

# **CHAPTER- I**

# **INTRODUCTION**

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## ***Personality***

**Personality** is a concept to be used to recognize stability and consistency of behaviour across different situations, uniqueness of the person and individual differences. There are controversies among psychologists to define personality. Among the numerous definitions of personality, the most commonly accepted definition is given by **Allport (1937)**. He stated that originally persona denoted theatrical mask used in Greek drama. The legend is that a popular actor had to put the mask so as to cover some cosmetic defect. During the course of time the word assumed so many shades of meanings.

**Allport** gave fifty different definitions derived from the different shades of meaning of the term. All the meanings can be arranged on a continuum, ranging from external (false, mask-life) manner to true self. According to him Personal qualities are the most common reference point of the define personality. In accordance with their emphasis all the definitions can be placed into five categories (**Allport, 1937**):

1. **Omnibus definitions.** This category of definitions makes use of a list of personality characteristics. The list is followed by such expressions as “Sum-total”, composite of “Aggregate of”, “ensemble of” etc. This kind of definition is illustrated by Allport by reproducing **Prince’s definition**: “Personality is the sum total of all the biological innate dispositions, impulses, tendencies, appetites, and instincts of the individual, and the acquired dispositions and tendencies – acquired by experience”
2. **Integrative definitions.** This category are included those definitions which emphasize the organizational aspect of personality. One of the definitions as quoted by **Allport (1937)** to illustrate this category is, “The pervasive super

pattern which expresses the integrity and the characteristic behavioural individuality of the organism” (**Gesell**).

3. **Hierarchical definitions.** Such definitions regard personality as a pyramid like structure with innermost self in the commanding position at the center. Thus personality is regarded as, “Levels or layers of dispositions with a unifying or integrative principle at the top”.
4. **Definitions in terms of adjustment.** Such definitions regard personality as the whole organism in interaction with the environment in the interest of survival. Thus, personality becomes equivalent to an individuals’ mode of coming to terms with the demands of environment.
5. **Definitions in terms of distinctiveness.** These definitions advocate that there will be no personality if all the individuals behave in the same manner. Marking of any member of a group from others in terms of his systems of habits, dispositions and sentiments is collectively known as personality.

Allport (1937) did not find biosocial formulations and omnibus definitions of personality to be useful. Distinctiveness, adjustment and growth are the elements that Allport (1937) found useful in defining personality: he defines personality as; “Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment to shi environment” (Allport, 1947).”

Elaborating this definition Allport presented the following assumptions regarding personality:

1. Personality is a self-regulating system, which is constantly changing and evolving.

2. This organization entails the operation of what is known as mental and what is known as physical.
3. Personality is not the manifest behavior or impression which an individual makes on others. It is something behind the manifest behaviour; it does something when an individual is aroused to make a response to the impinging stimuli or to meet environmental demand.
4. Allport assumes that not only every individual's mode of adjustment to the environment is different qualitatively, but there is also quantitative variation in respect of common traits.
5. Though personality gives distinctiveness and identity to the individual, its role is not confined to making the individual distinctive. It also serves a useful purpose by making an individual to behave in the interest of his survival.

Later on, Allport (1965) revised his definition of personality. The revised definition contains the word 'characteristic' for 'uniqueness' and words 'behaviour and thought' in place of 'adjustment':

"Personality is a dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristic behaviour and thought" (Allport, 1965)

The substitution of "unique" by "characteristic" is the realization that personality is to be studied by ideographic as well as nomothetic methods and that acts and concepts, which an individual shares with others, are ultimately individualistic and idiomatic. The replacement of "adjustment" by "behaviour and thought" is acknowledgement of the fact that in addition to dealing with the demands of survival created by environmental situations, one grows in accordance with the psychological system that comprise personality.

The study of personality has a broad and varied history in psychology, with an abundance of theoretical traditions. The major theories include dispositional (trait) perspective, psychodynamic, humanistic, biological, behaviorist and social learning perspective. There is no consensus on the definition of "personality" in psychology. Most researchers and psychologists do not explicitly identify themselves with a certain perspective and often take an eclectic approach.

### **Philosophical assumptions for personality Theories**

Many of the ideas developed by historical and modern personality theorists stem from the basic philosophical assumptions they hold. The study of personality is not a purely empirical discipline, as it brings in elements of art, science, and philosophy to draw general conclusions. The following five categories are some of the most fundamental philosophical assumptions on which theorists disagree:

#### **1. Freedom versus Determinism**

This is the debate over whether we have control over our own behavior and understand the motives behind it or if our behavior is causally determined by forces beyond our control has been considered unconscious, environmental, or biological by various theories.

#### **2. Heredity versus Environment**

Personality is thought to be determined largely by genetics and biology, by environment and experiences, or by some combination resulting thereof. There is evidence for all possibilities. Contemporary research suggests that most personality traits are based on the joint influence of genetics and environment. One of the forerunners in this arena is C. Robert Cloninger with the Temperament and Character model.

### 3. **Uniqueness versus Universality**

The argument over whether we are all unique individuals (Uniqueness) or if humans are basically similar in their nature (Universality). Gordon Allport, Abraham Maslow, and Carl Rogers were all advocates of the uniqueness of individuals. Behaviorists and cognitive theorists, in contrast, emphasized the importance of universal principles such as reinforcement and self-efficacy.

### 4. **Active versus Reactive**

Do we primarily act through our own initiative (Active), or react to outside stimuli? Behavioral theorists typically believe that humans are passively shaped by their environments, whereas humanistic and cognitive theorists believe that humans are more active.

### 5. **Optimistic versus Pessimistic**

Personality theories differ on whether people can change their personalities (Optimism), or if they are doomed to remain the same throughout their lives (Pessimism). Theories that place a great deal of emphasis on learning are often, but not always, more optimistic than theories that do not emphasize learning.

## **Personality theories**

Critics of personality theory claim personality is "plastic" across time, places, moods, and situations. Changes in personality may indeed result from diet (or lack thereof), medical effects, significant events, or learning. However, most personality theories emphasize stability over fluctuation. The definition of personality that is most widely supported to date is attributed to the neurologist Paul Roe. He stated personality to be "an individual's predisposition to think certain patterns of thought, and therefore engage in certain patterns of behaviour".

## Trait theories

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association, personality traits are "enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and oneself that are exhibited in a wide range of social and personal contexts." Theorists generally assume a) traits are relatively stable over time, b) traits differ among individuals (for instance, some people are outgoing while others are reserved), and c) traits influence behavior.

The most common models of traits incorporate three to five broad dimensions or factors. The least controversial dimension, observed as far back as the ancient Greeks, is simply extraversion and introversion (outgoing and physical-stimulation-oriented vs. quiet and physical-stimulation-averse).

- Gordon Allport delineated different kinds of traits, which he also called dispositions. Central traits are basic to an individual's personality, while secondary traits are more peripheral. Common traits are those recognized within a culture and thus may vary from culture to culture. Cardinal traits are those by which an individual may be strongly recognized.
- Raymond Cattell's research propagated a two-tiered personality structure with sixteen "primary factors" (16 Personality Factors) and five "secondary factors."
- Hans Eysenck believed just three traits—extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism—were sufficient to describe human personality. Differences between Cattell and Eysenck emerged due to preferences for different forms of factor analysis, with Cattell using oblique, Eysenck orthogonal rotation to analyze the factors that emerged when personality questionnaires were subjected to statistical analysis. Today, the Big Five

factors have the weight of a considerable amount of empirical research behind them, building on the work of Cattell and others.

