

### 3.1.2. Personality and Self-Concept

#### 3.1.2.1. Meaning and Definition of Personality

The term personality has been derived from Latin word 'personare', which means 'to speak through'.

Thus personality is used in terms of influencing others through external appearance. Sum total of ways in which an individual reacts and interacts with others.

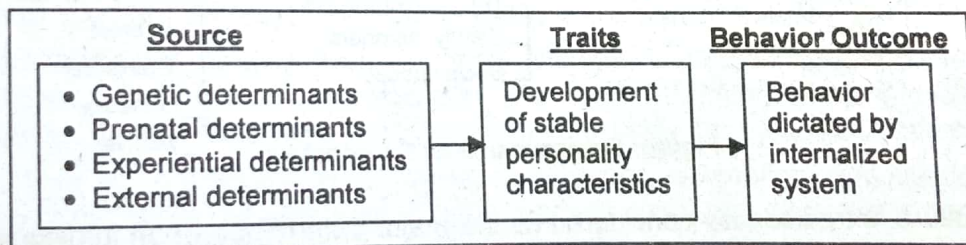
Personality is an internalized system which includes all those aspects of a person that are inherited as well as those that are learned. These two internal aspects are interdependent and cannot be isolated.

**According to Gordon Allport**, "Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment".

**According to Ruch**, Personality should include:

- i) External appearance and behavior or social stimulus value;
- ii) Inner awareness of self as a permanent organizing force; and
- iii) The particular pattern or organization of measurable traits, both inner and outer.

**According to Schiffman and Kanuk**, "Personality can be defined as those inner psychological characteristics that both determine and reflect how a person responds to his or her environment."



**Personality and Behavior**

#### 3.1.2.2. Nature of Personality

Personality has some basic characteristics which are observed in the behavior of employees. They are distinctive traits of personality, individual differences, consistent traits and attributes, and perceptual process and modification.



- 1) **Personality Traits:** Personality is the sum of different traits of a person. Personality is not known by a single trait. It is a composition of physical appearance, emotional attributes, sociability, objectivity, friendliness, thoughtfulness and so on. Personality is characterized by major trait dimensions such as restraint, emotional stability, objectivity, friendliness, personal relations and masculinity versus enmity, thoughtfulness, sociability, general activity, ascendance, authoritarian, growth-oriented, mathematical, critical, satisfying and so on.
- 2) **Personality Reflects Individual Differences:** Because the inner characteristics that constitute an individual's personality are a unique combination of factors, no two individuals are exactly alike. Nevertheless, many individuals tend to be similar in terms of a single personality characteristic. For instance, many people can be described as "high" in sociability (the degree of interest they display in social or group activities), while others can be described as "low" in sociability. Personality is a useful concept because it enables us to categorize consumers into different groups on the basis of a **single trait** or a few traits.
- 3) **Personality is Consistent and Enduring:** An individual's personality is commonly thought to be both consistent and enduring.

The stable nature of personality suggests that it is unreasonable for marketers to attempt to change consumers' personalities to conform to certain products. At best, they may learn which personality characteristics influence specific consumer responses and attempt to appeal to relevant traits inherent in their target group of consumer.

Even though an individual's personality may be consistent, consumption behavior often varies considerably because of psychological, socio-cultural and environmental factors that affect behavior.

- 4) **Personality Can Change:** Although personality tends to be consistent and enduring, it may still change under certain circumstances. For instance, an individual's personality may be altered by major life events, such as the birth of a child, the death of a loved one, a divorce, or a major career promotion.

### 3.1.2.3. Determinants of Personality

- 1) **Biological Factors:** Biological characteristics of human biological system influence the way in which human being tends to sense external event data, interpret, and respond to them.
- Heredity:** Is the transmission of the qualities from ancestor to descendant through a mechanism lying primarily in the chromosomes of the germ cells. Heredity predisposes to certain physical, mental, and emotional states. It has been established through research on animals that physical and psychological characteristics can be transmitted through heredity. Such a conclusive proof is not available for human beings. Heredity plays an important role in personality.
  - Brain:** It is the second factor, which is supposed to play role in personality. The structure of brain determines personality though role of brain in personality formation.
  - Physical Features:** Third factor of determining personality foundation is physical characteristics and rate of maturation. A person's physical features have some influence on his personality because it will affect influence on others and, in turn, will affect his self-concept. The rate of maturation also affects personality because persons of varying maturity are exposed to different physical and social situations and activities differently.

