

# CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS PERSONALITY?

## Chapter Outline

- I. Proposed Determinants of Personality
  - A. Genetics
  - B. Traits
  - C. Sociocultural determinants
  - D. Learning
  - E. Existential-humanistic considerations
  - F. Unconscious mechanisms
  - G. Cognitive processes
  - H. Personality as a composite of the above factors
- II. Questions Confronting the Personality Theorist
  - A. What is the relative importance of the past, present, and future?
  - B. What motivates human behavior?
  - C. How important is the concept of self?
  - D. How important are unconscious mechanisms?
  - E. Is human behavior freely chosen or is it determined?
  - F. What can be learned by asking people about themselves?
  - G. Uniqueness versus commonality
  - H. Are people controlled externally or internally?
  - I. How are the mind and the body related?
  - J. What is the nature of human nature?
  - K. How consistent is human behavior?
- III. How Do We Find the Answers?
  - A. Science as an epistemological pursuit
  - B. Science as a combination of rationalism and empiricism
  - C. The roles of scientific theory: Synthesizing and heuristic functions
  - D. The principle of verification
- IV. Science and Personality Theory
  - A. Kuhn's view of science and scientific paradigms
  - B. Popper's view of science and the principle of falsifiability

### 1.1 Multiple Choice Questions

- 1) The term personality is derived from the Latin word persona, which means
- A) mask.
  - B) mind.
  - C) brain.
  - D) the person.

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 1*

*Skill: Factual*

2) According to Kluckhohn and Murray, every human being is

- A) like every other human being.
- B) like some other human beings.
- C) like no other human beings.
- D) all of the above

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 1, 2*

*Skill: Applied*

3) According to the authors of your text, probably the most common lay explanation of personality is based on

- A) learning.
- B) cultural norms.
- C) genetics.
- D) existential-humanistic considerations.

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 2      Page Ref: 2*

*Skill: Conceptual*

4) The statement “He has an Irish temper” implies which of the following explanations of personality?

- A) cultural expectations
- B) learning
- C) inherited characteristics
- D) unconscious mechanisms

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 2*

*Skill: Conceptual*

5) Findings by Bouchard and others suggest that the role of genetics in personality development is

- A) substantial.
- B) minimal.
- C) nonexistent.
- D) substantial in other animals but minimal in humans.

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 2      Page Ref: 2, 3*

*Skill: Applied*

6) The question “How much of an attribute is accounted for by heredity and how much of it is accounted for by experience?” defines the

- A) mind-body problem.
- B) nativism-empiricism controversy.
- C) existential-humanistic controversy.
- D) uniqueness-lawfulness controversy.

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 2      Page Ref: 3*

*Skill: Conceptual*

7) A person who believes that a person's IQ level is determined mainly by experience can be considered a(n)

- A) empiricist.
- B) existentialist.
- C) humanist.
- D) nativist.

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 2 Page Ref: 3, 4*

*Skill: Conceptual*

8) The researcher who is interested in knowing what organizations you belong to and the economic level of your family is stressing \_\_\_\_\_ determinants of personality.

- A) genetic
- B) sociocultural
- C) existential-humanistic
- D) unconscious

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 2 Page Ref: 4*

*Skill: Conceptual*

9) Those emphasizing the learning process in their explanation of personality are

- A) nativists.
- B) existentialists.
- C) humanists.
- D) empiricists.

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 1 Page Ref: 4*

*Skill: Conceptual*

10) Those theorists who say, "We are what we have been rewarded for being," emphasize \_\_\_\_\_ in their explanation of personality.

- A) learning
- B) genetics
- C) early experience
- D) unconscious mechanisms

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 2 Page Ref: 4*

*Skill: Conceptual*

11) According to the theorist emphasizing the learning process in the explanation of personality, the difference between a successful person and an unsuccessful person is found in

- A) cultural norms.
- B) early experience.
- C) the genes.
- D) patterns of reward and punishment.

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 1 Page Ref: 4, 5*

*Skill: Conceptual*

12) According to the theorist emphasizing the learning process in the explanation of personality, control \_\_\_\_\_ and you can control personality development.

- A) inheritance
- B) cultural expectations
- C) patterns of reward and punishment
- D) early experience

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 2 Page Ref: 5*

*Skill: Conceptual*

13) Theorists who emphasize the importance of either sociocultural determinants or learning in their explanations of personality are said to accept

- A) nativism.
- B) unconscious thought processes.
- C) free will.
- D) environmentalism.

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 2 Page Ref: 5*

*Skill: Conceptual*

14) Which of these questions is the existential-humanistic theorist likely to ask?