- Lewis Goldberg proposed a five-dimension personality model, nicknamed the "Big Five":
  1. **Openness to Experience:** the tendency to be imaginative, independent, and interested in variety vs. practical, conforming, and interested in routine.
  2. **Conscientiousness:** the tendency to be organized, careful, and disciplined vs. disorganized, careless, and impulsive.
  3. **Extraversion:** the tendency to be sociable, fun-loving, and affectionate vs. retiring, somber, and reserved.
  4. **Agreeableness:** the tendency to be softhearted, trusting, and helpful vs. ruthless, suspicious, and uncooperative.
  5. **Neuroticism:** the tendency to be calm, secure, and self-satisfied vs. anxious, insecure, and self-pitying[1]

The Big Five contain important dimensions of personality. However, some personality researchers argue that this list of major traits is not exhaustive. Some support has been found for two additional factors: excellent/ordinary and evil/decent. However, no definitive conclusions have been established.

- Michael Ashton and Kibeom Lee, in 2008, proposed a six dimensional HEXACO Model of Personality Structure. The HEXACO personality traits/factors are: Honesty-Humility (H), Emotionality (E), Extraversion (X), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), and Openness to Experience (O). The three dimensions - Extraversion, Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience are considered to be basically the same as their counterpart dimensions in the Big Five Model. However, in the HEXACO

model, Honesty-Humility, Emotionality and Agreeableness differ from the Neuroticism and Agreeableness factors of the Big Five Model. Ashton and Lee especially emphasize the Honesty-Humility (H) factor as differentiating the HEXACO model from other personality frameworks. Specifically, the H factor is described as sincere, honest, faithful/loyal, modest/unassuming, fair-minded, VERSUS sly, deceitful, greedy, pretentious, hypocritical, boastful and pompous. The H factor has been linked to criminal, materialistic, power-seeking and unethical tendencies.

- John L. Holland's RIASEC vocational model, commonly referred to as the Holland Codes, stipulates that six personality traits lead people to choose their career paths. In this circumplex model, the six types are represented as a hexagon, with adjacent types more closely related than those more distant. The model is widely used in vocational counseling.
- Trait models have been criticized as being purely descriptive and offering little explanation of the underlying causes of personality. Eysenck's theory, however, does propose biological mechanisms as driving traits, and modern behavior genetics researchers have shown a clear genetic substrate to them.[vague] Another potential weakness of trait theories is that they may lead some people to accept oversimplified classifications—or worse, offer advice—based on a superficial analysis of personality. Finally, trait models often underestimate the effect of specific situations on people's behavior. It is important to remember that traits are statistical generalizations that do not always correspond to an individual's behavior.
- Does the importance of genetic influences on personality characteristics change across the 5 year period?

- Are genetic influences important for the likeliness of co-twins to change in the same way over the period of time?
- Are there genetic influences on the tendency of the co-twins to change, without keeping in mind of the direction of the change
- Age differences create more variables even within a family, so the best comparisons are found using twins. Twins typically share a family environment called a shared environment because they may share other aspects like teachers, school, and friends. A non-shared environment means completely different environment for both subjects. "Biologically related children who are separated after birth and raised in different families live in non-shared environments." Identical twins separated at birth and raised in different families constitute the best cases for heredity and personality because similarities between the two are due only to genetic influences. Vulnerability was a factor in this study that was taken into consideration regarding the issue of genetic influences on vulnerability. The study concluded that the monozygotic co-twins would be more similar than dizygotic co-twins in change over time. To answer the questions as to whether change is genetically influenced through personality, the data concluded that there was no significant differences for either variances between the monozygotic and dizygotic co-twins.

A link was found between the personality trait of neuroticism and a polymorphism called 5-HTTLPR in the serotonin transporter gene, but this association was not replicated in larger studies.[5] Other candidate gene studies have provided weak evidence that some personality traits are related to AVPR1A ("ruthlessness gene") and MAOA ("Warrior gene"). Genotypes, or the genetic make up of an organism,

influence but don't fully decide the physical traits of a person. Those are also influenced by the environment and behaviors they are surrounded by. For example, a person's height is affected by genetics, but if they are malnourished growth will be stunted no matter what their genetic coding says. Environment is also not completely responsible for an outcome in personality. An example from "Psychobiology of Personality" by Marvin Zuckerman is alcoholism: Studies suggest that alcoholism is an inherited disease, but if a subject with a strong biological background of alcoholism in their family tree is never exposed to alcohol, they will not get that way regardless of their genome. [6]

Another factor that can be addressed is biological versus adoptive relatives, a real-life experiment, adoption. This creates two groups: genetic relatives (biological parents and siblings) and environmental relatives (adoptive parents and siblings). So the question can be asked, are adopted children more like their biological parents, who share the same genes, or their adoptive parents, who share the same home environment? And consequently to sharing that home environment, do those adopted siblings come to share traits as well? After studying hundreds of adoptive families, the discovery was that people who grow up together, whether biologically related or not, do not much resemble one another in personality. In characteristics such as extroversion and agreeableness, adoptees are more like their biological parents than to their adoptive parents. However, the minute shared-environment effects do not mean that adoptive parenting is ineffective. Even though genetics may limit the family environment's influence on personality, parents do influence their children's attitudes, values, faith, manners and politics. In adoptive homes, child neglect and abuse and even divorce between the parents is uncommon. In accordance to that, it is not

surprising, despite a somewhat greater risk of psychological disorder, most adopted children excel, especially when they're adopted as infants. In fact, seven out of eight have reported feeling a strong connection with one or even both of their adoptive parents.

### **Types of theories**

Personality type refers to the psychological classification of different types of people. Personality types are distinguished from personality traits, which come in different levels or degrees. For example, according to type theories, there are two types of people, introverts and extraverts. According to trait theories, introversion and extraversion are part of a continuous dimension, with many people in the middle. The idea of psychological types originated in the theoretical work of Carl Jung[citation needed] and William Marston, whose work is reviewed in Dr. Travis Bradberry's *Self-Awareness*. Jung's seminal 1921 book on the subject is available in English as *Psychological Types*.

Building on the writings and observations of Jung, during World War II, Isabel Briggs Myers and her mother, Katharine C. Briggs, delineated personality types by constructing the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.[8] This model was later used by David Keirsey with a different understanding from Jung, Briggs and Myers.[9] In the former Soviet Union, Lithuanian Aušra Augustinavičiūtė independently derived a model of personality type from Jung's called Socionics.

The model is an older and more theoretical approach to personality, accepting extraversion and introversion as basic psychological orientations in connection with two pairs of psychological functions:

- Perceiving functions: sensing and intuition (trust in concrete, sensory-oriented facts vs. trust in abstract concepts and imagined possibilities)
- Judging functions: thinking and feeling (basing decisions primarily on logic vs. considering the effect on people).

Briggs and Myers also added another personality dimension to their type indicator to measure whether a person prefers to use a judging or perceiving function when interacting with the external world. Therefore they included questions designed to indicate whether someone wishes to come to conclusions (judgment) or to keep options open (perception).[8]

This personality typology has some aspects of a trait theory: it explains people's behaviour in terms of opposite fixed characteristics. In these more traditional models, the sensing/intuition preference is considered the most basic, dividing people into "N" (intuitive) or "S" (sensing) personality types. An "N" is further assumed to be guided either by thinking or feeling, and divided into the "NT" (scientist, engineer) or "NF" (author, humanitarian) temperament. An "S", by contrast, is assumed to be guided more by the judgment/perception axis, and thus divided into the "SJ" (guardian, traditionalist) or "SP" (performer, artisan) temperament.[9] These four are considered basic, with the other two factors in each case (including always extraversion/introversion) less important. Critics of this traditional view have observed that the types can be quite strongly stereotyped by professions (although neither Myers nor Keirsey engaged in such stereotyping in their type descriptions[8][9]), and thus may arise more from the need to categorize people for purposes of guiding their career choice.[10] This among other objections led to the emergence of the five-factor view, which is less concerned with behavior under work conditions and more concerned with

behavior in personal and emotional circumstances. (It should be noted, however, that the MBTI is not designed to measure the "work self", but rather what Myers and McCaulley called the "shoes-off self." [11]) Some critics have argued for more or fewer dimensions while others have proposed entirely different theories (often assuming different definitions of "personality").

