

Concept of Personality

The word personality is derived from a Greek word “*persona*” which means to “speak through.” This term denotes the masks worn by actors in ancient Greece and Rome. The term ‘personality’ signifies the role which the person or an actor displays to the public.

Man is not born a person. At the time of birth, he is an infant possessing the potentiality of becoming a person. After birth he associates with other human beings and comes under the influence of their culture. As a result of a variety of experiences and social influences, he becomes a person and comes to possess a personality. Because of differences in their personalities, individuals differ in their manner of responding to different situations.

The term personality is used in various senses. Generally, it is used to indicate the external outlook of an individual. In philosophy it means the internal quality. But in social psychology the term personality indicates neither the external or outward pattern nor does it indicate the internal quality. It means an integrated whole.

The study of personality focuses on two broad areas:

- 1) One is to understand individual differences in particular personality characteristics, such as sociability or irritability.
- 2) The other is to check how the various parts of a person come together as a whole.

Hence by studying the concept of personality, we get to know the ways in which an individual reacts and interacts with others. It is individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving. It is the supreme realization of the inborn habit of a living being.

Meaning of Personality

Personality is the combination of characteristics or qualities that forms a person’s unique identity. It signifies the role which a person plays in public. Every individual has a unique, personal and major determinant of his behavior that defines his/her personality.

According to **Gordon Allport**, “Personality is the dynamic organization within the individuals of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environments”.

According to **Lundberg and others**, “The term personality refers to the habits, attitudes and other social traits that are characteristic of a given individual’s behavior”.

Personality has various characteristics:

- Personality is something which is **unique in each individual**.
- Personality refers particularly to the **constant qualities of an individual** that exhibit themselves in form of social behavior and attempt to make adjustment with the environment.

- Personality is greatly **influenced by social interactions** which mean that when we come in contact with other members of the society, we acquire certain qualities while we exhibit certain others.
- Personality represents a **dynamic orientation of an organism to the environment** as we cannot acquire all the traits of personality all at once.
- Personality is **consistent** for a long period of time.
- Personality shows **the behaviors and actions** of an individual.