
UNIT 1 DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

For laypersons, the term personality is often understood in terms of being good looking, attractive etc. They go by the impression created by the person concerned. The ability to talk and interact with others pleasantly in addition to being good looking, would make others say that the person concerned has a good personality. Persons who do not have good looks or not well dressed or do not interact adequately are considered to have poor personality. But scientifically this is not a true concept of personality. In fact, psychologists consider any attempt to define personality in terms of social attractiveness inadequate because of two reasons, first it limits the number and types of behaviour considered important and worthy for incorporation into the study of personality. Second, such notion carries the absurd implication that some people who have unique abilities and temperament traits are devoid of having a personality. In this unit we will be dealing with the definition of personality as put forward by psychologists. Definition of personality will be presented as given by Gordon Allport and there will be a discussion of the concept of personality development. Under Personality development, various factors contributing to the same will be discussed including the biological, psychological and environmental factors.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After the reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Define personality and describe the nature of personality;
- Elucidate the concept of personality;
- List the characteristic features of personality;
- Explain the factors that contribute to the development of personality; and
- Identify the environmental factors that influence personality development.

1.2 DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY

The term personality is often understood in terms of social attractiveness. A good personality is considered to be one who impresses other people and who has the ability to get on well with others. Those who do not possess such ability are said to have relatively poor personality. However if one considers personality from a scientific point of view, being attractive to others is not a true concept of personality. In fact, psychologists consider any attempt to define personality in terms of social attractiveness as inadequate because of two reasons, (i) it limits the number and types of behaviours considered important and worthy for incorporation into the study of personality and (ii) such a notion implies that some people who have unique abilities, temperament and traits are devoid of having a personality.

Psychologists have attempted to explain the concept of personality in terms of individuality and consistency. We often observe that people differ a great deal in the ways they think, feel and act and that too to different or even same situations. This distinctive pattern of behaviour helps one to define one's identity. Commenting upon the notion of individuality, it has been said that each of us in certain respects is like all other persons, like some other persons and like no other person who has been in the past or will be existing in future (Kluckhohn & Murray, 1953).

Another important notion in defining the concept of personality is consistency. In other words it can be stated that the concept of personality also rests on the observation that a person seems to behave somewhat consistently in different situations over different time. From this observation of perceived consistency comes the notion of personality traits that determine the way of responding to one's world.

Combining these notions of individuality and consistency, personality can be defined as the distinctive and unique ways in which each individual thinks, feels and acts, which characterise a person's response throughout life. In other words, it can be said that personality refers to all those relatively permanent traits, dispositions or characteristics within the person that give some measure of consistency to the person's behaviour. These traits may be unique, common to some groups or shared by the entire species but their pattern will be different from individual to individual.

The thoughts, feelings and actions that are perceived as reflecting an individual's personality typically have three characteristics

- i) Thoughts, feelings and actions are considered as behavioural components of identity that make distinction between individuals
- ii) Behaviours are viewed as being primarily caused by internal rather than environmental factors.
- iii) The behaviours of the person seem to have organisation and structure.

Behaviours of an individual seem to fit together in a meaningful way. It is to be kept in mind that the nature of behaviours is dynamic and there may occur changes in the organisation and structure of behaviours over a period of time. It is in this sense that Allport (1937, 1961), defined personality as the dynamic organisation within the person of the psychophysical systems that determine the unique adjustments to one's environment. This suggests that there is an inner personality that guides and directs individual's behaviour. Allport the man who has done more than anyone to shed light on the myriad meaning of the term personality analysed 50 definitions of personality, and finally put forward his own definition of personality mentioned above.

For better distinct understanding of the term personality, it is essential that it should not be confused with character and temperament. While the term character refers to the value judgements, which are made about a person's moral values or ethical behaviour, the term temperament refers to the inborn enduring characteristics such as adaptability, irritability etc. However, both character and temperament are vital parts of personality.

