

In the News

- ☞ 1969; research on intelligence suggests that Blacks are GENETICALLY less INTELLIGENT than Whites; they TYPICALLY score lower on STANDARD INTELLIGENCE tests
- ☞ The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life; Murray and Herrnstein suggested that EFFORTS to provide EDUCATION to BLACKS were hopeless
- ☞ Black children typically GROW UP in an ENVIRONMENT that is LESS intellectually stimulating (2000)
- ☞ There is no hard core evidence to support either position (APA, 1996)

Is personality determined by individual differences or environmental factors?

HANS EYSENCK (page 249)

The Structure of Personality

Specific Response Level – the basic unit of personality

- ☞ Specific behavior which could be organized under the hierarchy

Habitual Response Level – a more general categorization of behavior and personality

Trait

Supertraits – the overarching dimension of personality

EX: EXT-sociability-friendly-goes out of way to meet with friends/eager to meet new people

EX: NEU-moody-not consistent with preferences-sometimes likes white, sometimes not

Who are the extraverts/introverts?

1. Extraversion – Introversion

- ☞ EXTRAVERTS have LOWER levels of cortical AROUSAL according to Eysenck which causes them to lean towards activities that would be stimulating
- ☞ Introverts are characterized as having higher levels of cortical arousal which does not necessitate them to find other stimulating activities such as social gatherings and others.
- ☞ Current research suggest that EXTRAVERTS are not simply attracted to social interactions per se, but rather to ENJOYABLE activities.

How are your study habits? Where do you prefer to study?

EX:

- ☞ INT prefer to study in quiet isolated places; they get easily DISTRACTED with very minimal noise (HIGH cortical AROUSAL); EXT can study even with the TV/radio on
- ☞ EXT have been found to be happier; they have more social interactions/contacts which play a significant role in overall psychological well-being; FRIENDS serve as a buffer against stress;

2. Neuroticism

- ☞ Characterized by people who are EMOTIONAL, EASILY EXCITED AND ANGERED, DEPRESSED than most others

3. Psychoticism

- ☞ Was added later on by Eysenck
- ☞ Characterized as EGOCENTRIC, AGGRESSIVE, IMPERSONAL, COLD, LACKING IN EMPATHY
- ☞ High score in this dimension correlates with delinquents and mental problems

Activity: Charades. Act out a specific response; other team will guess which supertrait it belongs to. Winning team will get additional 10 points in quiz.

Biological Basis for Personality

- ☞ Argues that the prevalence of the dimensions suggest the BIOLOGICAL factors that INFLUENCE personality DEVELOPMENT – all else being equal (culture, race, environment) it is the simplest explanation!!!
- ☞ 2/3 of variance in personality can be traced to biological makeup

Temperament – general patterns of behavior and mood that can be expressed in many different ways and that, depending on one's experiences, develop into different personality traits.

- ☞ These are our general predispositions from our physiological makeup
- ☞ Broad personality dispositions RATHER than SPECIFIC PERSONALITY TRAITS
- ☞ Can be seen during the early years of life, and may remain CONSTANT throughout the lifespan

- ☞ We are born ONLY with a PREDISPOSITION towards VERY GENERAL dimensions, it more likely that our experience plays a significant role in TRIGGERING the further development of these innate characteristics

Other Temperament Models Accepted Today

Emotionality – Activity – Sociability

- ☞ Emotionality refers to whether the person is expressive of feelings
- ☞ Activity refers to the level of energy output the person prefers
- ☞ Sociability refers to the level of affiliation and interaction the person requires

Where Do Temperaments Come From?

- ☞ Variance in newborn babies' personality suggests strongly of INHERITANCE
- ☞ Temperaments may actually cause the environment to validate them

Self-fulfilling Prophecy

- ☞ We shape our environment the same way that it shapes us

EX:

Inhibited and Uninhibited Children

Inhibited children:

- ☞ slow to warm-up, more relaxed, cautious when approaching UNFAMILIAR SITUATIONS
- ☞ they cling to their parents more
- ☞ grow up to be characteristic of a SHY PERSONAL
- ☞ *Anxiety to Novelty*

Uninhibited children:

- ☞ generally outgoing, energetic and quick to warm up
- ☞ basically the opposite

How do they differ?

- ☞ Identifying children in this manner and knowing the correlational statistics about it, better equip parents to do something about their child; TEACH then how to RESPOND to unfamiliar and novel situations, strangers, etc...

EVOLUTIONARY PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY

- ☞ We generally experience anxiety because of evaluation apprehension
- ☞ There is an evolutionary basis for why we experience anxiety from our perceived or

real negative evaluations from others

Natural Selection and Psychological Mechanisms

What is the theory of evolutionism? Natural Selection?

☞ Natural selection is also responsible for the evolution and development of psychological mechanisms

Some Universal Psychological Mechanisms of People

1. Fear (of strangers and the dark) – to avoid attack from other people we do not know (other tribes)
2. Anger
3. Love
4. Conformity and Belonging to a group

Anxiety and Social Exclusion

☞ Primary cause: social exclusion

☞ Anxiety serves to prevent us from behavior that would result in social exclusion; it is ADAPTIVE therefore

Brain Electrical Activity and Cerebral Asymmetry

Electroencephalograph (EEG)

Alpha Waves – associated with activities in the emotion region of the brain (low levels indicate activation of amygdala)

☞ High activity in left hemisphere = positive moods; vice versa

☞ There are people with higher brain activity in a particular hemisphere during a resting state – SUGGESTS that biological make up indeed plays a role in emotions (personality)

RELEVANT RESEARCH

Heritability of Personality Traits

☞ We are born with POTENTIALS, but environmental factors are needed to develop these characteristics.

EX: Intelligence, Aggression, mental disorders

☞ No different from being highly susceptible to diabetes, heart attack, and other diseases

☞ It is also possible that parents pass their personality to their children by the way that they rear their children and the type of environments that they provide to them

Twin Studies

Monozygotic twins = same egg; identical

Dizygotic twins = different egg; fraternal

☞ Results suggest that about 40% of our personality is inherited

Other variations of Twin studies:

1. identical twins raised apart compared to those raised together

Problems with twin studies

1. they assume that DZ twin are reared in the same manner (experience the same environment)

☞ MZ twins are usually the ones to be dressed alike, etc.; they are usually thought of as one unit

☞ DZ twins are usually thought of as normal siblings; may account for the difference in rearing style

Extraversion-Introversion

☞ Data from twin studies also show that E-I scores were positively correlated and associated with genetic influence than environmental one's (*see page 287*)

Evolutionary Personality Theory and Mate Selection

What do you look for a partner?

☞ Researchers suggest that this personality trait (what we look for in a partner) has been passed down from our ancestors (biological basis for personality)

APPLICATION

Children's Temperament and School

☞ There has been a shift in the teaching style of most teachers

☞ They are not more sensitive to the individual needs and characteristics of their students

☞ Slow, inattentive, short attention span are those that DO NOT perform well in class – show hot TEMPERAMENT affects scholastic PERFORMANCE

☞ Temperaments elicit specific responses from teachers; *fundamental attribution error*

☞ EFFECT on children's sense of SELF-WORTH AND SELF-ESTEEM

“Goodness of Fit” model

☞ How the learning environment is “fit” for the individual characteristics of a child

EX: SPED; individualized programmes

☞ Being aware of different temperaments allows teachers to see beyond their students