INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PERSONALITY THEORIES

By: Xavier A.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The term personality comes from the Latin word *persona*, which means 'mask'. This definition of personality implies that important aspects of a person remain concealed for some reason. Many answers exist to the question of personality.[1] In fact, every theory of personality can be viewed as an attempt to define personality and these definitions differ markedly from one another. The psychoanalytic theory of personality is an attempt to define one's personality by taking into account those aspects of a person's personality that remains hidden from her or him. This psychoanalytic theory will have a special reference with Freud's perspective.

First, we shall discuss here about three concerns of personality theory, defining personality in general, personality from personhood, the subjective nature of personality theories, and finally on dimensions for a concept of humanity.

1.1 Three Concerns of Personality Theory

"Kluckhohn and Murray observe that every human being is: (1) like every other human being; (2) like some other human beings; and (3) like no other human being. We are like all other human beings insofar as there is a **human nature** that describes humanness".[2] One task of the personality theorist is to describe what all human beings have in common, what we come equipped with at birth. Next we are like some other human beings insofar as we share a common culture. For example, to care for one's offspring, and to live cooperatively with one's fellow humans. It is culture that determines how these needs are satisfied. Lastly, each human is unique because no other human being has neither his/her particular cluster of genes nor his/her particular cluster of personal experiences.

---

[1] Karen Huffman, *Psychology in Action* (New York: John Wiley & Son, 1987), 501.

[2] B.R. Hergenhahn, *An Introduction to Theories of Personality* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1980), 2.

Different theories emphasize different aspects of human nature and individual differences, and offer different descriptions and explanations of them. For this reason, the best understanding of personality, at the present time, is provided by the composite of many theories of personality instead of by any single theory.

1.2 Defining Personality

The term 'personality' is probably one of the most ambiguous ones in modern psychology. Practically, every writer has his own notion of what it means and what definitions should be attached to it. Everybody has a unique individuality and we do not know exactly how to describe this individuality. However, in studying personality psychologists are drawn by the interest in describing and measuring individual differences in all kinds of behaviors and analyzing how those differences come about. They are also concerned with describing a personality as an integral whole rather than as a collection of bits and pieces. "Personality is defined as an individual's characteristic pattern of thoughts, emotions, and observable behaviors."[3]

The approaches personality researchers take and the conclusions they reach depend greatly on their theoretical orientation. That is, psychologist who start with different assumptions about basic human nature will reach different conclusions about how personality develops.

1.3 Philosophical Conception of Personality

Every human individual is born as a person. While personality is that which is acquired purposefully in the entire network of person's habits, emotions, activities, etc. 'I' has a two fold meaning. We employ it not only to the ultimate subject but also to all activities and habits, which are attributed to the ultimate Subject. In other words, we employ 'I' as 'I' of personhood, which is in the order of existence, and as 'I' of personality, which is in the order of what person does.[4]

Personhood is the ground and foundation of one's personality. It is also called the second nature. Personhood is common to all but personality is not. It is because personality is the end product of the individual's use of freedom. Hence, whatever

---

[3] Huffman, 501.

[4] James B. Reichmann, *Philosophy of the Human Person* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1985), 210.

significant decision one makes, they greatly influence in shaping one's personality, for instance entering into business line, joining the religious order etc. All other minor decisions cling to the major decisions. Therefore, we can conclude that the 'I' of personhood is composed of totality of person's experiences. This is the basis of having unique personality in every individual.[5]

It is already mentioned that personhood is born and it is incommunicable, but personality is acquired and it is communicable. Hence, when we talk about ethical sense, we talk about the right of person, not right of personality. Thus, the baby who is in mother's womb has the right to live. The *esse* of that living being makes him a person.

Personality is an abstraction, an underlying unity behind a person's acts, something like a good man, prestige, beauty and so on. "Personality is determined by heredity through genes, by endocrine glands, through hormones, by one's culture group, by childhood experiences especially parent-child relations and early training".[6] Personality is classified into types such as introverts and extraverts. Personality is measured by psychological tests such as self-inventories, ratings by others, situational tests and projective techniques.

1.4 The Subjective Nature of Personality Theories

It is true that a theory without evidence to support it is speculation. It seems equally true, however, that a mass of research data can be meaningless unless it is organized into some sort of explanation framework or context. A theory can be considered a kind of map that represents the *data* in their relationships with one another. It attempts to bring *data* into some kind of order, to fit them into an overall structure in which each *datum* is an integrated part.

"Theories are not restricted to Science; we all use personal theories in our everyday interaction with other. We all make certain suppositions about the personalities of those with whom we interact. Further, many of us speculate about human nature in general. These suppositions are theories".[7] We usually form these

---

[5] Ibid., 211.

[6] J. M. Fuster, *The Integrated Personality* (Calcutta: Xavier Publications, 1981), 6.

[7] Duane Schultz, *Theories of Personality* (California: Brooks Cole Publishing, 1981), 11.

personal theories on the basis of data derived from our perception of the behavior of those around us. In that respect – the fact that our theories derive from our observation – personal theories are similar to formal theories in psychology.

However, formal theories in psychology, and in other Sciences, have certain characteristics that set them apart from our personal theories. Formal theories are based on data from observations of large numbers of people of diverse nature. Personal theories, on the other hand, are derived from our observations of a limited number of persons, usually our small circle of relatives, friends, and acquaintances. A second difference is that formal theories are likely to be more objective because scientists' observations are unbiased by their own needs, fears, desires, and values. Our personal theories are based as much on observations of ourselves as of others. Another difference is that formal theories are repeatedly tested against reality, often by scientists other than the one who proposed the theory. A formal theory may be given many objectives, experimental tests and, as a consequence, be supported or modified in the light of the results. Once we develop a personal theory about people in general, or about one person in particular, we tend to cling to it and perceiving only those behaviors that confirm our theory.[8]

Thus, the formal theories tend to be objective. Personal theories tend to be more subjective. We might think that personality theories, because they belong to a discipline that calls itself a science, are all of the formal, objective variety. That conclusion is incorrect. In recent years, Skinner, Bandura have developed an awareness and acceptance of the subjectivity of personality theories.

1.5 Dimensions for a Concept of Humanity

The basic assumptions concerning human nature rest on several broad dimensions that separate the various personality theories. There are six dimensions as a framework for viewing each theory's concept of humanity.

The first dimension is *determinism vs. free choice*. Are people's behavior and personality determined by forces over which they have no control? Is our behavior partially free and partially determined? Although the dimension of determinism vs. free will is more philosophical than scientific, the position theorists take on this issue shapes their way of looking at people and colors their concept of humanity.

---

[8] Ibid., 12.

The second, perhaps related issue is one of *pessimism vs. optimism*. In general, personality theorists who believe in determinism tend to be pessimistic, whereas those who believe in free choice are usually optimistic.

The third dimension for viewing a theorist's concept of humanity is *causality vs. teleology*. Causality holds that behavior is a function of past experiences, whereas teleology is an explanation of behavior in terms of future goals or purposes.[9]

The fourth consideration that divides personality theorists is their attitude towards *conscious vs. unconscious determinants* of behavior. Are people ordinarily aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it, or do unconscious forces impinge upon them and drive them to act without awareness of these underlying forces?

The fifth question is one of *biological vs. social influences* on personality. Are people mostly creatures of biology, or are their personalities shaped mostly by their social relationships? A more specific element of this issue is heredity vs. environment.

A sixth issue is *uniqueness vs. similarities*. Is the salient feature of people their individuality, or is it their common characteristics? Should the study of personality concentrate on those traits that make people alike, or should it look at those that make people different?[10]

These basic issues that separate personality theorists have resulted in truly different personality theories, not just differences in terminology. The differences are philosophical and deep-seated. Each personality theory reflects the individuality of its creator, and each creator has a unique philosophical orientation, shaped in part by early childhood experiences, birth order, gender, and pattern of inter personal relationships.

In the following chapters, we shall study about various theories namely Psychodynamic theory, Social Cognitive theory, Dispositional theory, and Person-Centered theory.

CHAPTER 2

PSYCHODYNAMIC THEORY

---

[9] Jess Feist, *Theories of Personality* (New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994), 15.

[10] Schultz, 13.

"Psychodynamic theories include all the diverse theories descended from the work of Sigmund Freud, which focus on unconscious mental forces".[11] Freud inspired many brilliant scholars who followed in his intellectual footsteps. Some of these followers simply refined and updated Freud's theory. Others veered off in new directions and established independent, albeit related schools of thought. In this section we will examine the ideas of Sigmund Freud. Then we will look at the psychodynamic theories of Carl Jung.

