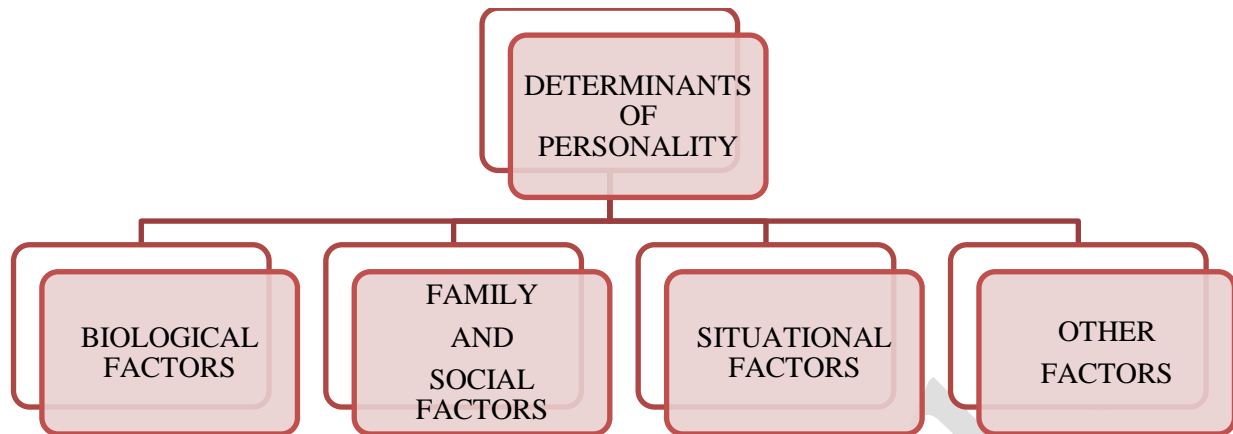


Determinants of Personality



BIOLOGICAL FACTORS

- **Heredity:** Heredity is another factor determining human personality. Some of the similarities in man's personality are said to be due to his common heredity. Man originates from the union of male and female germ cells into a single cell which is formed at the moment of conception. However, the importance of heredity varies from one personality trait to another.
- **Brain:** There is a general feeling that brain plays an important role in the development of one's personality. However, no conclusive proof is available so far about the nature of relationship between the brain and personality.
- **Physical Features:** An individual's external or physical appearance may have a tremendous effect on his personality. A man with a good physical structure and health generally possess an attractive personality. A man of poor health and ugly physical features develops inferiority complex.

FAMILY AND SOCIAL FACTORS

One of the very important determinants of the personality of a person is his immediate family and other social groups. Families influence the behavior of a person especially in the early stages. The infant (new-born) acquires those behavior patterns that are customary and acceptable to the standards of the family and the community where the family lives. The status of the family in the society influences individual's perception about self, others, work, money, etc.

To elaborate, a person brought up in a rich and prestigious family has a different personality as compared to the people who belong to a poor family. The family size will also affect the behaviour of a child. The personality of a single child is different from the personality of a person who is brought up in a family of more than two siblings.

Family and social factors shape a person's personality through the processes of socialization and identification. **Socialization** is a process by which an infant acquires from the extremely wide range of behavioural potentialities that are open to him at birth, those behaviour patterns that are customary and acceptable to the family and social groups. Initially socialization starts with the contact of the infant with the mother when he grows up.

The **identification** process occurs when a person tries to identify himself with some person whom he feels ideal in family. Generally a child in the family tries to behave like his father or mother.

SITUATIONAL FACTORS

Situational factors also play a very important role in determining the personality of a person. An individual's personality may change in different situations. The demands of different situations may call for different aspects of one's personality. So we should not look at personality patterns in isolation. According to Migram's research, "A situation exerts an important press on the individual. It exercises constraints and may provide push. In certain circumstances, it is not so much the kind of person a man is, as the kind of situation in which he is placed that determines his actions."

These factors often bring out the traits of a person that are not commonly seen. The different demands of different situations call forth different aspects of one's personality. This aspect is very important for organization behavior because the manager has control over the organizational situation.

That is why it is often said that life is a collection of experiences. Every individual goes through different type of experiences and events in his life. Some of the events and experiences can serve as important determinants of his personality.

A trauma suffered by a person in the childhood can sometime change the structure of his own personality. In addition to this, certain incidents or situations reveal a specific aspect of the personality of a person that was so far hidden. For example, a very weak and coward person may spontaneously perform heroic action in saving some one's life without regard to his own safety.

OTHER FACTORS

- **Culture:** Culture is the underlying determinant of human decision making. It generally determines attitude towards independence, aggression, competition, and cooperation. Each culture expects and trains its members to behave in a way that is acceptable to the group. The development of personality and the acquisition of culture are not different processes, but one and the same learning process.

- **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 programmes to satisfy the interests of executives. The successful persons in the same occupation have, to a large extent, the same interests.
- **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. For example, if the family of an individual is starving there is a great probability that one will steal. This, it is essential to study the situation as well as the individual before analyzing the behavior that shows undesirable character.
- **Motives:** Motives are the inner drives of the individual. They represent goal directed behavior of 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.