Type A and Type B personality theory: During the 1950s, Meyer Friedman and his co-workers defined what they called Type A and Type B behavior patterns. They theorized that intense, hard-driving Type A personalities had a higher risk of coronary disease because they are "stress junkies." Type B people, on the other hand, tended to be relaxed, less competitive, and lower in risk. There was also a Type AB mixed profile.

### **Psychoanalytic theories**

Psychoanalytic theories explain human behaviour in terms of the interaction of various components of personality. Sigmund Freud was the founder of this school. Freud drew on the physics of his day (thermodynamics) to coin the term psychodynamics. Based on the idea of converting heat into mechanical energy, he proposed psychic energy could be converted into behavior. Freud's theory places central importance on dynamic, unconscious psychological conflicts.

Freud divides human personality into three significant components: the id, ego, and super-ego. The id acts according to the pleasure principle, demanding immediate gratification of its needs regardless of external environment; the ego then must emerge in order to realistically meet the wishes and demands of the id in accordance with the outside world, adhering to the reality principle. Finally, the superego (conscience) inculcates moral judgment and societal rules upon the ego,

thus forcing the demands of the id to be met not only realistically but morally. The superego is the last function of the personality to develop, and is the embodiment of parental/social ideals established during childhood. According to Freud, personality is based on the dynamic interactions of these three components.

The channeling and release of sexual (libidal) and aggressive energies, which ensues from the "Eros" (sex; instinctual self-preservation) and "Thanatos" (death; instinctual self-annihilation) drives respectively, are major components of his theory. It is important to note that Freud's broad understanding of sexuality included all kinds of pleasurable feelings experienced by the human body.

Freud proposed five psychosexual stages of personality development. He believed adult personality is dependent upon early childhood experiences and largely determined by age five. Fixations that develop during the Infantile stage contribute to adult personality and behavior.

One of Sigmund Freud's earlier associates, Alfred Adler, did agree with Freud early childhood experiences are important to development, and believed birth order may influence personality development. Adler believed the oldest was the one that set high goals to achieve to get the attention they lost back when the younger siblings were born. He believed the middle children were competitive and ambitious possibly so they are able to surpass the first-born's achievements, but were not as much concerned about the glory. He also believed the last born would be more dependent and sociable but be the baby. He also believed that the only child loves being the center of attention and matures quickly, but in the end fails to become independent.

Heinz Kohut thought similarly to Freud's idea of transference. He used narcissism as a model of how we develop our sense of self. Narcissism is the exaggerated

sense of one self in which is believed to exist in order to protect one's low self esteem and sense of worthlessness. Kohut had a significant impact on the field by extending Freud's theory of narcissism and introducing what he called the 'self-object transferences' of mirroring and idealization. In other words, children need to idealize and emotionally "sink into" and identify with the idealized competence of admired figures such as parents or older siblings. They also need to have their self-worth mirrored by these people. These experiences allow them to thereby learn the self-soothing and other skills that are necessary for the development of a healthy sense of self.

Another important figure in the world of personality theory was Karen Horney. She is credited with the development of the "real self" and the "ideal self". She believes all people have these two views of their own self. The "real self" is how you really are with regards to personality, values, and morals; but the "ideal self" is a construct you apply to yourself to conform to social and personal norms and goals. Ideal self would be "I can be successful, I am CEO material"; and real self would be "I just work in the mail room, with not much chance of high promotion".

### **Behaviorist theories**

Behaviorists explain personality in terms of the effects external stimuli have on behavior. It was a radical shift away from Freudian philosophy. This school of thought was developed by B. F. Skinner who put forth a model which emphasized the mutual interaction of the person or "the organism" with its environment. Skinner believed children do bad things because the behavior obtains attention that serves as a reinforcer. For example: a child cries because the child's crying in the past has led to attention. These are the response, and consequences. The

response is the child crying, and the attention that child gets is the reinforcing consequence. According to this theory, people's behavior is formed by processes such as operant conditioning. Skinner put forward a "three term contingency model" which helped promote analysis of behavior based on the "Stimulus - Response - Consequence Model" in which the critical question is: "Under which circumstances or antecedent 'stimuli' does the organism engage in a particular behavior or 'response', which in turn produces a particular 'consequence'?"

Richard Herrnstein extended this theory by accounting for attitudes and traits. An attitude develops as the response strength (the tendency to respond) in the presences of a group of stimuli become stable. Rather than describing conditionable traits in non-behavioral language, response strength in a given situation accounts for the environmental portion. Herrnstein also saw traits as having a large genetic or biological component as do most modern behaviorists.

Ivan Pavlov is another notable influence. He is well known for his classical conditioning experiments involving dogs. These physiological studies led him to discover the foundation of behaviorism as well as classical conditioning.

### **Social cognitive theories**

In cognitive theory, behavior is explained as guided by cognitions (e.g. expectations) about the world, especially those about other people. Cognitive theories are theories of personality that emphasize cognitive processes such as thinking and judging.

Albert Bandura, a social learning theorist suggested the forces of memory and emotions worked in conjunction with environmental influences. Bandura was known mostly for his "Bobo Doll experiment". During these experiments, Bandura

video taped a college student kicking and verbally abusing a bobo doll. He then showed this video to a class of kindergarten children who were getting ready to go out to play. When they entered the play room, they saw bobo dolls, and some hammers. The people observing these children at play saw a group of children beating the doll. He called this study and his findings observational learning, or modeling.

Early examples of approaches to cognitive style are listed by Baron (1982). These include Witkin's (1965) work on field dependency, Gardner's (1953) discovering people had consistent preference for the number of categories they used to categorise heterogeneous objects, and Block and Petersen's (1955) work on confidence in line discrimination judgments. Baron relates early development of cognitive approaches of personality to ego psychology. More central to this field have been:

- Attributional style theory[13] dealing with different ways in which people explain events in their lives. This approach builds upon locus of control, but extends it by stating we also need to consider whether people attribute to stable causes or variable causes, and to global causes or specific causes.
- Various scales have been developed to assess both attributional style and locus of control. Locus of control scales include those used by Rotter and later by Duttweiler, the Nowicki and Strickland (1973) Locus of Control Scale for Children and various locus of control scales specifically in the health domain, most famously that of Kenneth Wallston and his colleagues, The Multidimensional Health Locus of Control Scale.[14] Attributional style has been assessed by the Attributional Style Questionnaire,[15] the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire,[16] the Attributions

Questionnaire,[17] the Real Events Attributional Style Questionnaire[18] and the Attributional Style Assessment Test.

- Achievement style focuses upon identification of an individual's Locus of Control tendency, such as by Rotter's evaluations, and was found by Cassandra Bolyard Whyte to provide valuable information for improving academic performance of students. Individuals with internal control tendencies are likely to persist to better academic performance levels, presenting an achievement personality, according to Cassandra B. Whyte. Recognition that the tendency to believe that hard work and persistence often results in attainment of life and academic goals has influenced formal educational and counseling efforts with students of various ages and in various settings since the 1970's research about achievement.

Walter Mischel (1999) has also defended a cognitive approach to personality. His work refers to "Cognitive Affective Units", and considers factors such as encoding of stimuli, affect, goal-setting, and self-regulatory beliefs. The term "Cognitive Affective Units" shows how his approach considers affect as well as cognition.

Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) is a theory of personality developed by the American psychologist George Kelly in the 1950s. From the theory, Kelly derived a psychotherapy approach and also a technique called The Repertory Grid Interview that helped his patients to uncover their own "constructs" (defined later) with minimal intervention or interpretation by the therapist. The Repertory Grid was later adapted for various uses within organizations, including decision-making and interpretation of other people's world-views. From his 1963 book, *A Theory of Personality*, pp. 103–104:

- Fundamental Postulate: A person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which the person anticipates events.
- Construction Corollary: A person anticipates events by construing their replications.
- Individuality Corollary: People differ from one another in their construction of events.
- Organization Corollary: Each person characteristically evolves, for convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs.
- Dichotomy Corollary: A person's construction system is composed of a finite number of dichotomous constructs.
- Choice Corollary: People choose for themselves the particular alternative in a dichotomized construct through which they anticipate the greater possibility for extension and definition of their system.
- Range Corollary: A construct is convenient for the anticipation of a finite range of events only.
- Experience Corollary: A person's construction system varies as the person successively construes the replication of events.
- Modulation Corollary: The variation in a person's construction system is limited by the permeability of the constructs within whose ranges of conveniences the variants lie.
- Fragmentation Corollary: A person may successively employ a variety of construction subsystems which are inferentially incompatible with each other.