2.1 Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory

Freud's psychoanalytic theory grew out of his decades of interactions with his clients in psychoanalysis. This theory attempted to explain personality, motivation, and psychological disorders by focusing on the influence of early childhood experiences, on unconscious motives and conflicts, and on the method people use to cope with their sexual and aggressive urges.

2.1.1 Structure of Personality

Freud divided personality structure into three components: the *id*, the *ego*, and the *superego*. He saw a person's behavior as the outcome of interaction among these three components.

"**The *id*** is the primitive, instinctive component of personality that operates according to the pleasure principle".[12] Freud referred to the id as the reservoir of psychic energy. The id operates according to the pleasure principle, which demands immediate gratification of its urges. Besides being unrealistic, and pleasure seeking, the id is illogical and can simultaneously entertain incompatible ideas. Another characteristic of the id is lack of morality. Because it cannot make value judgment to distinguish between good and evil, the id is not immoral, merely amoral. All of the id's energy is spent for one purpose – to seek pleasure without regard for what is proper of just. The id is filled with energy received from the instincts and discharged for the satisfaction of the pleasure principle.

---

[11] Wayne Weiten, *Psychology* (California: Brook Publishing Company, 1983), 425.

[12] Robert Liebert, *Personality strategies and issues* (California: Brook Publishing Company, 1986), 84.

"**The *ego*** is the decision-making component of personality that operates according to the reality principle".[13] The ego is the region of mind in contact with reality. It grows out of the id during infancy and becomes person's only source of communication with the external world. The ego is guided by the reality principle, which seeks to delay gratification of the id's urges until appropriate outlets and situations can be found. According to Freud, ego becomes differentiated from the id when the baby learns to distinguish itself from the outer world. As children begin to experience parental reward and punishment, they learn what to do in order to gain pleasure and avoid pain. Children soon learn that their impulses cannot always be gratified immediately. The ego temporarily suspends pleasure principle for the sake of reality principle.

While the ego concerns itself with practical realities, "**the *superego*** is the moral component of personality that incorporates social standards about what represents right and wrong".[14] The superego is the internal representative of the value of parents and society. It strives for the ideal rather than real. Until the time of Freud, it was believed that ethical behaviour was provided by God. But Freud argued that moral conscience is acquired after birth. The superego checks the uninhibited desires of the id, and influences the ego to be morally right and to seek high quality.

According to Freud, the id, the ego, and the superego are distributed differently across three levels of awareness which we will describe next.

2.1.2 Levels of Awareness

Perhaps Freud's most enduring insight was his recognition of how unconscious forces can influence behavior. He inferred the existence of the unconscious from a variety of observations that he made with his patients. For example, he noticed that 'slips of the tongue' often revealed a person's true feelings. Most important, through psychoanalytic, he often helped patients to discover feelings and conflicts that they had previously been unaware of.

Freud divided the mind into three levels of awareness: conscious, preconscious, and unconscious. "The **conscious** includes what we are aware of at a

---

[13] Ibid., 84.

[14] Ibid., 85.

given point of time".[15] This definition is close to the everyday use of the term. However, Freud contended that only a small portion's thoughts, images, and memories is conscious. Freud's conception of mind is often compared to an iceberg that has most of its mass hidden beneath the water's surface. He believed that the unconscious is much larger than the conscious or preconscious.

"The **preconscious** includes thoughts of which we are not immediately aware but that can easily be brought to awareness".[16] You may have had the experience of concentrating on a topic, as in an intense conversation, and suddenly finding yourself thinking about a completely unrelated topic. These unrelated thoughts have been in your preconscious.

"The **unconscious** contains thoughts, memories, and desires that are well below the surface of conscious awareness but that nonetheless exert great influence on behavior".[17] According to Freud, most behavior is motivated by forces of which the person is totally unaware. They are kept out of consciousness. These unconscious thoughts enter conscious only in disguised or symbolic form.

2.1.3 Conflict and The Tyranny of Sex and Aggression

Freud assumed that behavior is the outcome of an ongoing series of internal conflicts. He saw internal battles between the id, ego, and superego as routine. For example, your id might feel an urge to clobber a co-worker who constantly irritates you. However, society frowns on such behavior, so your ego would try to hold this urge in check. Here you would find yourself in conflict.

Freud believed that conflicts centering on sexual and aggressive impulses are especially likely to have far reaching consequences. Two reasons were prominent in his thinking. First, he thought that sex and aggression are subject to more complex and ambiguous social control than other basic motives. Second, he noted that the sexual and aggressive drives are thwarted more regularly than other basic, biological urges. Think about it: if you get hungry or thirsty, you can simply head for a nearby vending machine. Likewise, when you see an attractive person who inspires lustful urges, you don't normally walk up and propose a tryst in a nearby broom closet.

---

[15] J. Frank Bruno, *Dictionary of key words in Psychology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul plc, 1982), 94.

[16] Feist, 20.

[17] Ibid., 21.

There is nothing comparable to vending machine for the satisfaction of sexual and aggressive urges. Freud ascribed great importance to these needs because social norms dictate that they are routinely frustrated.

2.1.4 Anxiety and Defense Mechanism

Most internal conflicts are trivial and quickly resolved one way or the other. Occasionally a conflict will linger for days, months, or even years, creating internal tension. Such prolonged and troublesome conflicts involve sexual and aggressive impulses that society wants to tame. These conflicts are often played out entirely in the unconscious. Although you may not be aware of these unconscious battles, they can produce anxiety that slips to the surface of conscious awareness.

The arousal of anxiety is a crucial event is Freud's theory of personality functioning. Anxiety is distressing, so people try to rid themselves of this unpleasant emotion any way they can. This effort to ward off anxiety often involves the use of defense mechanisms. "**Defense mechanisms** are largely unconscious reactions that protect a person from unpleasant emotions such as anxiety and guilt".[18] Typically, they are mental maneuvers that work through self-deception. Consider **rationalization**, which is creating false but plausible excuses to justify unacceptable behavior. For example, after cheating someone in a business transaction, you might reduce your guilt by rationalizing that everyone does it.

According Freud, the most basic and widely used defense mechanism is repression. "**Repression** is keeping distressing thoughts and feelings buried in the unconscious".[19] People tend to repress desires that make them feel guilty, conflict that make them anxious and memories that are painful.

Self-deception can also be seen in projection and displacement. "**Projection** is attributing one's own thoughts, feelings, or motives to another".[20] For example, if lusting for a co-worker makes you feel guilty, you might attribute any latent sexual tension between the two of you to the other person's desire to seduce you. "Displacement is diverting emotional feelings (usually anger) from their original sources to a substitute target". If your boss gives you a hard time at work and you

---

[18] Weiten, 427.

[19] Ibid.,427.

[20] Bruno, 102.

come home and slam the door, kick the dog. You are displacing your anger onto irrelevant targets.

Other prominent defense mechanism includes reaction formation, regression, and identification. Reaction formation is behaving in a way that is exactly the opposite of one's true feelings. Guilt about sexual desire often leads to reaction formation. Freud theorized that many males who ridicule homosexuals are defending against their own latent homosexual impulses. Regression is a reversion of immature patterns of behavior. Identification is bolstering self-esteem by forming an imaginary or real alliance with some person or group. Youngsters often shore up precarious feelings of self-worth by identifying with rock stars, movie stars. According to Freud, everyone uses defense mechanism to some extent. They become problematic only when people depend on them excessively.

2.1.5 Development Psychosexual Stages

To shed light on these crucial early years, Freud formulated a stage theory of development. He emphasized how young children deal with their immature but powerful sexual urges. These sexual urges shift in focus as children progress from one stage of development to another. Thus, "psychosexual stages are developmental periods with the characteristic sexual focus that leave their mark on adult personality".[21] The notion of **fixation** plays an important role in this process. Fixation can be caused by excessive gratification of needs at a particular stage. Freud described a series of five psychosexual stages. Let's examine some of the highlights in this sequence.

Oral stage encompasses the first year of life. During this period, the main source of erotic stimulation is the mouth (in biting, sucking). In his view, the handling of the child's feeding experiences is crucial to subsequent development. He attributed considerable importance to the manner in which the child is weaned from the breast of the bottle. According to Freud, fixation at the oral stat could form the basis for obsessive eating or smoking later in life.