Self Assessment Questions 1

- 1) Who has said that personality is the dynamic organisation of traits?
 - a) Eysenck
 - b) Allport
 - c) Murray
 - d) None of them.
- 2) Which of the followings are regarded as component of behavioural identity of personality?
 - a) Thoughts
 - b) Feelings
 - c) Actions
 - d) All.
- 3) Human behaviours are largely determined by:
 - a) Internal factors
 - b) Environmental factors
 - c) Both
 - d) Neither.
- 4) Which one is the inborn enduring characteristics of the personality?
 - a) Traits
 - b) Character
 - c) Temperament
 - d) None of these.
- 5) Personality has been understood as largely the combination of:
 - a) Trait and temperament
 - b) Consistency and individuality
 - c) Value and attitude
 - d) Character and temperament.

1.3 PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

The development of personality has been a topic of interest for the personality psychologists right from the time the term came into existence. Psychologists have tried to identify those factors which directly or indirectly influence the growth and development of personality. Although there are a large number of factors, which influence the development of personality, such factors have been broadly grouped into three general categories and these are given below.

- 1) Biological factors,
- 2) Psychological factors,
- 3) Environmental factors.

Since these factors tend to determine the way personality develops they are also called as determinants of personality. These three sets of factors are discussed here in detail.

1.3.1 Biological Factors

Biological determinants also called as physical determinants emphasise that physique and body functioning are directly responsible for personality development. Some of these factors are: (i) Body build (ii) Physical attractiveness (iii) Homeostasis (iv) Physical defects (v) Health conditions.

- i) **Body build:** Body build influences personality directly by determining what an individual can and cannot do, as well as what the individual's reaction will be to all those whose body builds are superior or inferior.

Some of the known body builds are (i) ectomorph (ii) endomorph, and (iii) mesomorph.

Ectomorphs are persons who are tall and thin in their body builds. They have been generally found to be superior to Endomorphs who have round and soft body builds. The superiority is especially in speed and endurance. Likewise, mesomorphs who are strong and muscular in their body builds have been found to be superior to both ectomorphs and endomorphs in activities like speed, endurance and agility.

It has also been reported that body build of an individual affects the person's self-concept, which is an important constituents of personality. This self concept can be favourable or unfavourable. For instance if the body build allows the person to do things that are socially desirable, prestigious and better than others it would contribute to positive self concept about oneself. On the other hand if it allows the person to do things which are not favourable or positive or ends up in failure, it would lead to poor or negative self concept.

- ii) **Physical attractiveness:** Physical attractiveness is another physical component that affects the development of personality. An attractive person of any age is more appealing than a person who is unattractive. Brislin & Lewis (1968) have commented that it is very much rewarding to be with someone who is physically attractive. Generally, it has been found that the people tend to be more tolerant in their attitudes and judgements of an attractive person. That is the reason why a pretty child is less likely to be punished or criticised for troublesome behaviour than a simple looking

homely child. In business circle, an attractive worker may be less efficient and less conscientious than an unattractive worker and yet, the attractive worker is relatively more likely to get promotion sooner than the unattractive one.

- iii) **Homeostasis:** Homeostasis is another important determinant. It refers to the maintenance of a stable internal environment through relatively having normal temperature, normal level of blood sugar, normal level of blood pressure, proper water balance, etc. When any of these conditions is upset, disequilibrium starts and disturbances in homeostasis results. Homeostasis or disturbances in it, has a significant impact upon personality both directly or indirectly.

Directly, the effect of homeostasis is seen in relaxed, controlled and socially acceptable behaviour patterns of the person who is feeling well both physically and psychologically. When the level of homeostasis is disturbed, behaviours like irritability, indigestion, insomnia and other uncomfortable states often result.

Disturbances in homestasis

Disturbances in homestasis also affects personality indirectly. It affects personality through the way the person reacts to what he thinks and believes to be the attitudes of some significant people in his life. For example, a person who is above average in physical stature in comparison to his age and sex group, because of excessive hormonal discharge will respond to his superior size in one of the two ways. If his superior size is viewed favourably by others, his reaction will be positive and therefore, disturbance in homeostasis will thus have a favourable impact upon the development of personality. But if his size proves to be a social handicap and others ridicule it, his reactions will be negative and the effect in the disturbance of homeostasis will be unfavourable.

Some studies have very clearly shown that development of personality is affected by homeostasis or lack of it. For example, when the blood sugar goes above the normal range, depressive mental states tend to follow. Severe deficiency in vitamin B complex results in increased level of emotionality and depression. High blood pressure frequently produces neuroticism. Anoxia or reduction in the amount of oxygen in the inspired air, as it happens in asthma, causes emotional outbursts, mental confusion and self-criticism.