- Commonality Corollary: To the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, the psychological processes of the two individuals are similar to each other.
- Sociality Corollary: To the extent that one person construes another's construction processes, that person may play a role in a social process involving the other person.

### **Humanistic theories**

In humanistic psychology it is emphasized people have free will and they play an active role in determining how they behave. Accordingly, humanistic psychology focuses on subjective experiences of persons as opposed to forced, definitive factors that determine behavior. Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers were proponents of this view, which is based on the "phenomenal field" theory of Combs and Snygg (1949).

Maslow spent much of his time studying what he called "self-actualizing persons", those who are "fulfilling themselves and doing the best they are capable of doing". Maslow believes all who are interested in growth move towards self-actualizing (growth, happiness, satisfaction) views. Many of these people demonstrate a trend in dimensions of their personalities. Characteristics of self-actualizers according to Maslow include the four key dimensions:

1. **Awareness** - maintaining constant enjoyment and awe of life. These individuals often experienced a "peak experience". He defined a peak experience as an "intensification of any experience to the degree there is a loss or transcendence of self". A peak experience is one in which an individual perceives an expansion of his or herself, and detects a unity and

meaningfulness in life. Intense concentration on an activity one is involved in, such as running a marathon, may invoke a peak experience.

2. **Reality and problem centered** - they have tendency to be concerned with "problems" in their surroundings.
3. **Acceptance/Spontaneity** - they accept their surroundings and what cannot be changed.
4. **Unhostile sense of humor/democratic** - they do not like joking about others, which can be viewed as offensive. They have friends of all backgrounds and religions and hold very close friendships.

Maslow and Rogers emphasized a view of the person as an active, creative, experiencing human being who lives in the present and subjectively responds to current perceptions, relationships, and encounters. They disagree with the dark, pessimistic outlook of those in the Freudian psychoanalysis ranks, but rather view humanistic theories as positive and optimistic proposals which stress the tendency of the human personality toward growth and self-actualization. This progressing self will remain the center of its constantly changing world; a world that will help mold the self but not necessarily confine it. Rather, the self has opportunity for maturation based on its encounters with this world. This understanding attempts to reduce the acceptance of hopeless redundancy. Humanistic therapy typically relies on the client for information of the past and its effect on the present, therefore the client dictates the type of guidance the therapist may initiate. This allows for an individualized approach to therapy. Rogers found patients differ in how they respond to other people. Rogers tried to model a particular approach to therapy- he stressed the reflective or empathetic response. This response type takes the client's viewpoint and reflects back his or her feeling and the context for

it. An example of a reflective response would be, "It seems you are feeling anxious about your upcoming marriage". This response type seeks to clarify the therapist's understanding while also encouraging the client to think more deeply and seek to fully understand the feelings they have expressed.

### **Bio-psychological theories**

Some of the earliest thinking about possible biological bases of personality grew out of the case of Phineas Gage. In an 1848 accident, a large iron rod was driven through Gage's head, and his personality apparently changed as a result, although descriptions of these psychological changes are usually exaggerated.

In general, patients with brain damage have been difficult to find and study. In the 1990s, researchers began to use Electroencephalography (EEG), Positron Emission Tomography (PET) and more recently functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), which is now the most widely used imaging technique to help localize personality traits in the brain. One of the founders of this area of brain research is Richard Davidson of the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Davidson's research lab has focused on the role of the prefrontal cortex (PFC) and amygdala in manifesting human personality. In particular, this research has looked at hemispheric asymmetry of activity in these regions. Neuropsychological experiments have suggested that hemispheric asymmetry can affect an individual's personality (particularly in social settings) for individuals with NLD (non-verbal learning disorder), which is marked by the impairment of nonverbal information controlled by the right hemisphere of the brain. Progress will arise in the areas of gross motor skills, inability to organize visual-spatial relations, or adapt to novel social situations.[clarification needed] Frequently, a person with

NLD is unable to interpret non-verbal cues, and therefore experiences difficulty interacting with peers in socially normative ways.

One integrative, biopsychosocial approach to personality and psychopathology, linking brain and environmental factors to specific types of activity, is the hypostatic model of personality, created by Codrin Stefan Tapu.

### **Stages of personality development**

The aspects of the existence of an individual are numerous, most of which are genetically determined and in the majority of cases, environment has a critical role in the completion of what nature has started. Personality and its changes over life span are a good example on such phenomenon. Personality is defined as the distinguishing characteristics of an individual which differentiate him/her from others when displayed in a wide variety of situations and circumstances especially social ones. In fact, the development of personality which is the outcome as previously mentioned of interaction between genetic make-up of an individual and his environment, starts prenatally or even before conception since genetics has something to do with it. In children, personality has a considerable potential for growth and changes i.e. very flexible, but it is rigid i.e. unalterable in adults . Personality and its development are under influence of some determinants. Environment is considered the major extrinsic one. Cultural, racial, socioeconomic, educational, social guidance and health conditions could be environmental factors playing a critical role in personality development . The intrinsic factors could be biological drives, such as the homeostatic, sexual, defensive and assimilatory drives, and hereditary temperamental differences . Parental education, health and emotional states, social interactions are other

factors which influence personality development. Several theories were stated explaining the development of personality, each of which dealt with the concept of personality development from a different point of view. For example, the Psychoanalytic theory that was developed by Freud dealt with personality development from a sexual point of view and was concerned mainly with emotional development . The learning theory is another theory of personality development that is concerned mainly with child and his social background and which rose the idea of that behavior is modified by experience. The Psychoanalytic development theory was modified by Erik Erikson and Stack Sullivan. The later emphasized the importance of interpersonal transactions between parents and child and the child's development in a social system. Erikson formulated eight stages of psychosocial development focusing upon the specific developmental tasks of each phase (psychosocial crisis). Generally, the life cycle is divided into eight developmental stages the details of each of which are going to be discussed in the body of this essay. These stages are: infancy, toddler hood, preschool child, school child, adolescence, young adulthood, middle years and old age.

**Infancy stage:**

The infancy stage is the first year of life. It occurs from one month to the end of the first year. This period is characterized by very rapid physical, psychological, and social growth and development. Developmentally, it is during this stage that the infant begins to establish himself as a dependent being and begins to establish self-awareness. Rudimentary social interaction is developed as the infant begins to explore the physical world. The nurturing persons must imitate

their behavior in addition to fulfilling their needs such as food and warmth. In addition, attachment is best established during this period of development. Furthermore, this period of life witnesses the establishment of foundations of future emotional stability and intellectual development. Infants need stimulating and socializing experiences to provide a firm foundation for developing into a person. A critical issue concerning infancy is whether or not a feeling of confidence in the world is established. The sense of confidence is established when the infant gains a feeling that caregivers on whom they depend to fulfill their needs are dependable, as Erikson has thought about when he considered trust Vs mistrust to be the psychosocial crisis during this period of life. Establishing a sense of trust in caregiver will constitute the nucleus of confidence and trust in self. One cannot recall infancy experiences although no part of life experience will be as solidly incorporated in the individual as infancy. The developmental tasks of infancy have been identified as: learning to walk, beginning to talk and communicate with others, beginning to have emotional relationships with primary caregivers, learning to eat solid foods and developing stable sleep and eating periods.