- A) Why are you the way you are?
- B) What have you been rewarded for being?
- C) What does it mean to be you?
- D) Why doesn't anyone like you?

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 3 Page Ref: 5*

*Skill: Conceptual*

15) Who is most likely to ask the question, "What is the significance of your awareness that you ultimately must die?"

- A) a learning theorist
- B) a psychoanalytic theorist
- C) an existential theorist
- D) a geneticist

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 2 Page Ref: 5*

*Skill: Conceptual*

16) The \_\_\_\_\_ theorist assumes that a person knows a great deal about the determinants of his or her own personality.

- A) learning
- B) trait
- C) existential-humanistic
- D) psychoanalytic

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 3 Page Ref: 5*

*Skill: Conceptual*

17) The so-called \_\_\_\_\_ theorist is most interested in studying lapses of memory.

- A) learning
- B) trait
- C) existential-humanistic
- D) depth

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 3      Page Ref: 5*

*Skill: Conceptual*

18) The theorist emphasizing the unconscious assumes the person knows \_\_\_\_\_ determinants of his or her own personality.

- A) the unconscious
- B) only the conscious
- C) the existential-humanistic
- D) few if any

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 3      Page Ref: 6*

*Skill: Conceptual*

19) According to Freud's or Jung's theories, the ultimate causes of behavior are

- A) unconscious.
- B) learned.
- C) traits.
- D) cultural norms.

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 6*

*Skill: Applied*

20) Which theory posits that your present experience and future goals are important determinants of personality?

- A) Learning Theory
- B) Existential-Humanistic Theory
- C) Trait Theory
- D) Cognitive Theory

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 6*

*Skill: Conceptual*

21) Behavior that is pulled by the future rather than pushed by the past is called \_\_\_\_\_ behavior.

- A) teleological
- B) hedonistic
- C) humanistic
- D) existential

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 7*

*Skill: Conceptual*

- 22) Hedonism refers to  
A) the search for meaning.  
B) the tendency to seek pleasure and avoid pain.  
C) goal-directed behavior.  
D) attraction to men named Don.

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 1            Page Ref: 7*

*Skill: Factual*

- 23) The \_\_\_\_\_ believes that all of the influences acting on a person at a given time can actually be known.  
A) determinist  
B) existentialist  
C) free-willist  
D) none of the above

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 3            Page Ref: 8*

*Skill: Conceptual*

- 24) The intense study of the individual case is called \_\_\_\_\_ research.

- A) idiographic  
B) nomothetic  
C) introspective  
D) humanistic

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 1            Page Ref: 9*

*Skill: Factual*

- 25) The study of the average performance of groups of individuals is called \_\_\_\_\_ research.

- A) idiographic  
B) nomothetic  
C) introspective  
D) humanistic

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 1            Page Ref: 9*

*Skill: Factual*

- 26) Variables controlling a person's behavior internally are called

- A) person variables.  
B) situation variables.  
C) introspective variables.  
D) unconscious variables.

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 1            Page Ref: 9*

*Skill: Factual*

27) Variables controlling a person's behavior externally are called

- A) person variables.
- B) situation variables.
- C) introspective variables.
- D) unconscious variables.

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 9*

*Skill: Factual*

28) The mind-body problem consists of determining how

- A) our behavior can be both freely chosen and determined at the same time.
- B) mental events and bodily events are related to each other.
- C) bodily experiences are similar to mental experiences.
- D) the mind can inhibit undesirable behavior.

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 3      Page Ref: 9*

*Skill: Conceptual*

29) Which of the following positions on the mind-body problem states that there is really no problem because the mind does not exist?

- A) physical monism
- B) epiphenomenalism
- C) parallelism
- D) interactionism

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 9*

*Skill: Factual*

30) Which of the following positions on the mind-body problem claims that mental events are merely irrelevant byproducts of bodily events?

- A) physical monism
- B) epiphenomenalism
- C) parallelism
- D) interactionism

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 9*

*Skill: Factual*

31) Which of the following positions on the mind-body problem claims that external events trigger mental and bodily events at the same time?

- A) physical monism
- B) epiphenomenalism
- C) parallelism
- D) interactionism

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 9*

*Skill: Factual*

32) The \_\_\_\_\_ theory of human nature states that people become what they experience.

- A) rationalistic
- B) empirical
- C) existential
- D) animalistic

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 2      Page Ref: 10*

*Skill: Conceptual*

33) The \_\_\_\_\_ conception of human nature claims that we inherit behavioral predispositions from our evolutionary past, but these predispositions can be modified by rational thought or by cultural influence.