- iv) **Physical defects:** Physical defects are another determiners. The first scientific study showing the impact of physical defect upon personality has come from Alfred Adler's theory of organ inferiority. Today several studies have been conducted to examine the direct and indirect impact of physical defects upon personality. Obesity is one of the popular physical defect. Obesity proves to be a handicap in social relationship because the obese person is unable to keep up with his contemporaries. Obesity also affects the personality indirectly. Awareness of unfavourable attitude towards obesity makes the person feel not only inferior but also they develop the feeling of being socially scorned. Not only this, some researchers have also pointed out that massively obese individuals become more disturbed perhaps because of less self-satisfaction and cumulative adverse comment from others.

Health conditions

Health conditions also affect the development of personality. At all ages and in both sexes good health is considered as a personality asset and poor health is a liability. There are ample evidences to support it. Many personality changes result from poor health conditions and tend to continue even after the illness has been cured or its severity has been lessened. This is especially true during childhood when the personality is in the formative stages. Many personality changes and disturbances in adolescents and adults have their root in illnesses during the early years of childhood (Martin & Vincent, 1960).

It has also been found that persons having illness like diabetes, etc., experience tension and anxiety which causes frustration in dealing with the demands of social environments. As a result of frustration, they become aggressive and often turn their aggression towards others. Physical disturbances like the female irregular menstrual cycle often lead to emotional instability accompanied by a tendency to be irritable and depressed. This increases their level of emotionality and the heightened emotionality is reflected in poor social adjustment and decrease in social activities, ultimately affecting women's self-concept and the attitudes towards other people.

Self Assessment Questions 2

- 1) Tall and thin body builds are the characteristics of:
 - a) Mesomorph
 - b) Ectomorph
 - c) Endomorph
 - d) None of these.
- 2) Homeostatis refers to:
 - a) Disturbances in the internal balance of the body
 - b) Maintenance of a stable internal environment
 - c) Maintenance of even rate of oxygen utilisation
 - d) Maintenance of normal level of blood sugar and blood pressure.
- 3) Homeostasis affects the self-concept:
 - a) Only in a positive way
 - b) Only in a negative way
 - c) Both positively and negatively
 - d) Has no effect.
- 4) Which is Not the physical determinants of personality?
 - a) Homeostasis
 - b) Physical attractiveness
 - c) Body builds
 - d) Gender
- 5) High blood pressure is generally associated with causation of:
 - a) Neuroticism
 - b) Depression
 - c) General nervousness
 - d) None of these.

1.3.2 Psychological Factors

Several psychological factors tend to determine the development of personality. Among those factors the following can be specially discussed because of their importance. These include:

- i) Intellectual determinants
- ii) Emotional determinants
- iii) Self disclosure
- iv) Aspiration and achievements

The above are being discussed in the following paragraphs.

1.3.2.1 Intellectual Determinants

These are one of the important factors which influence the development of personality. Researchers are of view that intellectual capacities influence personality through various kinds of adjustments in life and indirectly through the judgments other persons make of the individual on the basis of the person's intellectual achievements.

This judgment in turn affects the evaluation and consequently the development of personality. Intellectually bright men and women make better personal and social adjustments than those of average or below average intelligence.

Several studies bear testimony to the fact that bright men and women are generally introspective, thoughtful, creative, adventuresome and have strong concern with problems, meanings and values. They are found to show a wider interest especially in the theoretical and aesthetic areas. Since they have greater and stronger mental ability, they have better control over themselves.

However, having very superior intelligence affects personality development unfavourably because it creates special problems which are not encountered by those persons who are merely bright. These various problems result in the development of a personality pattern, which is characterised by the traits like negativism, intolerance, habits of chicanery, emotional conflicts, solitary pursuit, self-sufficiency, dominance, etc. Evidences also have provided support to the fact that intellectual capacities also influence development of values, morality and human.

1.3.2.2 Emotional Determinants

These are other important factors that shape the development of personality. Emotions are considered important personality determinants because they affect personal and social adjustment. Research has shown that several aspects of emotions like dominant emotions, emotional balance, emotional deprivation, excessive love and affection, emotional expressions, emotional catharsis and emotional stress directly and indirectly affect the development of personality.