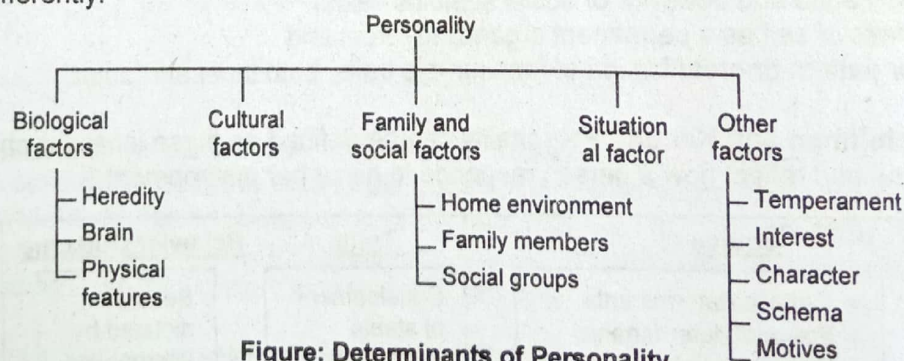


Figure: Determinants of Personality

- 2) **Cultural Factors:** Culture is traditionally considered as the major determinant of an individual's personality. The culture largely determines what a person is and what a person will learn. The culture within which a person is brought up is very important determinant of behavior of a person.

It generally determines attitudes towards independence, aggression, competition, and co-operation. Each culture expects and trains its members to behave in the ways that are acceptable to the group. Despite the importance of cultural contribution to the personality, a linear relationship cannot be established between



personality and a given culture. One problem stems from the existence of numerous subcultures within a given culture. Thus workers are not influenced by the same culture as managers are.

- 3) **Family and Social Factor:** The development of the individual proceeds under the influence of many socializing forces and agencies, from nuclear family to more distant or global groupings.

In order to understand the effects of a family on individual's personality, we have to understand the socialization process and identification process.

- i) **Socialization Process:** The contribution of family and social group in combination with the culture is known as socialization.

Socialization initially starts with the contact with mother and later on the other members of the family (father, sisters, and close relatives) and the social group play influential role in shaping an individual's personality.

- ii) **Identification Process:** Identification starts when a person begins to identify himself with some other members of the family. Normally a child tries to emulate certain actions of his parents.

Socialization and identification process is influenced by home environment, family members, and social groups:

- a) **Home Environment:** Total home environment is a critical factor in personality development. **For example,** children with markedly institutional upbringing or children in a cold, unstimulating home have a much greater potential to be emotionally maladjusted than children raised by parents in a warm, loving, and stimulating environment. The key variable is not the parents *per se* but rather the type of environment that is generated for the child.
- b) **Family Members:** Parents and other family members have strong influence on the personality development of the child. The study by Newcomb showed the high correlation between attitudes of parents and children with a further consistency in patterns. The relationship between parents and children was higher than that between the children and their teachers. Besides parents, siblings (brothers and sisters) also contribute to personality.
- c) **Social Groups:** Besides a person's home environment and family members, there are other influences arising from the social placement of the family as the person is exposed to agencies outside the home, particularly the school, friendship, and other work groups. Similarly, socio-economic factors also affect personality development.

- 4) **Situational Factors:** An individual's personality may change in different situations. The demands of different situations may call for different aspects of one's personality. Therefore, we should not look at the personality factor in isolation. Although certain generalizations can be made about personality, there exist significant individual differences which are further influenced by situational factors.

The relationship of the above factors affects the formation and development of personality. Physiological inheritance is entirely an internal contribution. Group and the culture are the early environmental factors that influence later behavior. Family and the social setting during early stages of education are the important factors which influence the initial formation of personality. Whatever the child learns lasts for life time. Later in life, it is the peer groups of primary affiliations at work, social activities, etc. which shape the personality of an individual.

5) **Other Factors**

- i) **Temperament:** Temperament and other non-intellectual personality traits are distributed according to the normal distribution. Temperament is the degree to which one responds emotionally.
- ii) **Interest:** The individual normally has many interests in various areas. The top executives in any organization do not have interests in common. The organization should provide opportunities like job rotation and special training programme to satisfy the interests of executives.
- iii) **Character:** Character primarily means honesty. It is resistance to stealing and cheating others. Character is a very important requirement for responsible jobs. It is likely that an individual may not steal under normal circumstances. The situation needs to be considered to verify this part of the character of the individual.
- iv) **Schema:** It is an individual's belief, frame of reference, perception, and attitude which the individual possesses towards the management, the job, working conditions, pay, fringe benefits, incentive system, and development programmes in the organization. It depends upon the individual's belief towards religion, government and the satisfaction derived from environment and cultural influences of his community.
- v) **Motives:** Motives are the inner drives of the individual. They represent goal directed behavior of the individual. A motive is a cognitive factor which operates in determining one's behavior towards a goal. Individuals differ in variables which determine the inner drives. The behavior of an individual to accomplish the goal varies because of his inner drives.