns from the fixated stage would persist.

PSYCHOSEXUAL STAGES

Freud in his theory proposed five psychosexual stages. They are

1. oral stage
2. Anal stage
3. Phallic stage
4. Latency Stage
5. Genital Stage.

Let us briefly explain each of the stage.

1. ORAL STAGE(birth to 1 year)

In the oral stage the infant gains sensual pleasure first by sucking and later by biting. Feeding and contact with the mother, mouthing new objects, all help to make the mouth the focus of pleasure during the first year.

A body given too little opportunity or too much to suck or made anxious about it may acquire an oral fixation which may foster excessive talking, dependency etc. fixation during the oral biting stage may produce a critical biting personality.

2. ANAL STAGE (1-3 years)

Anal stage occurs when parents are toilet training their children and teaching them to avoid prohibited behaviour connected with excretion. At this time the region around the anus becomes highly sensitive to the stimulation of "holding on" and "letting go".

Toilet training is the child's first encounter with authority and the first the id must be brought under the control of the emerging ego.

The first part of the anal stage involves pleasure from expulsion of feces. The later part involves pleasure from retention of feces.

Fixation at the first stage results in the characteristics of messiness and disorder. Fixation at the later sub stage results in excessive compulsiveness, over conformity and exaggerated self-control.

3. PHALLIC STAGE (3-5 years)

Genitals become the major focus of sexual excitement in the phallic stage. In this stage children develop sexual feelings toward the parent of the opposite sex.

According to Freud, in boys these thoughts and feelings are called OEDIPUS COMPLEX after the mythical story of Oedipus who unknowingly killed his father and married his mother.

In girls, these kinds of thoughts and feelings are called ELECTRA COMPLEX after Agamemnon's daughter who arranged for her mother to be murdered.

In phallic stage the child develops the defense of IDENTIFICATION to overcome the Electra and Oedipus complex.

4. LATENCY STAGE (6 years to puberty)

In this stage the child learns more about the world sexuality is largely repressed and the ego expands.

5. GENITAL STAGE (ADOLESCENCE AND BEYOND)

In this stage mature heterosexual interest appears. There are three major sources of sexual arousal during this period. They are 1) memories and sensations from early childhood period, 2) physical manipulations of genitals and, 3) other erogenous zones and hormone secretions. This stage is set for responsible enjoyment of adult sexuality.

HORNEY'S PSYCHOANALYTICAL INTERPERSONAL THEORY

FEMININE PSYCHOLOGY (Horney pronounced horn-eye)

Karin Horne proposed a theory of personality which is known as “Psychology of persons” she took sharp issue with Freud on some of his views on “Feminine psychology”. She argued that “penis envy” was not a normal development in females but rather an unusual pathological occurrence. She also countered that some of her male patients envied women their capacity for pregnancy, childbirth, motherhood, breast development and sucking.

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF “PERSON PSYCHOLOGY”

Two major components of Horney’s person psychology were the twin notions of basic anxiety and basic hostility.

BASIC ANXIETY

Basic anxiety arises in childhood when the child helpless in a threatening world. Children learn that they are relatively weak and powerless. They are dependent on their parents for safety and satisfaction.

Loving and reliable parents can create a feeling of security. Erratic, indifferent or rejecting parents may sharpen the child’s sense of helplessness and vulnerability. This sets the stage for basic anxiety.

BASIC HOSTILITY

Basic hostility accompanies basic anxiety. It grows out of resentment over the parental behaviour that led to anxiety in the first place. Because the hostility cannot be expressed directly to parents, it is repressed. This repressed hostility increases the child’s anxiety.

Children caught in this bind –dependent on their parents, anxious because of their parents, hostile towards their parents and unable to express their feelings directly –tend to rely heavily on one of three modes of social behaviour.

MODES OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

1. MOVING TOWARD OTHERS

This mode involves excessive compliance. Security is sought by making oneself indiscriminately compliant, subject to the will of the others, inclined to do whatever they wish in order to gain their approval and affection. The result may be a kind of security and leaves the individual feeling displayed exploited and unhappy.

2. MOVING AGAINST OTHERS

This mode involves pursuit of satisfaction through ascendance and domination of others. Self- protection is provided via one’s power over others. Basic hostility may be expressed, but basic anxiety is usually denied. As a result, feeling of weakness and vulnerability are neither and explored nor resolved.

3. MOVING AWAY FROM OTHERS

This approach is self protection by withdrawal. Some people avoid the risk and pain of social relationships by avoiding relationship in the first place. This approach does provide some protection but it also cut short any real prospect for growth in the social realm.