Anal stage: in their second year, children get their erotic pleasure from their bowel movements. The crucial event at this time is toilet training, which represents

---

[21] Hergenhahn, 42.

society's first systematic effort to regulate the child's biological urges. Severely punitive toilet training leads to a variety of possible outcomes. For example, excessive punishment might produce a latent feeling of hostility toward the trainer, usually the mother. The genital anxiety derived from severe toilet training could evolve into anxiety about sexual activities later in life.

Phallic stage: during the fourth and fifth years of life, the libido is centered in the genital region. Children at this age are frequently observed examining their genitals, and asking question about birth and sex. According to Freud, the conflict in the phallic stage is the last and most crucial conflict with which the young child must cope. The conflict involves the child's unconscious wish to possess the opposite sexed parent and at the same time to do away with the same sexed parent. Freud called this situation the Oedipus complex.

Latency and Genital stage: from around age through puberty, the child's sexuality is largely suppressed, it becomes latent. Important events during this latency stage centre on expanding social contacts beyond the immediate family. With the advent of puberty, the child progresses into the genital stage. Sexual urges reappear and focus on the genitals once again. At this point, sexual energy is normally channelled toward peers of the other sex, rather than toward oneself as in the phallic stage.[22]

In arguing that the early years shape personality, Freud did not mean that personality development comes to an abrupt halt in the middle childhood. However, he maintained that the future developments are rooted in early, formative experiences and those significant conflicts in later years are replays of crises from childhood.

2.1.6 Evaluation

Freud's approach can be expounded in four main areas. The first is his strict application of determinism – the principle that every event has preceding causes – to the realm of the mental. The second and most distinctive feature is that he showed the distinction between conscious, preconscious, and unconscious. The instincts or drives are a third main feature of Freud's theory. The fourth main point in Freud's theory is his developmental account of individual human character.

---

[22] Weiten, 431.

Most of Freud's contemporaries were uncomfortable with his theory for at least three reasons. First, in arguing that people's behavior is governed by unconscious factors of which they are unaware of, Freud made the disconcerting suggestion that individuals are not masters of their own minds. Second, in claiming that our adult personalities are shaped by childhood experiences and other factors beyond one's control, he suggested that people are not master of their own destinies. Third, by emphasizing the great importance of how people cope with their sexual urges, he offended those who held the conservative, Victorian values of his time. Thus, Freud endured a great deal of criticism, condemnation, and outright ridicule, even after his work began to attract more favorable attention.

2.2 Carl Jung's Analytical Psychology

Although Freud modified his ideas in many ways during his 50 years of theory building, he expressed great displeasure when his disciples proposed their own revision. The relationship between Jung and Freud was ruptured irreparably when Jung could no longer accept the immense importance that Freud placed on sexuality. Jung called his new approach **analytical psychology** to differentiate it from Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Unlike Freud, Jung encouraged his followers to develop their own theoretical views.

2.2.1 Levels of The Psyche

Jung, like Freud, based his personality theory on the primary assumption that mind, or psyche, has both a conscious and an unconscious level. However, he strongly asserted that the most important portion of the unconscious springs, not from personal experiences of the individual, but from the distant past of human existence. The psyche, therefore, can be divided into the conscious and the unconscious, the latter being subdivided into the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious.

Conscious images are those that are sensed by the ego, whereas unconscious elements have no relationship with the ego. The ego, in Jung's view is more restrictive than it is in Freudian theory. Jung saw the ego as the centre of consciousness, but not the core of personality. The ego develops as a child becomes

aware of itself and evolves a sense of 'I' or 'me', but it should not grow to the point where it dominates the unconscious self. [23]

The **unconscious**, that part of the psyche that adds depth and completeness to personality, refers to all psychic processes that are not related to the ego. Unconsciousness includes all previously conscious images that have been repressed or have merely fallen below the threshold of consciousness. In addition, it comprises those psychic elements that have never been conscious. Many of these elements form the seeds of future consciousness, but some images are not capable of becoming conscious.[24]

The personal unconscious: "The top layer of the unconscious, which embraces all repressed, forgotten, or subliminally perceived experiences of the individual, is known as the personal unconscious".[25] Jung used the term personal because it pertains exclusively to one particular person. One's personal unconscious is formed by that individual's experiences and, for this reason, the personal unconscious of each human being is unique. Contents of the personal unconscious are called *complexes.* A complex is an emotionally toned conglomeration of associated ideas. A complex has a disproportionate influence on one's behavior, in the sense that the theme around which the complex is organized keeps recurring over and over again in one's life.

Collective unconscious: In contrast to the personal unconscious, which results from individual experiences, the collective unconscious has root in the ancestral past of the entire species. "The physical contents of the collective unconscious are inherited and pass from one generation to the next as psychic potential. The content of the collective unconscious do not lie dormant but are active and influence a person's thoughts, emotions, and actions".[26] They are revealed through their activity. Humans, like other animals, come into the world with inherited predispositions to act or react in certain ways if their present experiences touch upon these biologically based predispositions. For example, a man who falls in love at first sight may be greatly surprised and perplexed by his own reactions. Jung might suggest that the man's

---

[23] Feist, 163.

[24] Ibid., 163.

[25] Schultz, 25.

[26] G. Carl Jung, *The Integration of the Personality* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul plc, 1956), 52.

collective unconscious contained biologically based impressions of woman and that these impressions were activated when the man first saw his beloved.

2.2.2 Archetypes

"The ancient experiences contained in the collective unconscious are manifested or expressed in the form of image that Jung called archetypes".[27] The collective unconscious is by far the most important and influential part of the psyche and everything in it seeks outward manifestations. When the content of the collective unconscious are not recognized in consciousness, they are manifested in dreams, fantasies, images, and symbols. According to Jung, humans can learn about their future by studying these dreams, because they symbolize basic human nature, as it is hoped to be understood. Although Jung recognized the existence of many archetypes, he wrote extensively on only a few. These were the persona, the anima, the animus, the shadow, and the self.

Persona is the Latin word for mask, and Jung used this term to describe one's public self. The persona archetype develops because of humans' need to play a role in society. This is the part of the psyche by which we are known by other people. Jung points out that some people equate their persona with their entire psyche and that is a mistake. In a sense, the persona is supposed to deceive other people, because it presents to them only a small part of one's psyche.

The **anima** is the female component of the male psyche, which results from the experiences men have had with women through the eons. This archetype serves two purposes. First, it causes men to have feminine traits; second, it provides a framework within which, men interact with women. Because men's relationship with women has included being nurtured, being sexually involved, and just being a friend, all of these are contained in anima, and elements of each are projected on the women in one's lifetime. "**animus** is the masculine component of the female psyche. It furnishes the women with masculine traits and also with a framework that guides her relationship with men".[28]

The **shadow** is the darkest, deepest part of the psyche. It is the part of the collective unconscious that we inherit from our ancestors and contain all of the animal

---

[27] Bruno, 14.

[28] Hergenhahn, 71.

instincts. Because of the shadow, we have a strong tendency to be immoral, aggressive, and passionate. As with all of the archetypes, the shadow seeks outward manifestation and is projected onto the world symbolically as devils, or evil spirit. The **self** is the component of the psyche that attempts to harmonize all the other components. It represents the human striving for unity, wholeness, and integration of the total personality. When this integration has been achieved, the person is said to be self-actualized.[29]

2.2.3 Dynamics of The Psyche

We have seen that Jung divided the psyche into a conscious and an unconscious layer, with latter being further divided into the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. Now, we turn to a consideration of the dynamics of the psyche that is the nature of the energy that moves us. In this section we look at Jung's idea of libido.

Freud and Jung disagreed about the nature of the **libido**. Freud saw libido mainly as sexual energy. Jung felt that this view was too narrow and instead defined "the libido as general biologic life energy that is concentrated on different problems as they arise".[30] In the early years of life, according to Jung, libidinal energy is expended mainly on eating, elimination, and sex, but as the person becomes more proficient at satisfying these needs, libidinal energy is applied to the solution of more philosophical and spiritual needs. Thus for Jung, libido is the driving force behind the psyche (Jung's term for personality), which is focused on various needs as they arise, whether these needs are biologic or spiritual. Jung also talked about the *principle of equivalence*, which is essentially the first law of thermodynamics in physics. It states that energy is not lost to the personality but rather is shifted from one part to another. *The principle of entropy* is the second law of thermodynamics, which states that a constant tendency exists toward the equalization of energy within a system. According Jung, a tendency exists for all components of the psyche to have equal energy. For example, the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche would have equal energy and thus equal representation in one's life.

