An Assignment Submitted by

Name of Student

Name of Establishment

Class, Section, Date

Abstract

This research paper describes six essential ideas that are components of the personality theory and how they are connected to the biblical principles. These six principles are divided into either the foundation of personality or the progression of personality. Under these two divisions, the ideas such as nature and nurture, development, maturation, self- concept, and unconsciousness are discussed.

Research Paper

All human beings have a unique and relatively basic pattern of thinking, reasoning, emotions, and behavior for which they are referred to as their personality. Personalities vary from one person to another, and in many circumstances, people rarely share the same personality. Due to the varying nature of the human personality, psychologists have developed the frameworks which can be used to understand this concept. These frameworks include the development of the human personality, progression of the human personality, how the thoughts, actions and feelings relate to each other, and also why people usually suffer from the psychological problems. The personality theory is the framework that is used to understand various ideas concerning personality. It is a system composed of concepts, ideas, assumptions, and principles which psychologists have proposed to aid in understanding personality.

**Foundation of Personality**

***Nature versus Nurture***

The idea of nature and nurture has been an issue of debate for years. While some scholars argue that personality and behavior can be learned from the environment, others hold a view that personality is genetic and that behavior is inborn. The issue of an inherited trait or the life experience playing a key role in shaping the character of an individual remains a debate. Philosophers such as Plato have argued that some features are inborn and occur naturally irrespective of the influence of the environment (Bleidorn et al., 2010). Some scientists have had extreme ends in the issue of nature and nurture. According to Zing-Yang, all the traits, except the primary flexes, are learned (Bleidorn et al., 2010). According to him, no research held a contrary view to this argument. Studies have also shown that several characteristics which are considered to be instinctual are not genetic but are instead learned. The studies centered on the theory of sociogenomics have demonstrated that there are two types of traits when it comes to personality. Those traits that are fragile must be coached to reach the full potential, while the resilient traits are considered to be automatic (Sameroff, 2010). For example, a resilient trait for an individual may be innate understanding of art or even music. Such person may have a genetic disposition towards music. At the same time, a fragile trait could mean that an individual does not have a disposition but can still master music.

The Bible also reaches an agreement with the theory of sociogenomics. The scriptures teach that we are all made in the image of God, even though we have fallen nature. Given that human beings are created in the image of God, they have certain basic personality traits that are determined as early as we are in the womb. Understanding of the Bible concerning the personality theory identifies the foundation of personality which has to be built by parents.

***Unconscious and Personality***

In the debate between the conscious and the unconscious, the conscious thought has always been considered dominant in the process of the human personality due to the fact that the black and white separation between the unconscious and conscious thoughts still prevails. However, several studies have shown the unambiguous separation that exists between the two processes to be too simplistic. Modern studies have been done to back the idea of Freud’s theory which argues that the unconscious is normally an originator of the actions and that the conscious is the entry (Bargh, 2013). The actions of human beings originate from the unconscious, but these actions are regulated by the conscious. According to Freud (2018), the conscious mind contains all kinds of thoughts, feelings, memories, and wishes which human beings are aware at any given time. The conscious mind forms part of the human mental processing that is responsible for our rational thinking and talking. The unconscious mind, on the other hand, is a reservoir of feelings, thoughts, and memories that originate from outside the conscious human awareness. Most of the components of the unconscious mind are usually unpleasant, for example, pain, conflict, and anxiety. Freud argues that the unconscious influences the human behavior and experience even if we remain unaware of the exact underlying influences.

The Bible is in agreement with the more integrated theory of the unconscious and conscious thoughts. In the scripture, the unconscious is represented by the heart. Several verses in the scripture speak of the fact that what is in the heart of human beings is what they act upon. In Proverbs 4: 23; Proverbs 6:14; Proverbs 7: 3; Proverbs 11: 20, the scriptures state that the actions of human beings are the exact reflection of what is in the heart. Paul also talked about the responsibility of human beings to renew and purify the unconscious mind, pushing all the unconscious drives that do not lot up with the Bible (Romans 12: 2; 2 Corinthians 10: 5).

***View of Self and Personality***

The view of self is based on how we tell others about ourselves and how we perceive who we are. The general belief that there is only a single version of self is too simplistic and is not in line with what we as human beings observe. According to Carl Rogers, for human beings to grow, they need a surrounding that provides them with genuineness and empathy (Dweck, 2013). Without openness and self-disclosure, the relationships and healthy personalities cannot develop as they are supposed to. According to Rogers, every person has the potential of achieving their desires and goals in life as long as they reach self-actualization. A person can have two views when it comes to their conceptual self. These views are independent self and interdependent self. Independent self is based on the notion that every person is on his own, with individual desires, preferences, attributes, and abilities. On the other hand, an interdependent thought is the idea that for human beings to stand self, they have to do it through the lens of the relationship with others. In this case, the idea of self can only exist when we as human beings interact with other people as well as groups.

