

# Personality

Personality is one of those concepts that is familiar to everyone but is difficult to define, most people use the term, “personality” to identify the most obvious characteristics of a person, or to refer to that person’s social skills. In this complex society pleasing personality is an important for him and it is for two different reasons persons desire to create favorable impression on others and his desire to judge accurately the personality of others.

Different psychologists defined personality in their own way. Most of them mentioned two aspects of personality, the first one from observer’s point of view that is how person is perceived and evaluated by others and second from the inside of the person. In the simpler terms these are factors of the person which create his/her identity.

One of the early psychologists Rainwater in 1956 stressed on hereditary foundation of personality. According to him “Personality is formed from the interaction of significant figures... first the mother, later the father and siblings and thereafter the extra familial figures within the world. The child with this interaction brings certain biological constitution, certain needs and drives and certain intellectual capacities which determine the reaction to the way in which he is acted upon by these significant figures”. In day to day life person tries to elicit positive relation with others in order to develop warm relationships, this effectiveness can be accessed through personality.

Watson (1925) supported that the hereditary potential can be molded into any desired personality pattern. Watson also claimed that new born baby can be molded into anything the significant people in his environment desires.

Although the construct of personality has been defined in many ways, there is a general consensus on what personality is, Allport (1937) collected some more than 50 definitions of personality and also created one of his own, according to Allport personality is a dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment.

Allport (1965) revised his definition of personality, this new definition contained word “characteristic” for word “uniqueness” and words “behavior and thought “ in place of

“adjustment : “Personality is a dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristic behavior and thought”. According to Pervin and John (2001) “Personality represents those characteristics of the person that account for consistent patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving”. Funder (2001) defined “Personality refers to an individual’s characteristic patterns of thought, emotions, and behavior, together with the psychological mechanisms-hidden or not-behind those patterns”. According to Mayer (2005) “An individual's pattern of psychological processes arising from motives, feelings, thoughts, and other major areas of psychological function. Personality is expressed through its influences on the body, in conscious mental life, and through the individual's social behavior.”

According to Pervin (1970) personality represent those structural and dynamic properties of an individual or individuals as they reflect themselves in characteristic response situation, according to this definition personality to be ultimately defined in terms of behavior and that consistency within a single individual consistency across all the individuals and that consistency along the groups of individuals are the salient features of personality, as for as definition of personality is concerned one of the important reason to have the concept of personality is that we want to describe an individual as an integrated behaving unit for example: an occasional anger outburst by an individual would not brand him as hostile person, however if he was to show frequent displays of temper he would probably be considered to be an angry or hostile person, hence it is the unit of trait that would define him as an angry or hostile person, now what traits are, why they are so called?

Personality traits are the unique set of characteristics and qualities that only you possess. While a lot of people might have similar personality traits, each person combines these traits in a different way, to create one unique, irreplaceable\_conglomeration of traits that make up their individual personality. According to Guilford (1959) a trait is any distinguishable relatively enduring way in which one individual differs from others.

Allport (1937) a generalized and focalized Neuro-physic system (Peculiar to individual), with the capacity to render many stimuli functionality equivalent and initiate and guide consistent (equivalent) form of adaptive and expressive behavior, if behavior changes, does this means that one of our trait has changed, or has our environment influenced our behavior.

Quimette, Klein & Pepper (1996) found that variety of personality or traits attributed may predispose individuals to mood disorders may be altered as the result of the experience of a major mood disturbance. Traits of personality “are classified by the adaptive problems they were designed to solve and... traits evolve as a function of the adaptive problems faced by the organism over evolutionary time” (Figueredo, Sefcek, Vasquez, Brumbach, King & Jacobs, 2005, p. 871). The sustaining and consistent characteristic reaction of the individual under different situations is called personality traits (Costa & McCrae, 1989). The individual behavior usually reflects the unique personality traits, such as shy, amendable, loyal and timid. If these characteristics appear sustaining in different situations, it is regarded “personality traits”. Therefore, personality traits are stable and extremely important compositions in people’s life (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

According to Buss (1989) Personality traits have been challenged as unimportant determinants of behavior, but evidence suggest that traits may carry as much variance as experimental manipulation, asking whether traits or manipulations control more variance is useless because researchers can plan paradigm that favors’ one or the other when traits and manipulations complement each other there are several major kinds of interactions. The trait manipulations dichotomy is analogous to the person-environment dichotomy and both are related to active versus passive models of behavior. Individual responses are on a continuum of breadth that extends successively upward to response classes, personality traits and higher order traits, broad and narrow traits each have advantages disadvantages. Recent researches have led to novel personality traits and to knowledge about the origin and maintenance of traits. If there is to be a specialty called personality, its unique and therefore defining characteristic is trait, as this is study states that “personality is unique and its defining characteristic is traits.” Maher and Maher (1994) an area that has long been of interest in psychology is the relationship between personality traits and psychopathology.

As far as present investigation is concerned investigator is interested in investigating the relationship between, Big Five Model (i.e., the Five Factor Model) and there relationship to anxiety and depression among students, before we go in much depth let’s have a brief look, on history of Big Five Model.