Some people experience a predominance of pleasant emotions while others experience a predominance of unpleasant emotions. This predominance affect the development of personality. The cheerful persons are usually happy and even when they are in a depressive mood they can see the brighter side of things. Likewise, since apprehensive persons are full of fear, they even when there is ja happy or enjoyable situation, feel depressed and remain afraid. Emotional balance which is a condition in which pleasant emotions outweigh the unpleasant emotion, is considered essential to good social and personal adjustment.

When the person encounters with obstacles and problems, unpleasant experiences like fear, anger, envy and other negative emotions are aroused. As a consequence,

the person's adjustments are adversely affected. Such conditions in the long run are responsible for development of many pathological traits in the person. Also emotional deprivation of pleasant emotions like love, happiness and curiosity also has an impact, which gradually leads to poor personal and social adjustment.

Research has revealed that impact of emotional deprivation depends upon the extent to which a person is emotionally deprived in addition to the duration of emotional deprivation as well as upon the age at which it occurs. One of the common effects of deprivation of love and affection is the development of emotional insecurity. Much of adolescent and adult rebellion against authority stems from emotional insecurity which has its origin in unstable affective relationship with parents and other members of family during early childhood years.

1.3.2.3 Excessive Love and Affection

This also has psychologically negative effect. Sigmund Freud had earlier cautioned that too much parental love and affection awakens a disposition for neurotic disorders, spoils the child and makes the individual a problematic adolescent. Strecker (1956) has pointed out that excessive mothering, that is, overprotective mothers turn their sons and daughters into immature and dependent adults. Emotional expression, that is, how the person expresses emotion also affects the development of personality. If the person is able to express emotions in a socially approved manner, that person would be judged favourably and this provides a good mirror image of the self. Such emotional expression produces a better feeling both physically and mentally because homeostasis can be restored.

Sanctions, control over the overt expression of emotions is often necessary to avoid social disapproval. However, repression of emotions like anger, fear, jealousy, and envy makes the individual gloomy and morbid which ultimately produces behaviour like extreme laziness, lack of interest in people, vacillation of mood etc. Emotional Catharsis (release of unexpressed emotions) also contributes to the development of good adjustment. Release of pent up emotions allows for physical and mental homeostasis to be restored. As a consequence, the person can judge oneself in a more realistic way.

1.3.2.4 Self-disclosure

Self disclosure is considered basic to mental health and such disclosure helps to bring about a healthy personality pattern which is a guarantee for a socially desirable and favourable reactions from others. Emotional stress expressed in the form of anxiety, frustration, jealousy and envy also affect the development of personality. A person who suffers from emotional stress makes good personal and social adjustments. Intense emotional stress may motivate the person to go to excesses in hope of being relieved from it. For example, the person may resort to overeating and using drugs to dull the intense feeling of insecurity caused by emotional stress. It has been reported that women who experience greater degree of emotional stress during menstrual period, are found to develop depressive tendencies. Psychologists have shown that people with low self-esteem are more adversely affected by emotional stress than those with high self-esteem.

1.3.2.5 Aspiration and Achievements

These also have an effect on the development of personality. Aspiration means a longing for and striving for something higher than one's present status. Thus aspirations are the ego-involved goals that persons set for themselves. The more ego-involved the aspirations are, the more will be the impact upon behaviour and therefore, greater will be the impact upon personality. There may be various forms of aspirations such as positive aspiration (to achieve success), negative aspiration (to avoid failure), realistic aspiration (within the range of the person's capacity), unrealistic aspirations (beyond the capacity of the person), remote aspirations (to achieve a goal in the remote future) or immediate aspirations (to achieve a goal in the near future).

The motivating power of aspiration varies. In general, remote and realistic aspirations do provide stronger motivating forces than immediate and unrealistic aspirations. Negative aspirations are considered weaker in providing motivating strength than positive aspirations.

Level of aspiration, that is, the discrepancy between the goal an individual has achieved and the goal the person hopes to reach, affects the personality in terms of the size of the discrepancy. When the size of discrepancy is large, the person's self-concept is severely damaged especially if the person fails to achieve the goal. Not only the individual will judge self as failure but others will also judge the person as a failure in particular if others know about the person's goal and that goal had not been achieved.