---

[29] Ibid., 72.

[30] Bruno, 43.

2.2.4 Psychological Types

Jung thought that there were two general orientations the psyche could take in relating to the world. One was inward, toward the subjective world of the individual; and other was outward, toward the external environment. Jung called these orientations **attitudes**; the former he labeled *introversion*, and the latter he labeled *extroversion*. The introvert tends to be quiet, imaginative, and more interested in ideas than in other people. The extravert tends to be sociable, outgoing, and interested in people and environmental events. No designation of worth should be placed on introversion or extraversion. Each tendency has strength as well as weakness but unfortunately, introverts and extraverts frequently under-value one another. Few people are either completely introverted or completely extraverted. Most have some elements of both attitudes; that is, they are influenced by both the subjective and the objective world.

Both introversion and extraversion can combine with any one or more of four functions, forming eight possible orientations or types. The four functions – sensations, thinking, feeling, and intuition. By combining the two attitudes and the four functions, Jung described eight different types of people, which are listed below.

ATTITUDES

Functions	Introversion	Extroversion
Thinking	Philosophers, Theoretical Scientists, Certain inventors.	Research Scientists, Accountants,Mathematicians.
Feeling	Subjective movie critics, Editorial writers.	Objective critics, Politicians, Real estate appraisers.
Sensation	Artists, Classical Musicians	Proof reader, House painter
Intuition	Mystics, Religious fanatics	Certain inventors, reformers

2.2.5 Stages of Development

Jung defined stages in terms of the focus of libidinal energy. Jung disagreed with Freud about the nature of the libido. Freud believed that the libido was mainly sexual in nature and how it was invested within the first five years of life determined,

to a large extent, what a person's adult personality would be like. Jung, conversely, thought that libidinal energy was directed simply toward whatever was important to the person at the time and what was important changed as a function of maturation. Jung's stages of development can be summarized as follows.

Childhood (from birth to adolescence): During the early portion of this period, libidinal energy is expanded on learning how to walk, talk, and other skills necessary for survival. After the fifth year, more and more libidinal energy is directed toward sexual activities and this focus of libidinal energy reaches its peak during adolescence.

Young Adulthood (from adolescence to about age forty): During this stage, libidinal energy is directed toward learning vocation, getting married, raising children, and relating in some way to community life. During this stage the individual tends to be outgoing, energetic, impulsive, and passionate.

Middle Age (from about age forty to the years of life): This stage of development was the most important for Jung. The person is transformed from an energetic, extroverted, and biologically oriented person to one with more cultural, philosophical, and spiritual values. The person is now much more concerned with wisdom and with life's meaning. The needs that must be satisfied during this stage are just as important as those of the preceding stages, but they are different kind of needs. Because it is during middle age that a person first begins to determine the meaning of life, it is a time when religious becomes important. "Jung believed that every person possesses a spiritual need, which must be satisfied, just as the need for food must be satisfied. Jung's definition of religion included any systematic attempt to deal with God, spirit, demons, laws, or ideal".[31]

The steady evolution of the psyche toward understanding, harmony, and wisdom is called *progression.* Progression occurs when libidinal energy causes growth. *Regression* occurs when libidinal energy 'flows backward' away from the external environment and inward toward the unconscious.[32] Regression does not mean a cessation of progression. But rather regression comes as an aid for progression. For example, if one confronts a barrier in life and is, therefore frustrated, one may regress

---

[31] Hergenhahn, 75.

[32] Feist, 175.

in the unconscious and that will solve the problem. Jung suggested that time to time proper use of unconscious could be beneficial.

2.2.6 Evaluating Psychodynamic Perspectives

The psychodynamic approach has provided a number of far-reaching, truly grand theories of personality. These theories yielded some bold new insights when they were first presented. Although one might argue about exact details of interpretation, psychodynamic theory and research have demonstrated (1) that unconscious forces can influence behavior, (2) that internal conflict often plays a key role in generating psychological distress, and (3) that early childhood experiences can influence adult personality. Many widely used concepts in psychology emerged out of psychodynamic theories, including the unconscious, defense mechanism, and the inferiority complex.

In addition to being praised, psychodynamic formulation have also been criticised on several grounds, including the following:

1. Poor testability: Scientific investigations require testable hypotheses. Psychodynamic ideas often been too vague to permit a clear scientific test. For instance, no one has figured out how to either prove or disprove the existence of the collective unconscious described by Jung.

2. Inadequate evidence: The empirical evidence on psychodynamic theories has often been characterized as 'inadequate'. These theories depend too greatly on clinical case studies in which it's much too easy for clinicians to see what they expect to see.

3. Sexism: many critics have argued that psychodynamic theories are characterized by a sexist bias against woman. Freud thought that females tend to develop weaker superego and to be more prone to neurosis than men. He dismissed female patient's reports of sexual molestation during childhood as mere fantasies. The sex bias in modern Freudian theories has been reduced considerably.[33]

---

[33] Weiten, 435

CHAPTER – 3

BANDURA'S SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY

More than any other personality theorist, Bandura has evolved a model of human functions based on careful research and cautious speculation. His theorizing is never far ahead of his base of knowledge. To some extent, he has built his model on the work of earlier learning theorists such as Clark, Rotter, and Skinner. As a learning theorist, Albert Bandura agrees with skinner that behaviour, in its normal as well as abnormal manifestations, is learned. Bandura's approach is a truly social kind of learning theory that investigates behaviour as it is formal and modified in a social context. He argues that one cannot expect findings of experiments that involve no social interaction to be relevant to the everyday world, in which few people function in social isolation.

"Skinner's approach stresses that reinforcement is a necessary condition for the acquition, maintenance, and modification of behaviour. A person's behaviour changes as a result of the consequences of the behaviour – the reinforcement experienced directly by the individual." [34] While Bandura recognizes that much learning does take place as a result of such reinforcement, he also stresses that virtually all forms of behaviour can be learned in the absence of directly experienced reinforcement. His approach is sometimes labelled observational learning to indicate the role in learning of observing the behaviour of other people. "**The social cognition theory** of Albert Bandura, however, takes fortuity into consideration. Personality is modelled by an interaction of behaviour, personal factors, and environment, but chance frequently plays a role in determining which environment we live in and even which behaviour we will enact."[35]

Bandura's theory differs from Skinner's views in several fundamental ways. Unlike Skinner, Bandura believes that responses need not occur in order to be learned. According to Bandura, we can learn by observing another person's performance. Bandura insists that behaviour is not ultimately a function of the environment but of the interaction among the environment, the behaviour of the person, and personal factors, especially cognition.

---

[34] Schultz, 304.
[35] Feist, 393.

His theory emphasizes, "**reciprocal determinism**, in which external determinism of behaviour (such as rewards and punishment) and internal determinism (such as beliefs, thoughts, and expectations) are part of a system of interacting influences that affect both behaviour and other parts of the system."[36] In Bandura's theory of reciprocal determinism, the self system and learning are interrelated, but for convenience we discuss them separately.

3.1 Reciprocal Determinism

Skinner held that behaviour is determined by the environment. But Bandura adopts quite a different stance. In his theory, a reciprocal interaction among three variables – the environment, the behaviour, and the person – is responsible for his action. "The position taken by the social cognitive theorist is called reciprocal determinism, which means person variables, situation variables, and behaviour all continuously interact with one another." [37] Because people possess cognitive capacities of memory and anticipation, they are able to influence both their environment and their own behaviour.

Cognition determines, at least partially, which environmental events people will attend, and how they will organise these events for future use. Cognition, however, is not an autonomous entity, independent of behaviour and environment. Bandura criticized those theorists who attributed the source of human behaviour to internal forces such as instincts, drives, needs, or intentions. Cognition itself is determined, being formed by both behaviour and environment. Thus, Bandura sees personal conduct in terms of reciprocal determinism, a term that suggests a triadic interaction of environment, behaviour, and person.

Reciprocal determinism is represented schematically below, where '**B**' signifies behaviour; '**E**' is the external environment; and '**P**' represents the person, including physical characteristics such as sex, social position, and physical attractiveness, but also the internal state of cognition, including thought, memory, judgement, foresight, and so on.