LEARNING AND BEHAVIOURAL THEORIES OF PERSONALITY

Learning and behavioural theories emerged from experiments in classical conditioning, Instrumental conditioning and cognitive learning. These theories share the common idea that many of the behaviours that make up personality are conditioned or learned. This means, that many such behaviours originated somewhere in the learning history of the individual, often as early as childhood. A second idea is that current conditions in the individual's environment help maintain these behaviours. Finally all the learning theories focus on observable events and behaviours.

SKINNER'S RADICAL BEHAVIOURISM

Skinner's approach is exclusively instrumental or operant. It deals only with the processes by which reinforcement (reward) and punishment influence the likelihood of behaviours.

SKINNER'S VIEW ON PERSONALITY

According to Skinner personality is a collection of reinforced responses. We are the person that we are because we behave in certain ways. We behave in certain ways because of the reinforcement contingencies we experience.

PERSONALITYLESS VIEW OF PERSONALITY

In Skinner's view, there is not need for a concept of personality. He described people's behaviour entirely in terms of objectively observable events. It is an effort to be clear, precise and to rely on the smallest possible number of theoretical concepts and assumptions.

DOLLARD AND MILLER-EARLY SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Dollard and Miller explained the individual and social behaviour by means of learning principles. They tried to translate Freud's Psychoanalytic concepts into the language of learning theory.

APPROACH-AVOIDANCE TENDENCIES

Dollard and Miller believed that we have conflict between approach and avoidance tendencies. We may act indecisive and neurotic when we are torn between approaching and voiding a certain course of action.

For example, when we want to get a tooth filled but we fear the pain. In such cases the tendency to approach is often stronger (get the filling) than the avoidance tendency at first, but the closer we get to the "moment of truth" the more likely it is that the avoidance tendency will win out and we will retreat from the planned action (cancel our dental appointment).

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY (BANDURA AND WALTERS)

Albert Bandura and Richard Walters argued that in real life people often do not have the luxury of learning through instrumental or operant conditioning or trial and error learning. In real life, it is often too costly to risk “incorrect” responses because they have serious consequences.

OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING OR IMITATION

Observational learning is highly efficient form of learning in real life situations. According to Bandura and Walters, observational learning requires no direct reinforcement to the learner. Observational learning generally takes place in a social situation involving a model or an imitator.

VICARIOUS REINFORCEMENT

The imitator observes the model and experiences the model’s behaviour and its consequences vicariously. This process is called vicarious reinforcement.

Bandura maintains that all learning can take place vicariously through modeling.

HUMANISTIC THEORIES

Theories that focus upon the individual’s subjective perceptions of self, the world, and the self within the world are called HUMANISTIC THEORIES. Self concepts are central to these theories. Two of the most influential humanistic theorists are CARL ROGERS and ABRAHAM MASLOW.

1. ROGERS’S SELF THEORY

CARL ROGERS’S theory grew out of his client centered-approach to psycho therapy and behavioral change.

The major concepts of his theory are explained below.

PHENOMENAL FIELD

Roger in his theory emphasized phenomenal field, which means whole of experience. This is the individual’s subjective experience and subjective frame of reference. It may or may not correspond to external reality.

THE SELF

Out of phenomenal field, a self or self-concept gradually develops. The self is an important element in the experience of the individual.

REAL SELF

What a person is now, his attitudes, perceived traits, abilities and weaknesses constitute “REAL SELF” of a person.

IDEAL SELF

In addition to the real self there is an ideal self. It means the self the person would like to be.

INCONGRUENCES

The perceived self may match the ideal self and this can be very disturbing to be person. Trouble occurs when there are mismatches between the real self and ideal self. These mismatches are called INCONGRUENCIES.

CONDITIONS OF WORTH

Because we need self-esteem, we may distort our perception of our experiences in self-serving ways when incongruencies occurs. In doing this we may use conditions of worth – characteristic of our behaviour that we learned in childhood to associate with acceptance. This brings us to one of Roger's key notions about personality development.

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

As children grow, parents react to their behaviour, sometimes in a positive way and sometimes negatively. Children thus learn to regard some of their actions, thoughts and feelings as unworthy and they often react by distorting or denying these unworthy aspect of self.

Rogers believes that in mature adjusted people, there is congruence between the total person and the self. A well adjusted person can accept the full range of their experiences without distorting or avoiding them.

HUMANISTIC THEORIES

Self is the basic concept of various humanistic personality theories.