Research studies have also shown that high aspirations are not necessarily a source of damage to the self-concept. They may be a source of motivation and pleasure. They may be a kind of wishful thinking that will not cause any damage to personality so long as it remains a form of fun and play.

1.3.2.6 Achievements

These are another related factor that determine the development of personality. Achievement can be evaluated objectively by comparing one's performance with those of one's peers and subjectively, by comparing the person's achievement with the level of aspiration. Success and failure are the two different attitudes of the person towards achievement. If the person is pleased with own achievement, the achievement will be considered a success and this has a favourable impact upon the self-concept. However if the person's attitude towards achievement is negative, then the achievement will not be considered a success but a failure. Such persons will feel dissatisfied and miserable and in turn their self concept will be adversely affected. Persons who feel that they have been successful remain satisfied with themselves and appear to be happy.

Besides building a favourable self-concept, achievement also raises the person's self-esteem and increases the level of self-confidence so that the individual can solve the many new problem of the future successfully. In addition to the personal satisfaction that a person derives from achieving the goal successfully, the achievement ensures that the person is appropriate in all the actions that are taken up, which in turn produce a stabilising impact upon the behaviour. Therefore, a successful person tends to be more relaxed than a person who has experiences of failure.

1.3.2.7 Goal Setting

Experimental evidences have shown that one of the most important effect that success has upon the person is that the individual becomes more realistic about goal setting. Such persons would asset their goal to a point where they have reasonable chances of reaching. This behaviour is an obvious characteristic of intelligent, well-adjusted people than of those who are poorly adjusted.

Success enhances self-concept by increasing the person's prestige in the eyes of others. This enhances social acceptance and strengthens the individual's self-concept. But too much success during early years of life may, in fact, weakens the person's motivation to do one's best. It may cause the person to loose some of the new motivations which can be generated by early achievement. Extraordinary achievement even may prove to be more harmful than helpful to social relationship and not only that, it may arouse jealousy and resentment among those persons who are socially related to the person but somehow less successful.

Failure is another constituent of achievement. It is always ego-deflating. Failure undermines the self-confidence and self-esteem. Gradually, it destroys the person's belief that she or he can do something to achieve and this, in effect, weakens the motive to achieve even those things which are within his or her capability. Severe and repeated failure causes stress, anxiety and tension. Sometimes such repeated failures cause so intense stress and anxiety that it produces psychosomatic illness or leads to a defeatist attitude, which strengthens the person's belief in his or her inadequacy and intensifies the poor personal and social adjustment. Research have revealed that one of the most damaging aspects of failure is somehow not achieving the desired goal and social recognition, especially when the person hoped to do so. This sense of dissatisfaction is intensified by the realisation that others with whom the person has competed, have achieved the success much earlier than him or her. Under such conditions, the impact upon the self concept is highly unfavourable.

By contrast, one of the greatest source of satisfaction is to achieve success, recognition and prestige much earlier than anticipated and earlier than one's competitors. This condition has favourable impact upon the self-concept. Sometimes it may be so much favourable that it may lead to the delusion of grandeur and superiority complex and this condition, in the long term, may counteract favourable social judgement and prove damaging to the self-concept.

Self Assessment Questions 3

- 1) Markedly superior intelligence leads to a personality pattern which is characterised by :
 - a) negativism
 - b) Intolerance
 - c) emotional conflicts
 - d) All the above.
- 2) Which one of the followings is known as mental health insurance ?
 - a) Emotional balance
 - b) Tolerance
 - c) Envy tolerance
 - d) None of these.
- 3) Emotional starvation occurs due to :
 - a) Emotional deprivation
 - b) Deprivation of love
 - c) Emotional imbalance
 - d) None of these.

- 4) Which one qualifies to be called as emotional stress ?
 - a) a specific state of heightened emotionality
 - b) a generalised state of heightened emotionality
 - c) a generalised state of emotional imbalance
 - d) none of these above condition.
- 5) Who are more adversely affected by stress ?
 - a) people with high self-esteem
 - b) people with high emotional catharsis
 - c) people with low self-esteem
 - d) people with poor emotional catharsis.

