

Trait Theories

14-5

What is the Trait Theory?

- 2 basic assumptions
 - > All traits apply to all people
 - > Traits can be quantified on a sliding scale
 - > So we are all more or less dependent
- Basic traits are central for all people

Identifying Traits

- Gordon Allport
- Cardinal traits—pervasive, person is identified by that trait
- Central traits—make us predictable in most situations
- Secondary traits—preferences in food, music

Sixteen Trait Theory

- ◉ Raymond Cattell
- ◉ Factor analysis of personality traits.
- ◉ A person who exhibits A has a 75% chance of exhibiting B.
- ◉ Surface trait—stable characteristic that can be observed in certain situations.
- ◉ Source traits—stable characteristics that are core to the personality.

Cattell's 16 Source Traits

Reserved
Less intelligent
Emotional
Submissive
Serious
Expedient
Timid
Tough-minded
Trusting
Practical
Forthright
Self-assured
Conservative
Group dependent
Uncontrolled
Relaxed

Outgoing
More intelligent
Emotionally stable
Dominant
Happy-go-Lucky
Conscientious
Venturesome
Sensitive
Suspicious
Imaginative
Shrewd
Apprehensive
Experimenting
Self-sufficient
Controlled
Tense

Dimensions of Personality

- Hans Eysenck
- 2 Dimensions of personality
 - > Stability vs Instability
 - > Extraversion vs Introversion
- Stability = degree of control over feelings
- Extraversion = degree of assertiveness

The Robust Five

- ◉ Extraversion
- ◉ Agreeableness
- ◉ Conscientiousness
- ◉ Openness to experience
- ◉ Emotional stability
- ◉ Exist on a continuum.
- ◉ Value of identifying traits is that behaviour can be predicted