- A) empirical
- B) evolutionary
- C) existential
- D) mechanistic

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 10*

*Skill: Factual*

34) The \_\_\_\_\_ theory of human nature assumes that we are born basically good.

- A) rationalistic
- B) existential
- C) animalistic
- D) humanistic

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 10*

*Skill: Factual*

35) Traditionally, most personality theorists have assumed that

- A) people are basically selfish and animalistic.
- B) people are consistent.
- C) people have the tendency to lie and deceive.
- D) people are basically good.

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 10*

*Skill: Factual*

36) \_\_\_\_\_ is the study of knowledge.

- A) Introspection
- B) Empiricism
- C) Epistemology
- D) Rationalism

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 11*

*Skill: Factual*



37) \_\_\_\_\_ is the belief that sensory experience is the basis of all knowledge.

- A) Determinism
- B) Rationalism
- C) Empiricism
- D) Hedonism

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 11*

*Skill: Factual*

38) Scientific theory combines \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .

- A) introspection; nativism
- B) hedonism; epistemology
- C) determinism; free will
- D) rationalism; empiricism

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 2      Page Ref: 11*

*Skill: Factual*

39) A theory's ability to explain several different observations is its \_\_\_\_\_ function.

- A) synthetic
- B) heuristic
- C) empirical
- D) deterministic

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 12*

*Skill: Factual*

40) A theory's ability to generate new research is referred to as its \_\_\_\_\_ function.

- A) synthetic
- B) heuristic
- C) empirical
- D) deterministic

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 1      Page Ref: 12*

*Skill: Factual*

41) According to Hall and Lindzey, the most important question to ask when evaluating a personality theory is:

- A) Does it generate empirical research?
- B) Would it be approved by physical scientists?
- C) Does it seem reasonable?
- D) Does it explain everything that is known about personality?

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 3      Page Ref: 12*

*Skill: Applied*

42) In order to be useful, a scientific theory must

- A) explain all phenomena in a research area.
- B) generate new research.
- C) be incapable of being proven incorrect.
- D) all of the above

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 2            Page Ref: 12*

*Skill: Conceptual*

43) According to “the principle of verification,” a theory is only useful if it

- A) is correct.
- B) is understood by scientists.
- C) has interesting premises and conclusions.
- D) can be tested.

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 3            Page Ref: 13*

*Skill: Conceptual*

44) Thomas Kuhn called a point of view shared by a large number of scientists a

- A) paradigm.
- B) theory.
- C) beam of light.
- D) heuristic approach.

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 1            Page Ref: 14*

*Skill: Applied*

45) According to the authors of your text, the most important thing about paradigms is that

- A) logically, only one can be correct.
- B) they all generate different research methodologies.
- C) both A and B
- D) neither A nor B

*Answer: B*

*Diff: 1            Page Ref: 14*

*Skill: Conceptual*

46) According to Popper, before a theory can be considered scientific it must

- A) make risky predictions.
- B) be falsifiable.
- C) make nothing but correct predictions.
- D) both A and B above

*Answer: D*

*Diff: 1            Page Ref: 15*

*Skill: Applied*

- 47) Popper's principle of falsifiability is quite similar to  
A) the principle of verification.  
B) the Kuhn dictum.  
C) the rationality debate.  
D) the existential paradigm.

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 3 Page Ref: 15*

*Skill: Applied*

- 48) According to Marx and Goodson, progress in science occurs when  
A) theories are wrong.  
B) good people work together to solve problems.  
C) technology makes the impossible possible.  
D) all of the above

*Answer: A*

*Diff: 3 Page Ref: 16*

*Skill: Applied*

- 49) Which of the following would Popper consider to be nonscientific?  
A) astrology  
B) Freud's theory of personality  
C) Einstein's theory of relativity  
D) both A and B

*Diff: 3 Page Ref: 16*

*Skill: Applied*

- 50) According to Popper's criteria, many theories of personality  
A) are as scientifically sound as Einstein's theory.  
B) are based on pre-paradigmatic science.  
C) are not scientific.  
D) all of the above

*Answer: C*

*Diff: 1 Page Ref: 16*

*Skill: Applied*

## **1.2 Questions for Essay or Discussion**

1. In your opinion, what are the most important questions about human personality? In other words, what questions about human nature should be contained in a theory of personality?
2. In your opinion, can human personality be studied scientifically? Why or why not?
3. How important is it for a theory of personality to make risky, testable statements? Explain your answer.