1.3.3 Environmental Factors

Besides physical and psychological factors, some environmental factors have been isolated and shown to have a significant impact upon the development of personality. Under environmental determinants, the following four sets of factors have been primarily emphasised :

1.3.3.1 Social Acceptance

These are one of the major environmental determinants. Every person lives in a social group, which judges the person's behaviour in terms of the person's conformity to group expectations regarding proper performance behaviour and appropriate role playing. Thus social judgement serve as basis for self-evaluation. In this way, the social group tends to influence the development of self-concept.

The degree of influence the social group has on personality development depends not alone on how well accepted the individual is but also on how much importance social acceptance has for the individual. If the person places more value on group acceptance, that person will be more willing to be influenced by the group. Persons who are widely accepted and liked by the group, are likely to respond in a congenial and friendly spirit than those who experience hostility, disregard and rejection in the group.

In fact, how much influence social acceptance has on behaviour depends upon two conditions: how much security a person has in his/her status in the group and what importance he/she attaches to the social acceptance. If the person feels fully secure in the status, which would make the person free to act as he/she wishes and will not be greatly influenced by suggestions from others. Likewise, if the person attaches more value to the social acceptance, he/she will also be more susceptible to be in line with the group members.

Persons whose social acceptance is very high, they are generally more outgoing, more flexible, more active and daring than those who are only moderately socially accepted or moderately popular. However, such persons often fail to establish close relationship with people. They also fail to show emotional warmth which is considered essential to close and intimate personal relationship. This sense of aloofness usually comes from a feeling of superiority.

One extreme opposite of social acceptance is social isolation. If a person develops the feelings of rejection due to social isolation when in fact they want to be accepted, would develop the feeling of resentment against those who have rejected them. Such people are often depressed, sad and unhappy. They may develop sour-grapes attitude towards social activities. Such social rejection may lead the persons to become juvenile delinquents or criminals in the long run. Researchers have further shown that if early social experiences of the persons are favourable, they are likely to become social and if their experiences are unfavourable, they are likely to develop an unsocial or antisocial personality.

1.3.3.2 Social Deprivation

This is another environmental factor, which is said to influence the development of personality in massive and significant way. Social deprivation means being deprived of opportunities for various types of social contacts including love and affection. Social deprivation causes social isolation which has an adverse effect on personality. Social deprivation has proved most damaging for two age groups—the very young and the elderly. The young children who are deprived of contacts with parents / guardians fail to develop healthy and normal personality. Their behaviour is socially disapproved and they are also unfavourably judged by others.

Social deprivation in elderly people make them self-bound and selfish, which gradually lead to unfavourable social and self judgements. It has also been observed that social deprivation is far more damaging to people who want and also need social contacts for happiness than those who are self-sufficient or who voluntarily withdraw. For example, when elderly persons voluntarily decide on their own to withdraw from social activities, they are far happier and relatively well adjusted in comparison to those whose withdrawal is involuntary. If social deprivation is extensive and prolonged, it gradually leads to unhealthy social attitudes and mental illness.

1.3.3.3 Educational Factors

Another important factor, which influences the development of personality is the educational factors. Schools, colleges and teachers have significant impact upon the individual's development of personality. The impact of educational institution upon personality development is largely determined by the students' attitude towards school and colleges, towards peers, towards teachers and also toward the value of education. When these attitudes are favourable, the students usually enjoy their academic activities and have a warm and friendly relationship with teachers and their peers. This has a very favourable impact upon the development of personality by producing stronger sense of self-confidence and self-esteem.

The reverse is true when there is unfavourable attitudes amongst students towards education and educational institutions, teachers and peers etc. . Research studies have further revealed that if the students are physically and psychologically ready to enter the school or colleges, their attitude tend to be far more favourable. Attitude towards educational institution is greatly influenced by emotional climate of the institution, which affect the level of motivation, students' classroom behaviour and their general emotional reactions. Through these various behavioural patterns, the emotional climate of the educational institution affects the students' self-evaluation and the evaluation others make of them.