The scriptures also seem to be in agreement with the balanced approach to the concept of self. The Bible speaks to the fact that humanity is made up of individuals. These people have their callings, but the purpose of everyone is found within the group and towards a certain common objective. In Christianity, Paul talked about the gifts and the calling from God to every individual as he wills (1 Corinthians 12: 1-11).

**Progression of Personality**

***Development and Personality***

Human personality is never static and changes at different stages of human life. Children usually identify with their parents and learn various beliefs and ideas from them. However, as children grow older, they tend to take back at what they have learned from their parents and instead seem to develop new ideas and thoughts (Jung, 2014). At an adolescent stage, children tend to use the framework of what they have been taught, by questioning it or, in certain circumstances, accepting it. When a child questions what he/she had been taught, the result is that they reject the whole idea and develop their own. Social commitments determine how personality and identity are changed during the adolescence period of a child (Eysenck, 2012). Personality development, therefore, changes at different times of the stages of the human development. At some time, people tend to learn and imitate what others do, but at a later stage, they change and seem to develop their personality.

In the scriptures, childhood and adolescence are very crucial stages in the development of human beings. In the Old Testament, there is an admonishment to the parents to teach their children how to go and who they are to be as they grow up (Proverbs 22: 6; Deuteronomy 4: 10). The New Testament also seems to be in agreement with the fact that parents have a responsibility to teach their children the way they should act and live (Ephesians 5).

***Motivation and Personality***

Many scholars have defined motivation as the energy that compels human beings to accomplish a set of goals. Motivation can be facilitated by several things. Whenever a goal is uncertain, we become more motivated to gain the information necessary to achieve that goal. Human beings are usually motived to achieve the goals that are psychologically important and not biologically important. The personality of an individual seems to have a major impact on their emotional stability and consciousness. Emotional stability is the ability of an individual to work towards realizing a specific goal (Eysenck, 2012). A conscientious individual is a person who expects success and is more motivated to accomplish the set objectives.

In the Bible, people tend to have motivations from two perspectives. These are to serve God and to serve ourselves (Mathews 6: 24). Initially, the only human motivation was to serve God, and there was a general idea that human beings are created to serve God. In Mathew 10, Jesus spoke of all kinds of motivation. As long as the motivation of Christians is to seek his kingdom and glorify him, he will always meet our needs.

***Maturation and Personality***

In psychology, maturity is the ability of an individual to respond appropriately to the environment. It also involves being aware of the right time and place to act and behave. Maturity is distinguished from the move away from relying on parents and starting to make own decisions (Ewen & Ewen, 2014). However, according to the scriptures, there will be no full maturity until we meet Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 13: 12). At the same time, there is a specific expectation in striving towards what Christians are supposed to do, but much of it is associated with the social roles in the society (1 Timothy 4: 6-7). Paul also mentioned the idea that life satisfaction is very crucial for Christians (1 Timothy 6:6). The Bible tries to bring out the picture that personality is not only consistent internally but also couples with the current psychological studies. An individual is never a product of their genetics or environment alone, but a combination of both. The maturation of an individual can be measured in many ways some of which include life satisfaction, mastery of social roles, and Christ-likeness. The major changes in the maturation of an individual take place during adolescence period. At this time, people are taught to begin making decisions and acting like adults.

References

Bargh, J. A. (2013). *Social psychology and the unconscious: The automaticity of higher mental processes*. Psychology Press.

Bleidorn, W., Kandler, C., Hülsheger, U. R., Riemann, R., Angleitner, A., & Spinath, F. M. (2010). Nature and nurture of the interplay between personality traits and major life goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *99*(2), 366.

Dweck, C. S. (2013). *Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality, and development*. psychology press.

Ewen, R., & Ewen, R. B. (2014). *An introduction to theories of personality*. Psychology Press.

Eysenck, H. (2012). *Reminiscence, motivation, and personality: A case study in experimental psychology*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Eysenck, H. J. (Ed.). (2012). *A model for personality*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Freud, A. (2018). The unconscious. In *The Harvard Lectures* (pp. 5-19). Routledge.

Jung, C. G. (2014). *Collected Works of CG Jung, Volume 17: Development of Personality: Development of Personality* (Vol. 17). Princeton University Press.

Sameroff, A. (2010). A unified theory of development: A dialectic integration of nature and nurture. *Child development*, *81*(1), 6-22.