### **Toddler hood stage:**

The toddler hood stage occurs from one year to three years of age. During this stage, increased motor development permits increased physical autonomy, but the child still lacks skill and judgment, so limitations are very recommended at this stage for the child's own safety since accidents are very common. On the other hand, this may result in clashes with parental authority. Autonomy Vs shame and doubt is how Erikson thought about this stage of development in his theory. The

desire for autonomy often results in displays of negativism. This is displayed in that the child now knows the meaning and value of words such as “no” and starts using them frequently. Moreover, frustration, resulting in temper tantrums, is common. During this stage, the child's curiosity increases, but his verbal and intellectual abilities lag far behind his motor development. The toddler's psychosocial skills increase at a more rapid rate. They now explore new and different dimensions of their relationships with their parents. This fact reveals itself in that in the past the child was used to be provided with his needs but now he must be delimited. In addition, now, in order to maintain a satisfactory relationship with parents, the child has to obey rules and be limited by them. This stage is a critical time during which a toddler establishes a basic trust in self and a sense of initiative. Besides, the bond between caregiver and child becomes intense and the child strongly resists separation. Children now recognize that he/she are separate entities and there are boundaries between them and their parents. Consequently, anxiety increases as a result of not being sure yet of their ability to care for themselves. The developmental tasks for this stage are identified as: tolerating separation from the primary caregiver, gaining control of bowel and bladder function, using words to communicate with others, and becoming less dependent on the primary caregiver.

**Preschool stage:**

The preschool stage, also called early childhood, occurs from three to six years of age. The preschooler's world is expanding. New experiences and the child's social role are tried during play. During this stage, there is tremendous growth in vocabulary and continuous chatter is a characteristic feature of this stage as

intense curiosity was in the previous one. In addition, persistent questioning is the tool by which the preschooler explores and knows more and more about his/her world and environment. Moreover, fantasy characterized by making unbelievable long stories and pretended play mates may worry the parents, but is an important component of the child's growth and development during this period. During this stage, a child becomes more cooperative with his/her family as he/she becomes amenable to parental demands. In spite of that the child is still emotionally linked and dependent on his/her parents, the child becomes socially interacting and cooperative patterns of play develop. According to Erikson's psychosocial theory, this stage represents the stage of initiative when stimulated Vs guilt when discouraged. The developmental tasks of the preschool years include: increasing the ability to communicate and understand others, performing self-care activities, learning the difference between sexes and developing sexual modesty, learning right from wrong and good from bad and developing family relationships.

**School age stage:**

The school age stage occurs from six years to twelve years of age. This stage is the time for entering school and includes the preadolescent period (from ten to twelve years of age). Children move out of their homes into worlds where they have to find their places, therefore their self concepts, value systems and cognitive capacities change. In addition, children enter the world of peer groups and their behavior is increasingly influenced by their peers. The child's competence in communication increases as physical, cognitive, and social development increase. Although the child may attend kindergarten or had a sort

of experience with children in neighborhood through playing, attending school implies new expectations from a child. They now represent their families who want to be proud of their child. At this stage, the child starts comparing him/herself with class mates or playmates. Such circumstances stimulate the child to be as better as possible so that pride of oneself is achieved. This is the time when transition from ascribed to achieved status starts to take place. In school it does not matter how a child is in his/her family (loved, neglected, older or younger sibling) except when those factors have affected the child's personality in a way or another. In school, a child is treated as a part of a collectivity rather than as individual at home and this requires the child to forget many desires that may not enable him to fit into the group. All the previous demands organize the child's personality so that the child is able to prepare himself to live within a larger society rather than in a family. During this stage of development, a sense of belonging which makes the child feel accepted and as an integral part of the group and of the broader society occurs. This sensation involves identification of the society the child is a part of, beside commitment to its values and ethics. In addition, a sense of responsibility involving a capacity and willingness to live up to the expectations one has aroused evolves at this stage of development in the child's personality. The school child's evaluation of himself starts when adults, school mates and playmates evaluate him/her. A self concept that enables the child to regulate his ambitions and ways of relating to others is then established. A new set of values is acquired by the child and he/she starts to view his/her society from different perspectives. At this stage, children have rigid standards of what is right and what is wrong. Industry Vs inferiority represent this stage in the psychosocial theory of development. The developmental tasks of the school age child are:

developing the social and physical skills needed for playing games, learning to get along with others, learning behavioral attitudes appropriate to one's own sex, learning basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, developing a conscience and morals, and developing a good feeling and attitude about oneself. During the later part of the school age child's development, often called preadolescence, the child begins to show more refinement and maturity in the following areas: becoming an independent adult and learning to depend on oneself, developing and keeping friendships with peers, understanding the physical, psychological, and social roles of one's sex, developing greater muscular strength, coordination, and balance, learning how to study.

**Adolescence stage:**

The adolescence stage of growth and development, which represent the industry Vs role confusion stage of the psychosocial theory of development, occurs from 12 to 20 years of age. Adolescence is a transitional stage between childhood and adult life and is characterized by rapid physical growth and psychological, mental and social maturity. This stage of development officially begins at puberty and ends with person achieving a level of maturity enough to deal with and manage realities of life and be able to bear responsibility of him/her self and his/her actions . The developmental tasks faced by the child at this age are accepting changes in the body and appearance, developing appropriate relationships with males and females of the same age, accepting the male and female role appropriate for one's age, becoming independent from parents and adults, developing morals, attitudes, and values needed for functioning in society . Adolescence is thought to be the period of emotional unheard and rebellion, sudden changes of mood,

shifting ideologies and clashes with authority. During adolescence, although emancipation from parents in order to achieve independence and learning to accept responsibility for one's self takes place, an adolescent still fluctuates between child-like dependency and stubborn independence. During this critical stage an adolescent is ambivalent since he or she does not like adults' control but still seek their guidance. In addition, sudden fluctuations in mood are common to which erratic behavior can be related. Peer groups play a critical role in the process of socialization and social interaction and self concept is gradually acquired as a result of reactions of his peers towards him. As mentioned previously, an adolescent undergoes active mental maturity since an adolescent becomes capable of more than abstract mode of thinking and the capacity of receiving new information reaches its peak. This sort of development results in endless speculations about abstract issues. In spite of that, the adolescent still feels uncertain i.e. lacks the ability to direct him/her self and the confidence to translate his/her thoughts and ideas into a definite course of action. Persistent arguing and pretended wisdom are characteristic features of adolescents. Moreover, an adolescent rethinks about matters of life he learnt to be true from his/her parents early in life. What the adolescent needs by the end of this stage is to find out what sort of person he or she is and what his/her abilities and limitations are, therefore the period of adolescence can be called the period of readjustment.

### **Young adulthood stage:**

The stage of young adulthood occurs from 20 to 40 years of age. Psychological and social developments continue during this stage. A personal life-cycle

develops during this period. Generally, it is during this period that a person establishes a relationship with a significant other, a commitment to something, and competence. Marital and vocational choices represent the determinants of one's overall personality development in general and future personality development in particular, since they are two of the most significant decisions of a lifetime whose responsibility is beard by the young adult . Commitment of oneself to a specific way in life takes place through marriage and children rising. A person has attained adult status with the completion of physical maturation, and, he/she has become sufficiently well integrated and emotionally mature to utilize the opportunities and accept the responsibilities that accompany it . His/her independence from their parental families motivates them to achieve an interdependence and find their places in society. Through vocation and marriage he/she becomes united to networks of persons, find tasks that demand involvement, and gain roles into which he/she fit which help define their identities. Most individuals will give up their much sought independence to share with another in marriage. Then the life cycle rounds to the point at which young adults are again confronted by the start of life, but now as members of the parental generation, and they often undergo profound personality reorientations as they become involved in the unfolding of a child's life . This stage of life ends when a person has achieved stable positions in society and the time when his/her children no more need his/her attention. Intimacy Vs isolation is the representative of this stage in the psychosocial theory. Developmental tasks of young adulthood include: choosing education and occupation, selecting a marriage partner, learning to live with a spouse or wife and developing a satisfactory sex life.

