

GCE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PE2 UNIT GUIDE

Content Title: Personality

Key points

- Personality theories
- Personality profiling
- Limitations of personality profiling

Practical Application/Explanation

DEFINITION – ‘Personality represents those characteristics of the person that account for consistent patterns of behaviour,’ Pervin (1993). It is stable, enduring and unique to each individual.

PERSONALITY THEORIES – this relates to how personalities are formed.

TRAIT THEORY e.g. **Eysenck, Cattell. TWO main assumptions:**

- An individual’s personality is made up of certain key characteristics or traits (stable, enduring characteristics of a person).
- These characteristics or traits are genetic in nature i.e. you are born with them. Examples of traits are **extroversion** (lively, sociable, outgoing, impulsive) and **introversion** (quiet, passive, like to obey rules).

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY – Bandura. This states that people behave differently in different situations, and that personality is learned through OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING, MODELLING and VICARIOUS EXPERIENCES.

INTERACTIONIST THEORY – this is a mixture of TRAIT and SOCIAL LEARNING. It states that behaviour is a result of interaction of personality traits and the environment. It puts forward the idea that personality is the product of NATURE and NURTURE.

PERSONALITY PROFILING – sometimes referred to as psychometric testing, this is a means of measuring an individual’s personality in a particular situation. It is a measure of behaviour. Examples of personality tests are **Eysenck’s Personality Questionnaire**. This test enables the identification of dimensions of personality e.g. introvert/extrovert; stable/neurotic. **Cattell’s 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire** – this measures personality using 16 factors. Personality can also be measured by observation.

BENEFITS OF PERSONALITY PROFILING

- It could be used to recommend participation in sport and could help to lead a person towards an active, healthy and balanced lifestyle.
- It is time efficient.
- You could gain a deep understanding of each individual.
- It could identify personality strengths and weaknesses.
- It can help identify the type of coaching/leading/training to which the athlete best responds.
- It can enable appropriate strategies to be put in place to help athletes to achieve their potential e.g. anxiety control.

LIMITATIONS OF PERSONALITY PROFILING

- Not an accurate predictor of those who are likely to participate or excel in sport or physical activity.
- When completing questionnaires, many people do not respond honestly!
- Profiling results are usually subjective. Conclusions may be influenced by personal opinions and are not supported by scientific evidence.
- There is a danger that profiling may stereotype a person.

Top Tips:

When answering questions on personality, it is important to provide examples of potential characteristics linked to the theories e.g. in trait theory an extrovert will often display leadership qualities, while in social learning theory a player can become more aggressive if they are within a team of many other aggressive players etc.



Exam Style Questions

- 1 Describe **two** personality theories and explain how each can influence behaviour in sport. [4]
2. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of using personality profiling in sport [3]

Answers