Another important factor of educational determinants that affect personality is student-teacher relationship, which is largely dependent upon the teacher's treatment of the students, upon students' attitude toward particular teachers and on their teaching as well as the disciplinary techniques used by the teachers including the cultural stereotypes of teachers as a group. These attitudes, in turn, affect the quality of the student's academic work which becomes the basis of evaluation of self and social evaluation. Teacher student relationship affect the students' personality through its impact upon students' motivation for academic achievement. When the students see that their relationship with the teacher is warm and friendly, their achievements are far better than when they perceive the relationship as hostile, punitive and rejecting. This boosts their self-concept by enhancing self confidence and self esteem.

1.3.3.4 Family Determinants

This is another important class of factors that influence development of personality. The influence of family on personality development is maximal at all ages. The family affects the development of personality both directly or indirectly. Direct influence of family upon personality comes chiefly through different child-training methods which are used to mould the personality pattern, and the communication of interest, attitude and values between members of the family. Strict, demanding, punitive and inhibiting parents / guardians tend to encourage their children for depending upon external controls to guide their behaviour. As a result, when the children are outside the direct control of their parents/guardian, they tend to show impulsiveness in their behaviour.

Indirectly, through identification with parents, children develop a personality pattern similar to that of their parents. Experimental studies reveal that through imitation also, a certain personality pattern develops. For example, living with parents who are anxious, nervous and lacking the sense of humor produces in the children a sense of nervousness and frequent outburst of temper. Likewise, living with warm, affectionate, loving and interested parents generally produces a social and gregarious persons. Such persons also develop an interest of welfare and affection for persons outside the home as well.

1.3.3.5 Emotional Climate of Home and Ordinal Position

A very important factor in the development of personality is the emotional climate at home as well as the ordinal position of the individual concerned within his family. Ordinal position refers to the eldest or youngest or middle or 2nd or 3rd child in the family. If the home climate is favourable, the person will react to personal problems and frustrations in a calm way and to people in a tolerant and cooperative way. On the other hand if emotional climate of home is full of friction and conflicts, the person is more likely to develop a sense of hostility and may often tend to react to people in an aggressive way.

Ordinal position also affects the development of personality. Studies have revealed that the firstborns tend to be more conforming and dependent than later borns. They are more affiliative, more susceptible to group pressures and more introverted. Firstborns who achieve greater success than the later born siblings tend to be selfish and self centred. They show their feeling of superiority about their achievements by making criticism of others. Despite the feelings of superiority, they continue to suffer from a feeling of insecurity which had

developed earlier when they were replaced by younger siblings towards which parents started giving more attention, love and affection. This feeling of insecurity is responsible for poor personal and social adjustment of the firstborns.

The major personality characteristics of lastborn, as shown by the various researches, are dependency, affiliative need, lack of self-confidence, lack of frustration tolerance, defiance of authority, etc. In comparison to the firstborns, most lastborns have relatively weak achievement motivation. They are generally not pressed by the members of the family to achieve more nor do most families care to provide them with the opportunities that were provided to the firstborns. So far as the middle born or second borns are concerned, they are found to be generally less family oriented and more peer oriented. From their peer relationship, they develop such personality traits which produce better personal and social adjustment. As a result, they are more popular among the peers in comparison to the first or lastborn.

1.3.3.6 Size of the Family

This factor also affects the development of personality. In larger families parents have little time to protect any child. As such, children learn to be independent and show maturity in their behaviour at an earlier age as compared to children of smaller families. However, larger families encourage certain personality characteristics that may hamper good personal and social adjustments. For keeping the home environment reasonably calm, parents of larger families generally adopt authoritarian method of control, which produces a strong sense of resentment and rebellion among children. In small families since parents devote enough time to care and provide proper guidance to each child, this produces self-confidence, self-assurance and eliminates the feeling of inadequacy which may come when the child is left to meet the problem alone. However, due to strict competition for getting parental attention, affection and approval in small families, jealousy and envy especially against the firstborns who are perceived to be parents' favourite, damages the self-concept of the concerned individual.