**Middle adulthood stage:**

The stage of middle adulthood occurs from the age of 40 to 65 years. This stage of development is more stable and comfortable although some people develop a "midlife crisis." The "midlife crisis" is a term that describes the feelings of distress that affect some people when they realize that they are no longer young. The term is used most often to describe men who strive to recapture their sense of lost youth by having extramarital affairs, suddenly changing jobs, or adopting youthful fashions. The middle years start when persons achieve maturity, usually in their early thirties having gained the skills, knowledge and assurance needed to settle into their careers and family lives . They soon move into the period most people consider the "prime of life" the years among 35 and 55 during which they reach the midlife transition or crisis as mentioned previously. It is during this period of growth and development that life-style changes occur because of other changes. Several physical changes occur during this period. The most important of them is menopause in women. The changes may occur very gradually and go unnoticed, or they may be seen early. This stage is represented by the stage of generativity Vs stagnation in the psychosocial theory of development. The developmental tasks faced in middle adulthood are: adjusting to physical change, having grown children, developing leisure-time activities and relating to aging parents.

**Older adulthood stage:**

The stage of older adulthood is considered to begin at 65 years of age. Many physical, psychological, and social changes occur during later adulthood. The critical transition comes at the time of retirement for both the husband and the wife. In old age persons are moving toward completion of their life cycles. Old

age can be a time when a person can enjoy his/her time with his/her grandchildren and leisure time activities, and forget about things caused him/her a great deal of stress and anxiety in the past three or four decades. During this stage a person must adapt to changing physical abilities. This stage is characterized by increased wisdom although many other things are lost such as health, friends, family and independence. The aging process of people in this stage of development varies greatly . Ego integrity Vs despair represents this stage in the psychosocial theory. The developmental tasks of the older adult are: adjusting to decreases physical strength and loss of health, adjusting to retirement and reduced income, coping with death of a husband or wife and preparing for one's own death eating periods.

**To** sum up, individuals are characterized by their personalities which develop over life span under influence of both intrinsic factors such as biological drives and extrinsic factors such as the several components of environment, society and family. Several theories were stated explaining the development of personality, the most famous of which is the Psychoanalytic theory developed by Freud. Personality development is divided into eight major stages each with its own features, developmental tasks and abnormalities. Such abnormalities could be repeated frustrations and thumb sucking during infancy, maladjustment, educational problems and nail biting in school children and in childhood in general and Anorexia nervosa in adolescence .

## **Personality tests**

There are two major types of personality tests.

- **Projective tests;**

Projective tests assume personality is primarily unconscious and assess an individual by how he or she responds to an ambiguous stimulus, like an ink blot. The idea is unconscious needs will come out in the person's response, e.g. an aggressive person may see images of destruction.

- **Objective tests ;**

Objective tests assume personality is consciously accessible and measure it by self-report questionnaires. Research on psychological assessment has generally found objective tests are more valid and reliable than projective tests.

## ***Academic Achievement***

Academic achievement can be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as extracurricular activities. It includes excellence in sporting, behaviour, confidence, communication, punctuality, skill, assetiveness, Arts, Culture, and the like.

According to Steinberger (1993) "Academic achievement encompasses student ability and performance; it is multidimensional; it is intricately related to human growth and cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development; it reflects the whole child; it is not related to a single instance, but occurs across time and levels, through a student's life in public school and on into post secondary years and working life." Merriam Webster defines academic achievement as "the quality and quantity of a student's work."

### ***Factors influencing Academic achievement or performance***

Number of factors that determine the level and quality of students' academic performance are analysed from four perspectives:

- Student level factors — including the student's own physical health and social and emotional wellbeing
- Career level factors — such as socioeconomic status, and the physical and mental health of carers
- Family and household environment factors
- School environment factors.

#### **Student level factors**

**School attendance** ; Improvements in school attendance remain a key strategy for addressing low academic performance of Aboriginal students. Data modeling shows that students absent from school for 105 days or more were two times more likely to have low academic performance compared with students that were absent for 10 days or less.

**Risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioral difficulties**; The academic performance of Aboriginal students is substantially lower in the presence of an emotional or behavioral difficulty. Students at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were over two and half times more likely to be rated at low academic performance relative to students rated at low risk of such difficulties.

**Career education**; Higher levels of career education were a protective factor in terms of the academic performance of students. Students in the primary care of a person who had completed 13 or more years of schooling were over two times

less likely to have low academic performance than students whose primary carer had between 1–9 years of education.

**Lack of association between student’s physical health and academic performance;** Associations between a range of physical health indicators and Aboriginal students’ academic performance were also tested. Of the physical health factors tested, only two were found to be significantly associated with academic performance—students that had trouble saying certain sounds; and students that needed help with the basics of daily living such as eating, dressing and bathing.

**Speech difficulties;** Students that had trouble saying certain sounds were one and a half times more likely to have low academic performance than students who did not have trouble saying certain sounds.

**Main language spoken in the classroom;** Students that spoke Aboriginal English in the classroom were over two times more likely to be rated at low academic performance than students who spoke English in the classroom.

**Where the student usually studies ;** Students that usually did their homework or study in homework classes were over two times more likely to have low academic performance relative to students that usually studied at home.

### **Family and household factors**

**Gambling;** It is a cause of problems in the household. Students living in households where gambling was a cause of problems were over two times more likely to have low academic performance relative to students living in households where gambling did not cause problems.

### **School environment factors**

**Student to teacher ratio;** Students attending schools where the student to teacher ratio was 20 or more were 1.8 times less likely to have low academic performance than students attending schools where this ratio was 10 or less.

**Unexplained absence from school ;** Students with more than 10 days of unexplained absence from school were almost two times more likely to have low academic performance than students who did not have any unexplained absence.

**School suspension;** Students suspended from school on two or more occasions were over three times more likely to have low academic performance than students who had never been suspended.

### **Cultural Diversity and Academic Achievement**

One of the most serious and explosive issues in all countries today is how to meet the educational needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. If current trends in educational achievement continue, millions of students (primarily poor African-American, Asian, Native American, and Hispanic) will not obtain the education necessary for full participation in the economic and civic life of the country. Furthermore, the inequality that results from differences in educational achievement of children is likely to make the social stability .

Differences in the academic performance of children appear early. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NEAP) reported that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and many children of color consistently achieve below the national average in mathematics and language skills, with the gap widening as children continue through their school years. The longer some children stay in school, the greater the discrepancy between their educational

performance and that of white and middle-class students. Gradually and inexorably, the chances for academic success diminish for poor and minority students as they are launched into trajectories of failure (Alexander and Entwisle, 1988,). Early childhood, then, is a critical time for intervention in the schooling of at-risk children if we expect to change outcomes.

The importance of early childhood education is reflected in the first of our national goals: All children will come to school ready to learn. Those of us who study early development and learning find this statement to be awkward. After all, don't all children learn? The ability to learn is an essential condition for living and, with very few exceptions, all children can and do learn. Furthermore, whether children learn in school depends as much on the school environment as it does on the children. Therefore, many of us have rephrased this goal to read: All children will come to school *ready to learn in school*, and all schools will be ready to *teach all children*. The changed phrasing emphasizes not just the *children's* readiness, but the *school's* readiness. In this paper, I suggest that understanding how differences in culture and language affect children's learning can help us understand what schools can do to improve outcomes for many of this nation's children.

How do we account for the difference in children's academic performance? Is something wrong with poor children and children of color - their genes or their families - that undermines their development and achievement? Of course not. While some children are at risk for abnormal development because of the deprivations inherent in living in poverty or in crisis-ridden families, most poor and minority children are developmentally normal and their families ably carry out the essential child rearing functions. Poor and minority children's range of adaptive and learning capabilities is as broad as other children's. The explanation for the

differences in school performance lies in the difference in life experiences between groups - the worlds in which children of different cultural and socioeconomic groups live do not encourage the same beliefs and attitudes nor do they emphasize the same skills. By ignoring the differences between children - their experiences, their beliefs, their traditional practices - schools limit their own ability to educate these children.