SELF- DEFINITION

A set of feelings and attitudes and a certain sense of who we are is known as the self. However the self has two distinct sets of meanings they are

SELF CONCEPT OR SELF IMAGE

One set focus on people's attitudes about themselves, their picture of the way they look and act the impact they believe they have on others, their perceived traits, abilities harmless peculiarities in a person's character (foibles) and weaknesses. This is self- concept or self- image.

SELF AS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

The second set of meanings relates to the executives functions- processes by which the individual manages, copes, thinks, remembers, perceives and plans.

MASLOW'S SELF-ACTUALISATION THEORY

Abraham Maslow was a phenomenal theorist and emphasized development of the self. The important of his theory are described below-

LIFE URGE

Maslow believed that each person has an essential nature that presses to emerge, like the "press" within an acorn to become an oak tree.

HUMAN NEEDS

We all have high level growth needs such as the need for self actualization and understanding of ourselves. But these higher needs only assume a dominant role in our lives after our more primitive needs are satisfied.

Maslow stressed that the human being is not a white rat. Man has a higher and TRANSCENDENT NATURE. To understand this transcendent nature we should study transcendent people.

SELF-ACTUALISATION OR PEAK EXPERIENCES

Self- actualization is actualizing one's potentials. Most of us have had moments of true self – actualization. He also referred these moments as peak experiences. For example a burst of insight, a betrothal, the birth of a baby, a mountaintop sunrise.

During these highly focused vivid moments. There is often a disorientation in time and space, a feeling of richness and unity. The accompanying emotional reaction has a special flavor of wonder, of awe, of reverence, of humanity and surrender before the experience as before something great. The person is at the peak is godlike not only in senses but in the complete, loving unsoldering, corn passionate and perhaps amused acceptance of the world and of the person.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SELF-ACTULAISATIONED PEOPLE

1. They were open to experience vividly, selflessly, with full concentration and total absorption.
2. They were in tune with themselves, their inner feelings.
3. They were spontaneous, autonomous, independent with the fresh, unstereotyped appreciation of people and events.
4. They devote total effort to their goals, wanting to be first or at least as they could be.
5. They were dedicated, fully and creatively, to some cause outside themselves
6. They related to a few specially loved others on a deep emotional plane.
7. They resisted conformity to the culture, they could be detached and private.

ISSUES AND CONTROVERSIES IN PERSONALITY THEORY AND RESEARCH

Many psychologists have become disenchanted with sweeping efforts to capture “the whole person” in a single theory and have turned instead, to focus research on specific issues in personality. To fill out our picture of psychology, we will consider two of these issues.

GENES AND PERSONALITY

One is perhaps the oldest issue in psychology nature versus nurture. Most of the theories we have considered so far emphasize the acquisition of personality after birth; consistent with this emphasis, a recent view of genetic research noted that “investigators who have studied twins are unanimous in concluding that personality is more affected by environment than any other area of human functioning”.

STUDIES OF TEMPERAMENT

One line of research concerns temperament, the aspect of personality that includes mood, activity level, and emotion, and the variability of each. Studies with animals have shown that selective breeding can heighten or diminish characteristics like emotionality over successive generations. Twin studies with humans also seem to show a genetic influence.

TRAITS, TYPE AND CHROMOSOMS

Moving beyond child temperament we can find evidence of a genetic contribution to a large number of adult trait dimensions and to at least one typology.

In addition to similarities in their test scores, identical twins show a remarkable number of subtle behaviour similarities. Even twins who have been reared apart tend to laugh alike, show nervous mannerisms.

THE PERSON – SITUATION CONTROVERSY

Another major issue in personality research is called the person- situation controversy. It centers on one key question to what extent is our behaviour caused by characteristics inside of us and do what extent by characteristics of the situation in which we find ourselves? Advocates of trait and type approaches to personality tend to believe that people show certain consistencies across situations and across time and that type descriptions are useful ways of identifying the “person” characteristics that produce such consistencies.

EXTREME POSITIONS

The person – situation controversy has involved a small number of theories at both extremes and many occupying the middle ground. At the extreme “person” end are a few theories, often of the dynamic group, who believe that people possess certain core drives, motives, conflicts, or tendencies that produce consistency in their behaviour across various situations. At the extreme situational end of the controversy are theories like B. F. Skinner, who believe that notions like “traits of character” and “ free will” should be dropped and who favor a detailed account of the environment and how it determines our behaviour.

THE INTERACTION POSITION

The person – situations controversy has moved toward an integrationist viewpoint. Most personality researchers now agree that the relative impact of “person” characteristics and situation characteristics determines the personality of the individual.