B

---

[36] Reichmann, 214.
[37] Hergenhahn, 314.
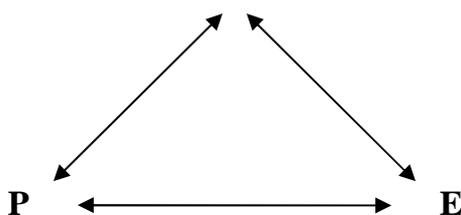
Bandura's concept of Reciprocal Determinism. Human Function is a product of the interaction of (B) *behaviour,* (P) *personal variables, and* (E) *environmental events.*

3.2 Self System

Bandura deviates from Skinner's radical behaviourism in postulating the existence of a Self System, which acts upon both the environment and behaviour. "Bandura believes that behaviour is generally more varied than it appears and that different behaviours should not be attributed to single or dual motives like striving for success as Adler says, or sex and aggression as Freud says. If behaviour were regulated by a single motive, people would be more consistent."[38] For example, a person who is usually moral would never behave immorally, but we know that this frequently happens. Gordon Allport argued that people possess personal dispositions or traits that have the power to render divergent stimuli functionally equivalent. Bandura would not countenance such an argument. An aggressive person, for example, is not always aggressive because the environment does not always reinforce aggressive behaviour. Differential experiences with reward and punishment, to a large degree, shape one's behaviour.

Bandura uses the term 'self system' carefully. It "refers to cognitive structures that provide reference mechanisms and to a set of sub functions for the perception, evaluation, and regulation of behaviour". This definition implies that people are capable of observing and symbolizing their own behaviour and of evaluating it on the basis of memories of past reinforced or nonreinforced behaviour as well as anticipated future consequences. Then, using this cognition as a reference point, they are able to exercise some measure of self regulation.

3.3 Self–Regulation

Although, people have no independent self with the capacity to manipulate the environment at will, they are capable of some degree of self–regulation. By using reflective thought, they can manipulate their environments and produce consequences

---

[38] Feist, 400.

of their actions. These consequences feed back into the reciprocal determinism paradigm and enable people to partially regulate their own behaviour. Three component processes are involved in self–regulation behaviour: self observation, judgemental processes, and self-reaction.[39]

3.3.1 Self–Observation

The first requirement for self–regulation is self observation of performance. We must be able to monitor our own performance, even though the attention we give to it need not be complete or even accurate. We attend selectively to some aspects of our behaviour and ignore others altogether. What we observe depends on interests and other pre-existing self conceptions. In achievement situation, such as painting pictures, playing games, or taking examinations, we pay attention to the quality, quantity, speed, or originality of our work; in interpersonal situation, such as meeting new acquaintances or reporting on events, we monitor the sociability or morality of our conduct.[40]

3.3.2 Judgemental Process

Self-observation alone does not provide a sufficient basis for regulating our own behaviour. We must also evaluate our performance. This second, or *judgemental process* helps people regulate their behaviour through the process of cognitive mediation. We are capable not only of reflective self-awareness but also of judging the worth of our action on the basis of goals we have set for ourselves. More specifically, the judgmental process depends on personal standards, referential performance, and performance attribution.

Personal standards allow us to evaluate our performance without comparing them to the conduct of others. Personal standards, however, are a limited source of evaluation. For most of our activities, we evaluate our performances by comparing them to a standard of reference. Students compare their test scores to those of their classmates, and the bridge player judges personal skill against that of others. In addition, we use our own previous levels of accomplishment as a reference for

---

[39] A. Bandura, *A Social Cognitive Theory* (New York: Ronald press, 1984), 439.
[40] Ibid., 440.

evaluating present performance. Also, we may judge our performance by comparing it to that of a single individual, a brother, sister, parent, or even a hated rival.[41]

Besides, personal and reference standards, the judgemental process is also dependent upon the overall value we place on an activity. Finally, "self-regulation also depends on how we judge the causes of our behaviour, that is, performance attribution."[42] If we believe that our success is due to our own efforts, we will take pride in our accomplishments and tend to work hare to attain our goals. However, if we attribute our performance to external factors, we will not derive as much self-satisfaction and will probably not put forth strenuous effort to attain our goals. Conversely, if we believe that we are responsible for our own failures or inadequate performance, we will work more readily towards self-regulation than if we are convinced that our shortcomings are due to factors beyond our control.

3.3.3 Self-Reaction

The third and final component of the self-regulatory function is self-reaction. We respond positively or negatively to our behaviour depending on how it measures up to our personal standards. That is, we create incentives for our own actions through self-reinforcement or self-punishment. For example, a diligent student may reward herself for completing a reading assignment by watching her favourite television program. We set standards for performance that, when met tend to regulate behaviour by such self-produced rewards as pride and self satisfaction. When we fail to meet our standards, our behaviour is followed by self-dissatisfaction or self-criticism.

3.4 Self-Efficacy

How we will act in a particular situation depends on the reciprocity of environmental and cognitive conditions, especially those cognitive factors that relate to our beliefs that we can or cannot execute the behaviour necessary to effect a successful change in that situation. In the triadic reciprocal determinism model, this postulates that the environment, behaviour, and person have an interactive influence on one another. Self-efficacy refers to the person factor. Although it has a powerful influence on our actions, it is not their sole determinant rather, self-efficacy combines with environment, prior behaviour, and other personal variables to produce behaviour.

---

[41] Feist, 402.
[42] Bandura, 441.

3.4.1 Self-Efficacy Defined

Bandura defined self-efficacy as "people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over events that affect their lives."[43] People with high self-efficacy believe that they can do something to alter environmental events; those with low self-efficacy regard themselves as essentially incapable of executing consequential behaviour.

Self-efficacy is not the expectation of our action's outcomes or effects. Bandura distinguished between efficacy expectations and outcome expectation. Efficacy refers to people's confidence that they have the ability to perform certain behaviour, whereas an outcome expectancy refers to one's prediction of the likely consequences of that behaviour. Besides being different from outcome expectancies, self-efficacy must be distinguished from several other concepts. First, efficacy does not refer to the ability to execute basic motor skills such as walking, reaching, or grasping. Also, personal efficacy does not imply that designated behaviours can be performed without anxiety, stress, or fear; it is merely our judgement as to whether or not we can execute the required actions. Finally, judgements of efficacy are not the same as levels of aspiration. Heroin addicts, for example, often aspire to be drug-free but may have little confidence in their ability to successfully break the habit.

3.5 Sources of Self-Efficacy

Personal efficacy is acquired, enhanced, or decreased through any one or combination of four sources: (1) enactive attainments; (2) vicarious experiences; (3) verbal persuasion; and (4) physiological arousal. With each method, information about oneself and the environment is cognitively processed and, together with recollections of previous experiences, alter perceived self-efficacy. Besides these four sources, efficacy is affected by one's internal standards of conduct.

The most influential source of self-efficacy is *enactive attainments* or performance. In general, successful performance raises efficacy expectancies, whereas failure tends to lower them. There are several corollaries to this general statement. First, successful performance raises self-efficacy in proportion to the difficulty of the task. Highly skilled tennis players gain little self-efficacy by

---

[43] Weiten, 425.

defeating clearly inferior opponents, but they gain much by performing well against superior opponents. Second, task successfully accomplished by oneself are more efficacious than those completed with the help of others. Another corollary is that occasional failure has little effect on efficacy, especially for people with a general high expectancy of success. However, people with low efficacy seldom give themselves credit even for these occasional successful performances.

The second source of efficacy is *vicarious experience*. Our self-efficacy is raised when we observe others succeed, but it is lowered when we see another person of equal competence fail. When the model we observe is dissimilar to us, this vicarious experience has little effect on our self-efficacy. Vicarious experiences are strongest when people have had little prior experience with the activity. For example, if an experienced golfer and a novice both watch a professional golfer correctly execute the proper golf swing, the beginning golfer will have the greater increase in self-efficacy.

"Self-efficacy can also be acquired through *verbal persuasion*. The effects of this source are limited, but under proper conditions verbal persuasion can raise or lower self-efficacy."[44] First, we must believe the persuader. Exhortations from a credible source have more efficacious power than those from an incredible person. Bandura hypothesized that the efficacious power of suggestion is directly related to the perceived status and authority of the persuader. Verbal persuasion is most effective when combined with successful performance. Persuasion may convince someone to attempt an activity, and, if performance is successful, both the accomplishment and the subsequent verbal rewards will increase future efficacy.

"The final source of efficacy is *physiological arousal*. Strong emotion ordinarily lowers performance, so that when people experience intense fear or acute anxiety they are likely to have lower efficacy expectancies."[45] Most of us, when not afraid, have the ability to successfully handle snakes. We merely have to grasp the snake firmly behind the head, but for most of us, the fear that accompanies snake handling is debilitating and greatly lower our performance expectancy. Psychotherapists have long recognised that a reduction is anxiety or an increase in physical relaxation can facilitate performance.

