

Ancient Indians (Ayurvedic) Classification

Even in India, the ancient system of medicine Ayurveda classifies man based on the presence of combination of elements of Nature. Ayurveda, advocates that the entire Universe (living and non-living) is made up of five elements: air, fire, water, earth and ether (space), collectively called "panchamahabhutas". Human body contains these elements as its constituents. However, their lie individual differences in human beings and as such the composition of these elements in the individual's differ. Where some are loaded with the combination of air and ether (space), others may have increased amount of the combinations like water and earth or fire and water. The presence of such combinations of the elements in the human bodies may group them into distinctive body types with a definite pattern of physiological and psychological characteristics depicted as below:

Ayurvedic's Classification of Personality Types

<i>Dominance of the elements in the body</i>	<i>Personality type</i>	<i>Physiological/ somatic characteristics</i>	<i>Personality characteristics</i>
Air & ether (space)	Vata	Slightly built, a little pigeon chested with dull dark hair and eyes, have dry rough and chapped skin, suffer from stiff joints, rheumatic problems and constipation.	Restless with active minds, indecisive and emotionally insecure, poor in memory, tendency towards insomnia depression and night marish dream, good artists and enjoy travelling, solitary and rebellious.
Water & Earth	Kapha	Big boned, often overweight with a pale, smooth complexion, hairs are lustrous and wavy and eyes are wide and attractive, suffer from sinus problems, lethargy and nausea.	Need a lot of sleep, rational speak and move slowly, calm and loyal, emotionally secure, experience romantic and sentimental dreams.
Fire & Water	Pitta	Average build, have a ruddy complexion or red hair, with moles, freckles or acne, tendency to go grey and bald early in life and often have green or very piercing eyes.	Intense, argumentative and precise with a critical sharp intelligence, make good leaders, at their worst they can be passionately angry, enjoy sports, hunting and politics and have vivid dreams.

Table 21.1 Hippocrates Classification of Personality Types

<i>Dominance of fluid type in the body</i>	<i>Personality type</i>	<i>Temperamental characteristics</i>
Blood	Sanguine	Light-hearted, optimistic, happy, hopeful and accommodating.
Yellow bile	Choleric	Irritable, angry but passionate, and strong with active imagination.
Phlegm (mucus)	Phlegmatic	Cold, calm, slow or sluggish and indifferent.
Black bile	Melancholic	Bad tempered, dejected, sad, depressed, pessimistic, deplorable and self-involved.

Kretschmer's classification. Kretschmer classified all human beings into certain biological types according to their physical structure and has allotted following definite personality characteristics associated with each physical make-up (Table 21.2).

Table 21.2 Kretschmer's Classification

<i>Personality types</i>	<i>Personality characteristics</i>
Pyknic (having fat bodies)	Sociable, jolly, easy-going and good natured.
Athletic (balanced body)	Energetic, optimistic and adjustable.
Leptosomatic (lean and thin)	Unsociable, reserved, shy, sensitive and pessimistic.

Sheldon's classification. Sheldon too, like Kretschmer, classified human beings into types according to their physical structures and attached certain temperamental characteristics to them as shown in Table 21.3.

Table 21.3 Sheldon's Classification

<i>Personality types</i>	<i>Somatic description</i>	<i>Personality characteristics</i>
Endomorphic	Person having highly developed viscera but weak somatic structure, (like Kretschmer's athletic type).	Easy-going, sociable and affectionate.
Mesomorphic	Balanced development of viscera and somatic structure, (like Kretschmer's athletic type).	Craving for muscular activity, self-assertive, loves risk and adventure.
Ectomorphic	Weak somatic structure as well as undeveloped viscera, (like Kretschmer's Leptosomatic).	Pessimistic, unsociable, and reserved.

An impressive personality is often taken to be synonymous with a good appearance, healthy physique, pleasing manners, a good character, a pleasant temperament, etc. Although personality includes all these aspects of one's self, it is far beyond each or even the sum of all these attributes. It may be defined as a complex blend of a constantly evolving and changing pattern of a person's unique behaviour, emerged as a result of his interaction with his environment, directed towards some specific ends in view.

Personality theories try to explain the structure of personality by adopting various approaches such as, type, trait, trait-cum-type and developmental approach etc.

Theories adopting the type approach try to classify people into categories or types according to certain characteristics. Hippocrates classified people according to the type of humour or fluid found in the body. Kretschmer described specific biological types based on body structures. Sheldon also identified three distinct types based on the relationship between a person's body physique and behaviour. Jung also adopted the type approach in classifying people in terms of introversion and extroversion.

Theories based on the trait approach try to describe people in terms of their unique pattern of traits. They define traits as relatively permanent and relatively consistent general behaviour patterns which an individual exhibits in different situations. Notable among these theories are the personality theories of Allport and Cattell. Allport identified three types of traits—cardinal, central and secondary; responsible for an individual's personal disposition. Cardinal traits are the primary traits so dominant as to cover virtually every aspect of a person's behaviour and attributes. Central traits represent those few characteristic tendencies that could be used to describe one and secondary traits are those displayed from time to time in a relatively small range of situations. Cattell used factor analysis to identify the surface traits and source traits and enumerated sixteen factors as the building blocks of personality.

Eysenck's theory of personality is based on a trait-cum-type approach towards personality and starting with the traits it yielded definite personality type. Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality postulated that there are three

levels of mind—the conscious, the sub-conscious and the unconscious that operate to shape one's personality. Besides this, he was of the opinion that the anatomy of our personality is built on the three unified and interrelated systems, the id, ego and superego. He also held that sexuality is at the core of all human behaviour. According to him, in the development of personality, the child passes through five psychosexual stages namely, oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital.

Adler, while disagreeing with Freud, laid stress on the power motive and not sex as the life energy. He pioneered the individual approach in the study of personality. The self-actualization, humanistic theory of Abraham Maslow believed that individuals are motivated by their needs arranged in a hierarchical order from the lower base level of physiological needs to the upper top level of the need for self-actualization. The personality build up of an individual, therefore, depends upon his striving for the level of his needs and the extent to which he feels that he has been successful in his attempts.

The other important humanistic theory, Carl Rogers' self theory holds that personality to be a function of the interaction between the two systems (the organism and the self) of one's world of subjective experience. He linked the personality with the development and maintenance of the self-concept and the effort to achieve the ideal self.

Dollard and Miller in their learning theory of personality attempted to combine the learning theory with the psychoanalytic theory and viewed personality as a function of drive reduction. Bandura and Walters in their theory of social learning emphasized that people acquire personality characteristics by observing and imitating real life as well as symbolic models.

We can only make an estimate or assessment of personality as the true measurement of one's personality is not possible. This assessment can be made by means of a variety of techniques like observation, situation test, questionnaire, personality inventory, rating scale, interview, and projective techniques.

Projective techniques make use of ambiguous or unstructured stimuli in order to permit people to express their own perception of stimuli. The various techniques involved in this category are, the Rorschach inkblot test, thematic apperception test (TAT), children's apperception test (CAT), word association test, sentence completion test, play technique, drawing and painting test and others.