Over the past half-century, child development research has provided an increasingly comprehensive knowledge base to explain how young children acquire skills and knowledge and define the environmental supports needed to stimulate and sustain development. This research, best represented in the work of Piaget (1952), focused on similarities in children's development. However, by placing emphasis on universal principles, this work did not adequately appreciate the cultural differences in the way that children express competence and achievement. Indeed, in school, behaviors characteristic of middle-class white children have been seen as the only valid representation of competence - the standard by which all children are judged. Schools have ignored or rejected different cultural expressions of development that are normal and adequate and on which school skills and knowledge can be built. Consequently, children from poor and minority families have been judged to be inadequate because they do not already know nor do they easily learn the school curricula. Inadequate communication, inaccurate assessment, and inappropriate education are the inevitable results, with poor and minority children labeled as delayed and their families labeled as dysfunctional because they have different resources, lifestyles, and belief systems.

A model of development that incorporates a full understanding of the role of culture might be characterized as encompassing two sides of the same coin. On one side are intrinsic characteristics, responsive to the genes that define both human and individual potential. Intrinsic characteristics include the capacity to learn - to categorize objects, to form interpersonal relationships, to learn language. These abilities are tempered by a variety of inborn characteristics, such as hearing acuity, neurological processing machinery, and brain functioning that help determine how fast and how well children will learn these tasks. But unless they have specific in-born disabilities, children will learn human characteristics.

On the other side of the coin are cultural characteristics that affect the specific ways in which developmental potential is realized. Culture determines which objects are worthy of being categorized, which people children should care for, what language is to be spoken. If we use the example of language, we can say that learning language, or the ability to symbolize thoughts in words, is a human accomplishment and that the ease or difficulty that children will have in realizing their potential is shaped by their unique genetic characteristics. But in order to learn to speak, children must participate in a particular language community, and the grammar, social rules, and cognitive challenges of the child's linguistic community shape his or her language abilities (Rogoff, 1984). Therefore, whether a child speaks Spanish or Black English, uses standard grammar, speaks to the teacher politely, or uses many or a few words to express ideas depends largely on what people in his or her community do, not simply on the child's intrinsic capabilities. Thus, in development, biological and cultural characteristics are inextricably interwoven.

The ability to form and value social contracts begins in the first infant/ caregiver relationships and continues throughout life. The relationship that evolves as caregivers respond to the dependent infant forms the first links of the social ties that guide development. Children learn to establish and verify perceptions and beliefs about the world through direct teaching by the older people in their community and through identification with those people who care for them and are emotionally important to them. Emotional/social ties bind children first to their primary caregivers and then to others in their group, providing the impetus to think, feel, and behave like them.

Social interactions are not haphazard. Although cultures may be highly complex and may change constantly as groups adapt to new challenges, the meaning that group members attribute to experience is relatively stable and represents almost unconscious definitions of what is right and, therefore, normal human behavior (Bowman, 1989). Cultural patterns of interaction guide the developing child, but they also become the basis for their definitions of themselves - their identity. Children become what they live.

This model of development - positing a broad normal range of individual and cultural variation - leads to the following question: Are all child rearing environments equally good for helping children reach their developmental potential? The answer is no. The evidence is clear that some early environments result in children's failing to thrive physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Such environments are characterized by poverty, abuse, and neglect. But it is extremely difficult to predict how a particular environment will affect an individual child. Environmental effects are buffered by social support systems, personal resiliency and vulnerability, and the meaning that people attribute to the care and

education they provide for children. Thus, some children who are reared in what might be considered hazardous circumstances are not developmentally impaired. Therefore, while identifying risk factors in children and their environments is useful, risks do not predict development and should not be used to determine developmental status or educational placement.

### **Developmental Competence**

By the time children are five years old, the vast majority have learned a great deal. They have reached "developmental competence" and "maturity," meaning that they have achieved the normative learning benchmarks of their community. They have mastered their home languages, established appropriate social relationships with their families and neighbors, learned a variety of category and symbol systems, and developed the ability to organize and regulate their own behavior in situations that are familiar to them. These benchmarks coordinate biological growth and social learning, and under ordinary circumstances children's knowledge and skills match those required in the social settings in which they live. On the basis of this definition, children should come to school ready to learn. If they fit into their families and communities, then we know that they are good learners and we need only worry about the small minority of children who have handicapping conditions or who live in extremely hazardous environments and therefore have not learned what their community teaches.

This scenario is, of course, not true to real life. We also must worry about another kind of readiness "problem," the problem that exists when a child's growth trajectory or prior knowledge and skills do not prepare him or her for the demands of a new setting - the school. A child may be developmentally competent in his or

her home environment, yet unable to adapt easily to a school environment or succeed at the academic tasks valued by teachers. The distinction between developmental failure and social mismatch has been clarified by Kagan (1990), Meisels, et al. (1992), and others. This distinction is important because it reminds educators of the developmental competence of children whose skills and knowledge are different from those expected by a school.

Developmentally competent children respond to new situations by selecting from a pool of possible behaviors. Their selection is guided by their understanding of what the situation (context) requires. Because a child chooses a particular response in a given situation does not mean that he or she is incapable of another, only that the one chosen is consistent with the requirements of the situation as he or she understands it. For instance, Lawson (1986) pointed out that the pattern of answering questions characteristic of African-American children is different from that of white children. The study described how African-American children's remarks were more likely to be analogical or answers that related objects or events to themselves or their experience. White children were more likely to use referential answers or ones that named the object or event. While all of the children gave answers of both types, the frequency with which children from each group used each response type was different. That is, children from both races could make both analogical and referential responses, but they were more likely to use the type that was appropriate in their past experience with similar situations. Based on their experience, the children in each group understood the meaning of the question differently. All of the children were developmentally competent, but they had learned to demonstrate their competence differently.

Developmental competence can be displayed only by specific cultural achievements. We know that children can form relationships, because they interact with other people in mutually intelligible ways. We know that they can categorize things, because they perform this function in the same way as people in their community. We know that children can talk, because they speak a language. We know that they understand the concept of numbers, because they use socially agreed upon number tags. Developmental accomplishments and cultural manifestation are bound together, and, as a consequence, specific behaviors come to be synonymous with development itself. However, we can be led astray when we try to use specific accomplishments to compare development across cultural settings and social practices.

Standardized testing and screening of young children vividly demonstrates the danger of using white, middle-class children as the gauge for judging other children. It is not coincidence that poor and minority children are over-represented in certain types of early intervention, special education, and at-risk programs. Because tests fail to separate culture from development, they attribute a child's inability to perform particular tasks to developmental delay. The child may know something else that is a developmental equivalent, but if he or she does not know what is on the test, we assume that there is something wrong. After all, if the child were normal, he or she would have learned to perform the task.

An example of the misuse of such instruments occurred recently when I asked a special education teacher about the language disabilities for which preschool children were enrolled in her class. She assured me that all of the students were there for valid reasons: they had failed certain portions of a screening test. Further questioning revealed, however, that she had no idea of the linguistic environments

in which the children lived. Yet, she was providing a treatment that emphasized slowing down and oversimplifying language for all of the children as if they were all developmentally disabled. This approach provides exactly the wrong treatment for a developmentally normal but culturally different child who can and will learn more if given a normalized language environment.

When practitioners assume that there is a "mainstream behavior" that should be used as the sole criterion for healthy development, children find themselves misdiagnosed and inappropriately treated and find their learning potential miscalculated, not because they have not learned a great deal, but because they have not learned the things that schools value. Misunderstanding cultural differences leads schools inappropriately to place minority children who are developmentally normal into special education and low-ability groups, and to expect less from them than from other children. For instance, they tend to evaluate poor black children as less mature and hold lower expectations for them than for children whose socioeconomic status is higher (Entwisle and Alexander, 1989). Such an interpretation of cultural differences presents an obstacle to children's learning in school.

Confusing development with specific cultural accomplishments has led to a misunderstanding of children's abilities, resulting in poorly designed educational programs and practices. By equating a child's developmental competence with a particular form of behavior, teachers misread the meaning of the child's behavior and are led toward practices that compromise the child's potential for learning.