The Big Five model originated with Allport and Odbert's work on trait descriptions which they reduced to 171 variables. Digman (1990), Goldberg (1993), John (1990), by sorting these variables into synonym groups, they reduced variables to 35 bipolar scales through a cluster analysis of trait ratings. Cattell further reduced these 35 variables to 12-15 factors using peer ratings of these scales. Borgatta (1964), Fiske (1949), Norman (1963), Tupes (1992) subsequent investigators consistently found that five robust factors were sufficient to represent the structure of these traits.

According to Watson and Clark (1994) in studying the connection between personality and major mental disorders, researchers have frequently relied upon the five factor model of personality and have found that some of the factors are related to several DSM disorders.

Present investigator investigated five facets using NEO FFI by Costa and McCrae (1992) is based on five broad and robust traits. According to Goldberg (1993) investigators have recognized that the various factor models are quite similar in structure and meaning.

While Digman (1990), Digman and Takemoto-chock (1981), Goldberg (1990, 1993), John (1990), the traits that make up the Big Five structure are Neuroticism (or emotional disorganization) versus emotional stability (or ego strength); Extraversion (or surgency); Conscientiousness, dependability (or will to achieve); Agreeableness (or friendly compliance) versus hostile non-compliance; and culture, imagination, intellect (or openness to experience).

A measure based on the five factor model is the NEO FFI personality inventory designed by Costa and McCrae (1992) although they have labeled them with different names: Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness (O), Agreeableness (A) and Conscientiousness (C), now present investigator will explain all the above mentioned facets.

*Neuroticism* is a fundamental personality trait in the study of psychology. It is an enduring tendency to experience negative emotional states. Individuals who score high on neuroticism are more likely than the average to experience such feelings as anxiety, anger, guilt, and depressed mood. They respond more poorly to environmental stress, and more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, and they may have trouble controlling urges and delaying gratification. Neuroticism is associated with low emotional intelligence, which involves emotional regulation, motivation, and interpersonal skills. It is also a risk factor for "internalizing" mental disorders.

such as phobia, depression, panic disorder, and other anxiety disorders (traditionally called neuroses). Highly neurotic individuals are very much incapable of facing frustrations. When under pressure, they choose to remain in situations that generate negative effects (Emmons, Diener & Larsen, 1985).

*Extraversion* is “the act, state, or habit, of being predominantly concerned with and obtaining gratification from what is outside the self”. Extraverts tend to enjoy human interactions and to be enthusiastic, talkative, assertive, and gregarious. The extravert feels more at home with the world of objects and other people. Extraverts are actively involved in the world of people and things; they tend to be more social and more aware of what is going on around them. They take pleasure in activities that involve large social gathering, such as parties, community activities, public demonstration, and business or political groups. An extroverted person is likely to enjoy time spent with people and find less reward in time spent alone. Politics, teaching, sales managing, etc. are the fields that favor extraversion. They tend to be energized when around other people, and they are more prone to boredom when they are by themselves.

*Openness* involves active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings, preference for variety, and intellectual curiosity. Openness tends to be normally distributed with a small number of individuals scoring extremely high or low on the trait, and most people scoring near the average. People who score low on openness are considered to be closed to experience. They tend to be conventional and traditional in their outlook and behavior. They prefer familiar routines to new experiences, and generally have a narrower range of interests. People who are open to experience are no different to mental health from people who are closed to experience. There is no relationship between openness and neuroticism or any other measure of psychological wellbeing. Being open and closed to experience are simply two different ways of relating to the world.

*Agreeableness* is a tendency to be pleasant and accommodating in social situations. In contemporary personality psychology, agreeableness is one of the five major dimensions of personality structure, reflecting individual differences in concern for cooperation and social harmony. People who score high on this dimension are empathetic, considerate, friendly, generous, and helpful. They also have an optimistic view of human nature. They tend to believe that most people are honest, decent, and trustworthy. People scoring low on agreeableness are

generally less concerned with other's well-being, report less empathy, and are therefore less likely to go out of their way to help others. People possessing such traits are trustworthy, straightforward, altruistic, compliant, modest and tender-minded (Costa & McCrae, 1992). People very low on agreeableness have a tendency to be manipulative in their social relationships. They are more likely to compete than to cooperate.

*Conscientiousness* is the trait of being painstaking and careful, or the quality of acting according to the dictates of one's conscience. It includes such elements as self discipline, carefulness, thoroughness, organization, deliberation, and need for achievement. It is an aspect of what has traditionally been called character. Conscientious individuals are generally very determinant, hard working, disciplined, reliable with strong will and trustworthy. They are very much achievement oriented, self-disciplined and deliberate in their thinking (Costa & McCrae, 1992). When taken to an extreme, they may also be workaholics, perfectionists, and compulsive in their behavior. People who are low on conscientiousness are not necessarily lazy or immoral, but they tend to be more laid back, less goal oriented, and less driven by success.