---

[44] Ibid., 425.
[45] Feiss, 403.

Self-efficacy is one of several self-influences that affect our behaviour. For Bandura, the source of control does not reside in the environment, but in the reciprocation of environmental, behavioural, and personal factors.

3.6 Observational Learning

Bandura believes that observation allows us to learn without performing any behaviour. We observe natural phenomena, plants, animals, the motion of the moon and stars, and so forth; but especially important to social-cognitive theory is the assumption that we learn through observing the behaviour of other people. He departs from Skinner as well as Dollar and Millar in his belief that reinforcement is not essentially to learning. True, reinforcement facilitates learning, but it is not a necessary condition for it.

Bandura believes that observational learning is much more efficient than learning through direct experience. By observing others we are spared countless responses that might be followed by punishment. Children observe characters on television, for example, and repeat what they hear or see. They need not enact random behaviours, hoping that some of them will be rewarded.

3.6.1 Modelling

The core of observational learning is *modelling*. Learning through modelling involves adding and subtracting from the observed behaviour and generalizing from one observation to another. In other words, modelling involves cognitive processes and is not simply mimicry or imitation. It is more than matching the actions of another and involves symbolically representing information and storing it for use at a future time.[46]

Several factors determine whether or not we will learn from a model in any particular situation. First, the characteristics of the model are important. We are more likely to model competent individuals rather than unskilled ones. Second, the consequences of the behaviour being modelled may have an effect on the observer. The greater the value the observer places on the behaviour, the more likely that behaviour will be learned. Also, learning may be facilitated when the observer views

---

[46] Ibid., 403.

a model receiving punishment, for example, seeing another person receive a severe shock from touching an electric wire teaches a valuable lesson.

3.6.2 Process Governing Observational Learning

Bandura recognized four processes that govern observational learning: attention, representation, behavioural production, and motivation.

i) Attention: Before we can model another person, we must attend to that person. "First, because we have more opportunities to observe individuals with whom we frequently associate, we are most likely to attend to these people. Second, attractive models are more likely to be observed than unattractive ones."[47]

ii) Representation: In order for observation to lead to new response patterns, those patterns must be symbolically represented in memory. Symbolic representation need not be verbal because some observations are retained in imagery and can be summoned in the absence of the physical model. This process is especially important in infancy when verbal skills are not yet developed.

iii) Behavioural Production: After attending to a model and retaining what we have observed, we then produce the behaviour. In converting cognitive representations into appropriate actions, we must ask ourselves several questions about the behaviour to be modelled. First we ask, "how can I do this?" While performing, we monitor ourselves with the question, "what am I doing?" Bandura, however, found that self-monitoring by use of a video recorder facilitates the learning of some motor skills.

iv) Motivation: Observational learning is most effective when learners are motivated to perform the modelled behaviour. Attention and representation can lead to the acquition of learning, but performance is facilitated by motivation to enact that particular behaviour. Even though observations of others may teach us how to do something, we may have no desire to perform the necessary action. In summary, modelling is facilitated by observing appropriate activities, properly coding the events

---

[47] Gregory Kimble, *Principle of Psychology* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc, 1990), 234.

for representation in memory, actually performing the behaviour, and being sufficiently motivated.

3.7 Dysfunctional Behaviour

Bandura's concept of reciprocal determinism assumes that behaviour is learned as a result of the interaction of person, behaviour, and environment. Dysfunctional behaviour is no exception, being determined by a mutual interaction of the person, including cognition and neurophysiological processes; the environment, including interpersonal relations and socioeconomic conditions; and behavioural factors, especially previous experiences with reinforcement. Bandura's concept of dysfunctional behaviour lends itself most readily to depressive reaction, phobias, and aggressive behaviours.

3.7.1 Depressive Reaction

High personal standards and goals can lead to achievement and self-satisfaction. However, when people set their goals too high, they are likely to fail. Failure frequently leads to depression, and depressed people often undervalue their own accomplishments. The result is chronic misery, feeling of worthlessness, and lack of purposefulness.

3.7.2 Phobias

Phobias are fears that are strong enough and pervasive enough to have severe debilitating effects on one's daily life. Phobias are learned by direct contact, inappropriate generalization, and especially by observational experiences. They are difficult to extinguish because the phobic person simply avoids the threatening object. Unless the fearsome object is somehow encountered, the phobia will endure indefinitely. Bandura credited television and other news media for generating many of our fears. Well-published rapes, armed robberies, or murders can terrorize a community, causing people to live more confined lives behind locked doors.

3.7.3 Aggressive Behaviours

"Aggressive behaviour takes place when one organism makes a hostile attack, physical or verbal, upon another organism or thing."[48] Another way of looking at aggressive behaviour is to explain it in terms of observational learning, learning by watching model display behaviour. Children who have aggressive parents or siblings are likely to copy some of their behaviour. This seems to be truer of pre-schoolers and emotionally disturbed individuals than it does of emotionally mature adults. Bandura contends that aggressive behaviour is acquired through observation of others, direct experiences with positive and negative reinforcements, and bizarre beliefs.

3.8 Evaluation

Bandura has evolved his social-cognitive theory by carefully balancing the two principal components of theory building – innovative speculation and accurate observation. Unlike many earlier personality theorists, namely Freud, Jung, and Sullivan, who based their observations on clinical experiences, and contrary to skinner's ideas, which were built largely on studies of animals, Bandura's personality theory rests on data carefully obtained from dozens of studies conducted by him and his associations using human subjects.

As with other theories, the usefulness of Bandura's personality theory rests on its ability to generate research and to organize knowledge. In addition, it must serve as a practical guide to action, be internally consistent, and parsimonious.

Critics of this approach argue that social-cognitive theory deals with only the behaviour aspects of personality – a person's overt behaviour. This emphasis on overt behaviour misses or ignores our distinctly human aspects - conscious and unconscious motivating forces.

Whatever the eventual status of social-cognitive theory in the study of personality, there is no doubt that it is a potent force in psychology. Growing numbers of psychologists are modelling their behaviour after that of Bandura and are evidently finding sufficient reinforcement for so doing.

---

[48] Bruno, 6.

CHAPTER 4

ALLPORT'S DISPOSITIONAL THEORY

Allport served two very important purposes in the study of personality; he helped to bring it into the mainstream of scientific psychology and he formulated his own controversial and useful theory of personality, in which the concept of traits plays a prominent role. In addition to making original contributions, he incorporated insights and ideas from other approaches, to form a truly eclectic theory of personality that attempts to deal with the whole person as a unique and dynamic functioning individual.

Allport took issues with Freud on several crucial points. First, he argued that the role of the unconscious had been exaggerated, Allport did not believe that unconscious forces dominate or even play a major role in the personality of the normal mature adult. Rather, he saw the healthy, normal individual as functioning in rational and conscious terms, aware of and controlling many of the forces that motivated him/her. A second point of disagreement with Freud was over the role of the past in controlling the present. In Allport's view, human beings are not prisoners of childhood conflicts and experiences. Rather, we are guided much more by the present than by the past. His whole focus in the study of personality was on contemporary influences. Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Allport's approach to personality is his insistence on the uniqueness of the individual personality as defined by the traits that characterise each of us. Personality, he argued, is not general or universal in nature. Rather, it is highly particular and specific to each individual.

In addition to formulating his theory, Allport, along with his students performed important empirical research on a variety of aspects of personality. He also developed several tests of assessing personality that are still very much in use in both the clinic and the laboratory. Thus, Allport's influence has been keenly felt in psychology, and he has received nearly every honour field has to offer.

4.1 Personality Defined

Few psychologists have been as painstaking and exhaustive as Allport in defining terms. His pursuit of a definition of personality is a classic. He traced the etymology of the word *persona* back to early Greek roots, including the old Latin and

Etruscan meanings. As we saw in chapter 1, the word *persona*, which refers to the theatrical mask used in ancient Greek drama during the first and second centuries before Christ. After tracing the history of the term, Allport spelled out 49 definition of personality as used in theology, philosophy, law, sociology, and psychology. He then offered a 50th definition, which in 1937 was "the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment."[49]

By 1961, he had changed the last phrase to read 'that determine his characteristic behaviour and thought'. The change was significant and reflected Allport's penchant for accuracy. By 1961 he realized that the phrase 'adjustments to his environment' could imply that people merely adapt to their environment. In his later definition, Allport conveys the idea that behaviour is expressive as well as adaptive. People not only adjust to their environment, but also to reflect on it and interact with it in such a way as to cause their environment to adjust to them.