## **Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and School Failure**

Teaching supports learning only when the meaning of children's and teachers' behavior is mutually intelligible. Teaching consists of "meaning making" episodes as adults and children create common interpretations of events and actions and standard ways of representing these interpretations. Teachers understand the meaning of children's behavior, in part, from their own experience. Their subjective understanding is essential, since young children have limited ability to say how they think and feel and why they behave as they do. They depend upon teachers' ability to understand without words - an empathic understanding. Anna Freud (1963), in describing the needs of young children, wrote, "We have to rely upon the capacity of the normal adult to remember things" to supplement the adult's understanding of children. Because adults have access to their own memories, they can make sense of the behavior of young children and develop interpretive connections between their acts of teaching and the meaning that their behavior will have for children.

But teachers are also victims of their own past experience. Teachers, like all of us, make generalizations about other people, ideas, and events on the basis of their personal constructions of reality. Considerable research documents that teachers have difficulty incorporating new visions of reality that conflict with their own personal beliefs and experience (Ball, 1989). When confronted with discrepancies, teachers cling to their own "meaning making" theories, forcing contrary evidence to fit their old beliefs. Thus, behavior that does not fit their preconceived notions is manipulated to conform to their sense-making hypotheses.

When adults and children do not share common experiences or hold common beliefs about the meaning of experience, they are apt to misunderstand culturally encoded interchanges (Bowman, 1989). Thus, teachers fail to appreciate real similarities and differences between their understanding of the world and that of children and families who come from different backgrounds. They become victims of their own naive and culture-bound conceptions.

Conflicts between home and school may occur over how children have been taught to view the world, the qualities of interpersonal relationships, standards of behavior, and the goals and objectives of education. Home, community, and school/center environments may value some of the same competencies, but differences in expression may obscure their common root. For example, "creativity" may show up in graffiti, "task persistence" may be demonstrated in playing video games, but neither predicts diligence and inventiveness in classroom activities. Similarly, children socialized in communities that value physical aggression and "macho" behavior may have considerable difficulty learning to suppress such behavior in school, just as children more conservatively socialized may feel deeply threatened by open aggression in the school yard. Both the children who tolerate high levels of aggressive behavior and those who do not acquired their characteristics through the normal developmental process of identification with the values and behavior of family and friends. The point is not that high or low levels of aggression are desirable, but that their acquisition is a normal accomplishment in some communities. Schools, by valuing low-aggression children, set the stage for cultural conflict for those who do not believe that physical docility can reflect competence and effectiveness.

Racism and classism also contribute to conflicts between schools and poor and minority children and families. For instance, when schools represent an Anglocentric and middle-class viewpoint, students and their families often feel devalued. This experience is common to many Spanish-speaking children. For these children, the issue is less one of language (difficulty in acquiring English) than of a social context in which these children, their families, and their communities are undervalued. Instead of reinforcing children's self-confidence and self-esteem, school compromises their learning potential by rejecting their language and culture. Even more serious, by devaluing the culture of poor and minority children, teachers encourage an ominous cultural choice: identify with family and friends and disavow the school, or embrace school culture and face emotional/social isolation. The result is that many young children opt for family and friends and become unwilling participants in school culture.

Ogbu (1992) points out that not all groups in our society experience the same type of prejudice and discrimination. He notes that "involuntary" minorities (primarily African-Americans, Native Americans, and some Hispanics) are exposed to a more pervasive and extensive exclusion from the mainstream than are other minorities. These groups are more likely to avoid learning skills associated with the white middle class, since their efforts will not pay off with the same opportunities that others derive. Consequently, they develop oppositional practices that separate them from the mainstream as a form of group cohesion and support. Thus, school achievement leads to the loss of peer affiliation and support.

Bilingual/bicultural classes and Areocentric curricula are attempts to "even the playing field" so that the language and culture of these groups are perceived as

equally valued and powerful. Projects such as the Kamehameha Elementary Education Program (KEEP) have demonstrated that when children are not required to renounce their cultural heritage, school achievement improves markedly (Tharp, 1989).

Caregivers mediate social situations for young children, helping them transfer what they know and can do from one context to another. By providing emotional support, by reminding them of what they already know, by defining the similarities between social situations, and by modeling appropriate behavior, families help children use their skills and acquire new ones. When the social distance between families and the school prevents parents from providing this type of support, children's emotional resiliency is diminished. When children do not have the support of important caregivers, they must use their school time trying to figure out for themselves the new rules of social engagement. Consider what happens when children who are accustomed to adults who are authoritarian, personal, and expressive encounter teachers who are indirect, impersonal, and not given to highly emotional displays. They may spend their time in class trying to test the teacher's limits and elicit a response from the teacher, instead of learning the content of the lesson.

The loss of the home social support system is the reason that some child advocates recommend educating young children within their own cultural and linguistic communities, contending that they learn best when there is a great deal of consistency in their lives - consistency in people, in social and physical environments, and in learning tasks.

## **Conclusions**

No standard strategies exist to direct cross-cultural professional practice. Making developmental practices responsive to cultural differences presents a significant challenge for teachers, requiring them to adopt role definitions, curricula, and teaching practices that challenge rather than reflect the values of the wider society and themselves. However, only when teachers do so will young children be encouraged to extend their learning to include the things that schools consider important, and only then will their parents endorse the school as a partner in their children's education. Educating culturally and linguistically diverse students will require a multifaceted approach to school change. The following recommendations will move us toward this goal:

- Emphasize prevention. The prevention of school failure is less costly in both monetary and human terms than treating the problems that arise from unresponsive educational programs. The preschool and primary years are critical ones if children are to be successful in school, and we must carefully review the treatment of children during these years to determine whether it is sufficiently responsive to cultural and linguistic differences.
- Enhance the quality of children's preschool experience. School readiness can be increased by high-quality preschool education and day care. Policies that raise the quality of early environments will increase the probability of school readiness for many children, particularly poor children. Such policies would include raising licensing standards for early childhood programs (Howes, et al., 1992), providing more family resource and support services (Powell, 1991), and stimulating better collaboration between schools and the other human services (Kagan, 1991).

- Use authentic assessments for children considered at-risk of school difficulty. Risks do not predict individual development. Assessments of individual children should focus on each child's unique response to his or her experience rather than assume a stereotype based on the child's social and economic background. In order for assessments of young children's functioning to be reliable and valid, they must use multiple methods and sources and be obtained over time, in a variety of settings, within the context of children's daily lives.
- Listen to the voices of excluded minorities. It is essential that minority communities feel a greater sense of ownership regarding school standards if they are to cooperate in preparing their children. Involvement by parents and community members from these minority groups in setting nationwide readiness criteria can help diffuse this issue.
- Change how schools interact with other community institutions. Collaboration with social service and health delivery systems is just the beginning. Establishing cooperative relationships with park districts, libraries, day care centers, and homes is equally important. Any school that is not collaborating cannot seriously claim to be focusing on educational success for all.
- Prepare teachers and schools to educate a greater range of children. Early childhood personnel need to be better prepared to help children for whom school represents a major challenge. As noted above, when the match between children's prior experience and the expectations of schools is too great, children are less likely to succeed. Mismatches occur when

developmental criteria, expectations for individual performance, and definitions for members of various culture groups are overly narrow or rigid.

The kind of change we want to accomplish is not easy. It will require the utmost skill and effort from all of us if it is to happen. Unless we speak out about the relationship between culture, development, and education, we cannot hope to provide the kind of schooling needed to carry us safely into the 21st century. The policy choice is either to broaden schools' approach to teaching to one that is more consistent with what is known about child development or to continue to follow traditional policies, knowing that many children will continue to be unprepared and their failure will be inevitable

The Academic achievement generally depends on the capacity of adjustment and the study methods of the students even the gender may affect the academic achievement of the student. The academic achievement depends on the environment and the capacity of the student to adapt with the environment. It also depends on the capacity of the student to change himself according to the environment.