

DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY AS A DISCIPLINE IN PSYCHOLOGY

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The history of personality dates as far as in the era of Ancient Greek medicine and philosophy when philosophers have been searching ways to define what exactly make us who we are. When the 'Father of Medicine', Hippocrates (c.460-377 BC) worked on the notable 'Four Temperaments or Four Humours', the Temperament theory which was rooted from the ancient humors theory was developed into a medical theory. These bodily fluids (blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile) were linked to different organs and illnesses as represented in the "Four Temperaments and Four Humours" of personality. (Azizi Yahaya et.al, 2009a).

Hippocrates also believed that these bodily fluids (called humors) are the one that caused certain human moods, emotions and behaviours. In other words, it hypothesized that a patient's personality can be influence by humoral imbalances. Later, in the search for physiological reasons for different human behaviours, Galen (AD 131-200) mapped these humors into four matrix of hot/cold and dry/wet which suggested that there could be balance and imbalance of the qualities. These four temperamental categories were named 'sanguine', 'melancholic', 'choleric' and "phlegmatic" (Michouli, 2014).

Plato (427-347 BCE) saw referred personality as The Soul which consisted of three parts known as Logistikon, Thymos and Epithymia that guides the human behaviour (Ellis, 2009). He pointed out that Logistikon or the reason is the intellectual component that serves to measure and make decisions while Thymos is the "structural elements of the soul" or the emotion. This is basically the romantic side of the soul that longs for honour, glory and respect. The Epithymia, on the other hand, is part of the soul that wants and desires things to help and satisfy our biological and material needs (i.e. appetite).

Plato allegorized Thymos and Epithymia as two horses that pull the personality or soul (which is The Chariot in this sense). Hence, it is up to the reason or Logistikon, being the highest value, to determine and coordinate the movement, direction and speed of the two "lower passion" which is the two horses. With this, Plato believed that the three parts of human soul or personality should be met and harmonized equally when there is certain unhappiness in life (Hibbard.C, Nov 2008).

Different from his predecessors, Aristotle (384-322 BCE) referred personality as the psyche which is a set of hierarchical faculties which are placed according to its importance. The first faculty is the nutritive being the human basic drives to meet its bodily needs. This is followed by perceptual faculties, aspects of human mind that is responsible in the interpretation of the sensory data and the final one being intellectual faculties that is unique to human beings with compare to the previous two faculties. Overall, he concluded that the theory of 'the psyche' is the product of biological processes (Ellis, 2009). It can be noted that the humoral theory, from Hippocrates onward, became the commonly held view of the human body among European physicians and was applied among the

Greek, Roman and Islamic physicians until the coming of modern medical research in the nineteenth century (Hibbard.C, Nov 2008).

By 16th century, an Italian diplomat and political thinker, Nicollo Machievelli (1469-1527) believed that personality can be best understood in a social context. His worldview suggested that all human beings are naturally selfish, greedy, ungrateful and vengeful and hence that human character is defined by two primary forces known as 'virtu' and 'fortuna'. The former is described as a combination of assertiveness and self-confidence while the latter is a Latin word for luck where with the great those of both forces would create a powerful leader. This suggested that an individual should have both forces in order to succeed in their aims in life.

Besides this, Rene Descartes (1596-1650) viewed human personality as the interaction between the divine and primal forces. The essential force behind individual personality is the immortal soul which he saw as pure, perfect and intangible. In setting out to see the interaction between spiritual entity and the physical body, Descartes concluded that the pineal gland of the central brain parts are the point of contact between the soul and the body. Imposing the philosophical notion of 'Cartesian Dualism', the soul is then explained by Descartes as being consisted "of two substances where matter and spirit – brain or mind exists independently for each other although they interact" (Ellis, 2009). This suggested the existence of human beings having free will and consciousness in a world that is said to have a view that human acted out based on their relationship to their environment (Azizi Yahaya et.al, 2009c).

This theory is developed by 1848 in the case of Phineas Gage which suggested physiological evidence that personality is linked to specific brain regions. He was a railroad construction worker who had an accident tamping iron to be drive to the side of his face and all the way to his left eye and skull. Miraculously, he was able to speak but his behaviours went from moral and calm to irreverent, impatient and profane. This study was further improved under a German Psychologist named Wilhelm Wundt (1897) who focused on the study of conscious experience into elements (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). However, this only studied mental processes and at that time, a complex and multidimensional topic as personality are not pursued.

Meanwhile, the 20th century witnessed an American psychologist by the name, John B Watson criticised Wundt focus on conscious experience as it cannot be seen or experimented upon in examining the human personality. Instead, he emphasized on behaviourism which presented a mechanistic picture of human being as machines that respond automatically to external stimuli. In this view, personality is nothing more than the accumulation of learned response that will eventually become a habit. It was not until the late 1930's that the study of personality began formalised and systemized in American Psychology Association through the work of Henry Murray and Gordon Allport, two of the earliest who had managed to define what personality is.

Azizi Yahaya et.al, (2009b) wrote that Allport is a trait theorist who believed that each individual has small number of specific traits that predominate in his and her personality known as the central traits. Allport later explained that occasionally one of the person's central traits will become an apparent dominant force called cardinal trait. As a child develops, these traits are environmentally influenced as specific behaviours and interactions will become a part of the individual's personality. Eventually the person grew and they become so much a part of the person that they no longer needed the stimuli and then become functionally autonomous

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