Allport chose each phrase of his definition carefully so that each word conveys precisely what he wanted to say. The term *dynamic organization* implies an integration or interrelatedness of the various aspects of personality. Personality is organized and patterned. Personality is not a static organization; it is constantly growing or changing. The term *psychological* emphasises the importance of both the psychological and the physical aspects of personality. Allport defined the word *system* as a complex of elements in mutual interaction; system implies activity either as potentiality or as action itself.

By *characteristic* Allport wished to imply individual or unique. The word 'character' originally meant a marking or engraving, terms that give flavour to what Allport meant by characteristic. All persons stamp their unique mark or engraving on their personality, and their characteristic behaviour and thought set them apart from all other people. Characteristics are marked with a unique engraving, a stamp, or marking that no one else can duplicate. The words behaviour and thought simply refer to anything the person does. They are omnibus terms meant to include thoughts as well as external behaviours such as words and actions.[50]

Allport's comprehensive definition of personality suggests that human beings are both product and process; people have some organized structure while, at the same

---

[49] Feist, 530.
[50] Ibid., 531.

time, they possess the capability of change. Pattern co-exists with growth, order with diversification.

4.2 Allport's Concept of Trait

Allport defined a trait as "a neuropsychic structure having the capacity to render many stimuli functionally equivalent, and to initiate and guide equivalent forms of adaptive and expressive behaviour."[51] Traits account for the consistency in human behaviour. Because no two people possess exactly the same pattern of traits, each confronts environmental experiences differently. A person possessing a strong trait of friendliness will react differently to a stranger than a person possessing a strong trait of suspiciousness. In both cases the stimulus is the same but the reactions are different, because different traits are involved.

Traits cannot be observed directly, and therefore their existence must be inferred. Allport suggested the following criteria for assuming the evidence of a trait. "The frequency with which a person adopts a certain type of adjustment is one criterion of a trait. A second criterion is the range of situation in which he adopts this same mode of acting. A third criterion is the intensity of his reactions in keeping with this preferred pattern of behaviour."[52]

Traits Are Not Habits: Habits are more specific than traits. For example, one may have the habits of brushing one's teeth, putting on clean clothing in the morning, brushing one's hair, washing one's hand, and cleaning one's nail. One has all these habits, however, because one has the trait of cleanliness. In other words, a trait synthesises a number of specific habits. This can be diagrammed as follows:

Specific Habits	Trait
Brushing Hair	
Brushing Teeth	Cleanliness
Washing Hands	
Cleaning Nails	

Traits Are Not Attitudes: Attitudes, like habits, are more specific than traits. A person has an attitude toward something; for instance, a certain person, a brand of automobile, or travel. A trait, conversely, is much more general. For example, if a person is basically aggressive, he or she will tend to act aggressively toward strangers,

---

[51] Hergenhahn, 182.
[52] Ibid., 182.

acquaintances, animals, world affairs, and the like. A second distinction between attitudes and traits is that attitudes usually imply evaluation; that is attitudes are usually for or against something; they are either positive or negative; and they imply either acceptance or rejection of something. Traits, conversely, are responsible for all behaviour and cognitions whether or not evaluation is involved.

4.3 Structure of Personality

The structure of personality refers to its basic units or building blocks. To Freud the basic units are instincts. To Allport, the most important structures are those that permit the description of the person in terms of individual characteristics. Thus, the two basic units of personality are personal dispositions and the proprium.

4.3.1 Personal Dispositions

In a conversation with Richard Evans, Allport rejected the label of trait psychologist because he believed that the term *trait* implies a general characteristic held in common by several people. Allport was careful to distinguish between *common trait*s and individual traits, or *personal dispositions*. Common traits are those aspects of human personality that tend themselves to inter-individual comparisons. They provide the means by which the characteristics of people within a given culture can be compared. Whereas common traits are important for studies that make comparisons among people, personal dispositions are of even greater importance because they permit researches to study a single individual.

Allport used the term personal dispositions rather than individual traits because it is more descriptive and less likely to be confused with common traits. He defined a *personal disposition* as "a generalized neuropsychic structure, with the capacity to render many stimuli functionally equivalent, and to initiate and guide consistent forms of adaptive and stylistic behaviour."[53] The most important distinction between a personal disposition and a common trait is indicated by the parenthetical phrase 'peculiar to the individual.' Personal dispositions are individual; common traits are shared by several people.

How many personal dispositions does person have? This question cannot be answered without reference to the degree of dominance the personal disposition has in the individual's life. If we count those personal dispositions that are central to a

---

[53] G.W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1961), 373.

person, then each person probably has 10 or fewer. However, if all tendencies or dispositions are included, then each person may have hundreds of personal dispositions.

i) Levels of Personal Dispositions: Allport placed personal dispositions on a continuum from those that are most central to those that are of only peripheral importance to a person.

Cardinal Traits: Some people possess an eminent trait or ruling passion so outstanding that it dominates their lives. Allport called these personal disposition cardinal traits. They are so obvious that they cannot be hidden; nearly every action in a person's life revolves around this one cardinal disposition. Most people do not have a cardinal trait, but those few people who do are often known by that single characteristics.[54]

Central Traits: Few people have cardinal dispositions, but everyone has several central traits. These central personal dispositions include the five to ten most outstanding characteristics around which a person's life focuses. Allport described central dispositions as 'those that would be listed in an accurate letter of recommendation written by someone who knew the person quite well'.

Secondary Traits: Less conspicuous but far greater in number than central traits are the secondary traits or dispositions. Everyone has many secondary dispositions. These are traits that are not central to the personality, yet they occur with some regularity and are responsible for much of one's specific behaviour.

The three levels of personal dispositions or traits are, of course, arbitrary points on a continuous scale from most appropriate to least appropriate. Cardinal dispositions, which are exceedingly prominent in a person, shade into central dispositions, which are less dominating, but which nevertheless mark the person as unique. Central personal dispositions, which guide much of a person's adaptive and stylistic behaviour, blend into secondary dispositions, which are less descriptive of that individual. We cannot say, however, that one person's secondary dispositions are less intense than another person's central personal dispositions. Inter-person comparisons are inappropriate to personal dispositions, and any attempt to make such comparison transforms the personal dispositions into common traits.

---

[54] Feist, 532.

ii) Motivational and Stylistic Traits: All personal dispositions are dynamic in the sense that they have motivational power. Nevertheless, some are much more strongly felt than others, and Allport called these intensely experienced personal dispositions motivational traits. These strongly felt trait receive their motivation from basic needs and drives. Allport referred to personal dispositions that are less intensely experienced as stylistic traits, even though these traits possess some motivational power. Stylistic traits guide action, whereas motivational traits initiate action.[55] An example of a stylistic personal disposition might be impeccable personal appearance. People are motivated to dress because of basic need to stay warm, but the manner in which they attire themselves is determined by their stylistic personal dispositions.

Whether motivational or stylistic, some personal dispositions are close to the core of personality, whereas others are more on the periphery. Those that are at the center of personality are experienced by the person as being an important part of the self. They are the ones an individual refers to in such terms as, 'this is me' or 'this is mine'. All characteristics that are peculiarly mine belong to *proprium*.

4.3.2 Proprium

Allport used the term *proprium* to refer to those behaviours and characteristics that we regard as warm, central, and important in our lives. The proprium is not the whole personality because many characteristics and behaviours of a person are not warm and central; rather they exist on the periphery of personality. These non-appropriate behaviours include – basic drives and needs that are ordinarily met and satisfied without much trouble; tribal customs such as saying 'hello' to people, wearing clothes, and driving on the right side of the road; and habitual behaviours such as smoking and brushing one's teeth, that are performed automatically and that are not crucial to the person's sense of the self.

As the warm center of personality, the proprium includes those aspects of a person that are regarded as important to a sense of self-identity and self-enhancement. The proprium includes a person's values, as well as that part of the conscience that is personal and consistent with one's adult beliefs. A generalized conscience may be

---

[55] Allport, 52.

only peripheral to a person's sense of personhood and thus outside that person's proprium.

4.4 Growth of Personality

Allport's theory of personality rests on a dual system of motivation. People are driven by both the need to adjust to their environment and by the tendency to grow or to become more and more self-actualized. Adjustment needs and growth needs exist side by side within the same person, and any adequate theory of personality, Allport said, must take into considerations the fact that people are both reactive and proactive.