We have seen that the development of personality is shaped by a set of three factors, namely, physical or biological factors, psychological factors and environmental factors. There are psychologists like J.B. Watson, father of Behaviourism, who have outright emphasised upon only one factor, that is environmental factor ignoring the role of other two sets of factor in development of personality. He had emphatically proclaimed that give him a child, he will make him either a doctor or a beggar or a engineer or a thief irrespective of his abilities. Today there is little support for such statement and there is almost an unanimity among the personality psychologists regarding the basic view that the physical or biological factors provide a boundary for the development of personality and within this general boundary, personality is developed or shaped under the influence of various psychological and environmental factors. Therefore, it can be concluded that development of personality can be explained in terms of the following equation:

$$\text{Personality Development} = \text{Physical determinants} \times \text{Psychological determinants} \\ \times \text{Environmental determinants}$$

Self Assessment Questions 4

- 1) Social deprivation generally leads to :
 - a) Social rejection
 - b) Social discrimination
 - c) Negative self-concept
 - d) None of these.
- 2) Mohan, leader of a group, is more colourful, more flexible, more active in his approach. It all happens because he has :
 - a) Social acceptance
 - b) Social support
 - c) Social status
 - d) All the above.
- 3) Within a group when the person status changes such as from follower to leader or the vice versa, it is termed as :
 - a) Social mobility
 - b) Changes in group status
 - c) Social stereotype
 - d) None of these.
4. Which has the most lasting impact upon the development of personality of a student ?
 - a) Academic success
 - b) Teacher's attitude and behaviour
 - c) Teacher-studente relationship
 - d) All of the above.
- 5) Which size of the family is considered ideal for development of pesonality?
 - a) Small families
 - b) Medium-size families
 - c) Large families
 - d) None.

1.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we learnt about personality. We pointed out as to how the term personality is often understood in terms of social attractiveness. We pointed out the scientific approach to personality development which explain the concept of personality in terms of individuality and consistency. Another important notion in defining the concept of personality is consistency. Combining these notions of individuality and consistency, personality can be defined as the distinctive and unique ways in which each individual thinks, feels and acts, which characterise a person's response throughout life. In other words, it can be said that personality refers to all those relatively permanent traits, dispositions or characteristics within the person that give some measure of consistency to the person's behaviour. These traits may be unique, common to some groups or shared by the entire species but their pattern will be different from individual to individual.

Behaviours of an individual seem to fit together in a meaningful way. It is to be kept in mind that the nature of behaviours is dynamic and there may occur changes in the organisation and structure of behaviours over a period of time. It is in this sense that Allport (1937, 1961), defined personality as the dynamic organisation within the person of the psychophysical systems that determine the unique adjustments to one's environment.

Then we took up personality development and pointed out as to how psychologists have tried to identity factors which directly or indirectly influence the growth and development of personality. Although there are a large number of factors,

which influence the development of personality, such factors have been broadly grouped into three general categories and these are given below.

- i) Biological factors
- ii) Psychological factors and
- iii) Environmental factors.

Since these factors tend to determine the way personality develops they are also called as determinants of personality. These were discussed in detail. Biological factors consisted of body build, physical attractiveness, homeostasis, physical defects and health conditions. The psychological factors consisted of intellectual factors, emotional factors including excessive love and affection, self disclosure, aspiration and achievement and goal setting behaviour. and environmental factors consisted of social acceptance, social deprivation, educational factors, family emotional climate, ordinal position of the individual in the family and size of the family. Finally it was concluded that personality development takes place through learning processes including imitation.

1.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define personality. Citing example, make distinction between temperament and character.
- 2) Discuss the physical or biological determinants of personality development.
- 3) Outline the role of psychological determinants of personality development.
- 4) Discuss the role of environmental determinants in shaping personality development.
- 5) Enumerate the basic formula : Personality Development = Physical determinants × Psychological determinants × Environmental determinants

1.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

Coon, D. (2007). *Introduction to Psychology*: Thompson.

Wood, S.E. & Wood, E.G. (1996). *The World of Psychology*: Allyn & Bacon

Ryckman, R.M (1993). *Theories of Personality*: Brooks / Cole Publishing Company.

1.7 ANSWERS TO SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- | | | | | | |
|----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1) | 1. (b) | 2. (d) | 3. (a) | 4. (c) | 5. (b) |
| 2) | 1. (b) | 2. (b) | 3. (c) | 4. (d) | 5. (a) |
| 3) | 1. (d) | 2. (b) | 3. (b) | 4. (b) | 5. (c) |
| 4) | 1. (c) | 2. (a) | 3. (a) | 4. (c) | 5. (d) |