4.5 The Development of Personality

In view of Allport's strong belief that there is a dichotomous rather than a functionally continuous relationship between the personality of the child and the adult – that the personality of the mature adult is more a function of the present and future than of the past – it is perhaps surprising to find any expression of interest on his part in childhood and the developmental aspects of personality.

Allport described the infant as "a purely pleasure seeking, destructive, totally selfish, impatient, and dependent. The genetic raw materials of physique, temperament, and intelligence, bases of an eventual personality, are present, but there exists in infancy little of what could be called a personality. The infant operates in accord with drives and reflexes concerned with reducing tensions and pain and maximizing pleasures"[56].

Of vital importance during this period is the attainment of adequate affection and security, primarily from the mother. If the child is successful in having these needs met, then positive psychological growth will follow, along the lines noted in the discussion of the proprium. Motivations are free to be transformed into autonomous propriate strivings, selfhood and the ego begin to differentiate and grow, a network or pattern of personal dispositions is formed, and a mature, normal adult is the inevitable result.

Under these conditions, the individual changes from a tension-reducing, biologically dominated organism to more of a psychological organism, in which motivations are divorced from those of childhood and become oriented and in which

---

[56] Ibid., 54.

the characteristics of maturity develop. In this sense, the adult personality is discontinuous with that of the child. It grows out of childhood, to be sure, but is no longer dictated to or dominated by the nature of childhood drives.

This is what happens in the development of the normal personality – one whose needs for affection and security were well met in infancy. Quite a different picture emerges, however, in the case where those needs are thwarted and frustrated. In that situation the child becomes insecure, aggressive, demanding, jealous and totally self-centered. As a result, psychological growth is stunned and the person continues to function at the level of infantile drives and conflicts. Motives do not become functionally autonomous but continue to be tied to their original conditions. The proprium does not develop, nor do unique traits and the personality as a whole remains undifferentiated, as it was in infancy.

Such a person, as an adult, is considered by Allport to be mentally ill. In this case, there is not a dichotomy between the personalities of adulthood and childhood. They remain one and the same in form. Allport was vague on the crucial question of whether such a person might be able to counteract or overcome unfortunate childhood experiences. He was much more interested in the positive growth of the normal, mature adult and had relatively little to say about the neurotic.

4.6 Motivation

Allport contended that an adequate theory of motivation must consider that peripheral motives and propriate strivings are not of the same kind. Peripheral motives are those that reduce a need, where as propriate striving seek to maintain tension and disequilibrium. Adult behaviour is both reactive and proactive, and an adequate theory of motivation must be able to explain both. Allport claimed that the theories of unchanging motives are incomplete because they are limited to an explanation of reactive behaviour. The mature person, however, is not motivated merely to seek pleasure and reduce pain but to acquire new systems of motivation that are functionally independent from their original motives.

4.6.1 Functional Autonomy

Allport introduced a motivational concept that he felt satisfied the foregoing requirements. This was functional autonomy, which he defined as "any acquired

system of motivation in which the tensions involved are not of the same kind as the antecedent tensions from which the acquired system developed".[57]

Functional autonomy, which is probably Allport's most famous concept, simply means that the reasons why an adult now engages in some form of behaviour are not the same reasons that originally caused him/her to engage in that behaviour. In other words, past motives are not functionally related to present motives.[58] Allport believed that when motives become part of the proprium they were pursued for their own sake and not for external encouragement or reward. Such motives are self-sustaining because they have become part of the person. To say that healthy adults pursue goals because they are rewarded for doing so was, to Allport, ridiculous.

Allport distinguished between two kinds of functional autonomy. i) *Preservative functional autonomy* refers to repetitious activities in which one blindly engages and that once served a purpose but no longer do so.[59] These activities occur independently of reward and independently of the past. ii) *Propriate functional autonomy* refers to an individual's interests, values, goals, attitudes, and sentiments.

4.6.2 Conscious and Unconscious Motivation

More than any other personality theorists, Allport emphasized the importance of conscious motivation; healthy adults are generally aware of what they are doing and their reasons for doing it. However, Allport did not ignore the existence or even importance of unconscious processes. He recognized the fact that some motivation is driven by hidden impulses and sublimated drives. He believed, for example, that most symptomatic behaviours are automatic repetitions, usually self-defeating, and motivated by unconscious tendencies. They often originate in childhood and retain a childish flavour into adult years.

For the healthy individual, however, consciousness is in control of behaviour, Allport insisted that normal behaviour is functionally autonomous and is motivated by conscious processes that are not only separate from unconscious motivation, but have their own ignition and spark. In summary, psychologically healthy adults are

---

[57] Ibid., 229.
[58] Hergenhahn, 190.

[59] Ibid., 191.

motivated principally by conscious thoughts, with unconscious processes playing only a minor role in their behaviour.[60]

4.7 The Healthy Personality

Allport say, a dichotomy between the psychologically healthy or mature personality and the one who is unhealthy or neurotic. Because, healthy individuals are motivated by conscious processes, they are more flexible and autonomous than the unhealthy who remain dominated by unconscious motives that spring from childhood experiences. Mature people are also characterised by activity, security, and freedom of choice. Ordinarily, they have experienced a relatively trauma-free childhood, even though their later years may be tempered by conflict and suffering. Healthy individuals are not without idiosyncrasies. In fact, individuality and uniqueness would be expected. Age is not requisite for maturity, although persons seem to become even healthy as they get older.

4.8 Religion

Allport believed that a religious orientation often characterizes the healthy adult personality. He believed, however, that embracing some forms of religion was beneficial and embracing other forms was harmful. In other words, for Allport, there was healthy religion and unhealthy religion.

Extrinsic religion is unhealthy religion. It is immature and is often a carryover from childhood. Extrinsic religion is often embraced because it is superficially useful. For example, membership in a church can be used to make business contacts or to become a respected member of the community. Extrinsic religion tends to be a devise factor in a person's life rather than a unifying them. It lends support to exclusions, prejudices, hatreds that negate all our criteria of maturity.

Intrinsic religion is healthy religion. It motivates a person to seek and follow the value underlying all reality for its own sake and as an end in itself; facilitates the realization that many important experiences transcend one's own existence. Intrinsic religion encourages identification with all of humanity, not just with those who share one's beliefs. By providing a means by which a person can relate meaningfully to the

---

[60] Schultz, 502.

totality of existence, intrinsic religion provides the kind of unifying theme that characterizes the healthy, mature adult personality.

4.9 Evaluation

More than any theorist we have discussed, Allport saw each person as unique. Although common traits connote some degree of universality in our behaviour, our individual traits or personal dispositions define our nature much more clearly. However, Allport's theory has not been very successful in stimulating research, for several reasons. His stress on idiographic research goes against the main current of thought of contemporary psychology. Allport's insistence on studying only healthy adult subjects is also at variance with the majority position in research in clinical psychology, which emphasizes the study of the neurotic and psychotic.

In spite of these points of criticism, Allport's theory has been well recognized and received. His work has not been ignored by those studying and writing about personality, as has been the case with other theorists. His approach to the definition and assessment of traits has found wide acceptance among psychologists; indeed, many feel it is his greatest contribution to the study of personality.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allport, G. W. *Pattern and Growth in Personality.* New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1961.

Atkinson, Rita. L. *Hilgard's Introduction to Psychology.* 3rd ed. New York: Aarcourt College, 1981.

Bandura, A. *A Social Cognitive Theory.* New York: Ronald P, 1984.

Bruno Frank, J. *Dictionary of key words in Psychology,* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.

Feist, Jess. *Theories of Personality.* 3rd ed. New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishing, 1994.

Freud, Sigmund. *Ego and the Id.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1990.

Hergenhahn, B. R. *An Introduction to Theories of Personality.* New York: Prentice Hall, 1980.

Huffman, Karen. *Psychology in Action.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1987.

Fuster, J. M. *The Integrated Personality,* Calcutta: Xavier Publications, 1981.

Jung, C. Carl. *The Integration of Personality.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956.

Kimble, Gregory. *Principle of Psychology.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1990.

Lerner, M. Richard. *Psychology.* New York: Macmillan, 1986.

Liebert Robert, *Personality strategies and issues,* California: Brook, 1986.

Reichmann, B. James. *Philosophy of Human Person.* Chicago: Loyola UP, 1985.

Rogers, G. R. *On Becoming A Person.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

Schultz, Duane. *Theories of Personality.* California: Brook / Cole Publishing, 1981.

Weiten, Wayne. *Psychology,* California: Brook, 1983.