

Inaugural Lecture Series 148

**EXPLORATIONS INTO THE  
PERSON**

*BY*

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*Professor of Psychology*

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NO 148



**OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY PRESS LIMITED**

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*Professor of Psychology.*

**An Inaugural Lecture Delivered at Oduduwa Hall,  
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife,  
On Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 1994**

**Inaugural Lecture Series 148**

**Obafemi Awolowo University Press Limited, Ile-Ife, Nigeria**

ISSN 0189 – 7845

*Printed by*

Obafemi Awolowo University Press Limited Ile-Ife, Nigeria

## PREAMBLE

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, other Principal Officers of the University, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is with all humility and thanks to God that I give this inaugural lecture, which is the first that emanates from the Department of Psychology of this University.

The title of my lecture, 'Explorations into the Person', has been chosen because it gives me a broad canvass to the subject of psychology. It also summarizes my work years at Ife, which predates the 'birth' of the Department of Psychology. This is because I worked in the Directorates of Personnel and Student Affairs before I transferred to the Department of Psychology, which was created in 1977.

From inception part-time lecturers serviced the department. I transferred from the registry as an Assistant Registrar in 1979 to become an Assistant Lecturer! In the department of Psychology then, was Mrs. Sheila Jeyifo who was appointed an Assistant Lecturer on the same day with me. She started teaching immediately while I had to seek for my release from the registry. In the interim, I taught as a part-timer. The "trinity" of full-timers that graduated the first set of students was made up with the arrival of a Lecturer Grade II in person of Dr. Funmi Faniran (later, Dr. Funmi Togonu-Bickersteth). Many part-time lecturers assisted these three persons. They were Dr. C.G.M. Bakare (now Professor C.G.M. Bakare) of the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the University of Ibadan. Others from Ife were. Dr. Dayo Adejumo (later, Professor Adejumo of blessed memory) may his great soul continue to rest in peace, Dr. Dibu Ojerinde (now, Professor Dibu Ojerinde) and Dr. Eileen Wilson who later joined the department as a full time lecturer I in 1982: Many persons have come and gone the department remains.

I like to report happily too that today, we have a staff strength of ten, two of whom are holders of our M.Sc. Psychology degree. Within a short while we hope to produce the first set of our doctoral graduates. The programmes run by the department are unique in that students can study the person from conception to the grave in a truly African perspective.

Since inception, the department has taught Psychology courses to 17,000 students in all the faculties of the University. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, I vouch to say that the Department of Psychology is doing well.

## INTRODUCTION

The noun exploration is from the verb explore, which means to travel for the purpose of discovery. It also has its root in the Latin word *explorare*; to investigate. As such this lecture is an odyssey into a greater understanding of why people behave as they do and how we may, in the future, proceed towards an even clearer understanding of this behaviour. It is concerned with personality dynamics, personnel management, personality theory, assessment and research.

It is probably no mere historical accident that the word 'person' is a mask in its first meaning. It is rather a recognition of the fact that everyone is always and everywhere, more or less consciously playing a role... It is in these roles that we know each other; it is in these roles that we know ourselves.

In a sense, and in so far as this mask represents the conception we have formed of ourselves – the role we are striving to live up to – this mask is our truer self, the self we would like to be. In the end, our conception of our role becomes second nature and an integral part of our personality. We come into the world as individuals, achieve character, and become persons.

In legal terminology of antiquity, 'person' denotes anyone, of any rank, whether freeman or slave. In the days of old, the essential nature of a person was recognized as the unique substance of a nature endowed with reason. Man is fundamentally an active being-in-itself before which there was possible being-in-the world. The 'person' is conceived as a center of activity in the sense of man as the basic possibility of personal encounter. Man as person is oriented to the community, in which his dignity unfolds to the full.

Being a person signifies an indivisible, unique and therefore non-replicable unity in human existence. It implies a living entity, which embodies a complete whole and does not normally disintegrate during life and it signifies the individual, living, entire bodily and psychic foundation of man as being. Being a person concerns the 'vital-biological' levels, the 'id' levels and is related to the mental or spiritual superstructure, in that this 'intellectual' structure can influence the person inwardly. It is not every person who is de-facto 'ego-conscious', for man as an embryo or when mentally deranged is also a person. The 'person' is the foundation of the process of development and unfolding which is revealed in character and personality. Empirical factors and observations demonstrate the existence of a psychic control system within which the personal self has a psychological location. Examples

are the need to compensate for feelings of inferiority and conscience. In recent times, that branch of the humanistic psychology movement has systematically postulated the personal constitution of human existence. Thus the essential question of the moment is: Is man a machine or a person?

My exposure to the science of behaviour and experience, nay, the study of the person has been enriched by my being an indigene of Okeigbo, who has had a third generation exposure to Christian education. I refer to all these because I see them as relevant to the content of this lecture. Psychologists have been able to demonstrate that crucial aspects in the organisation and functioning of cognition and personality depend on a good number of factors hidden in the ecosystem where the individuals are born and socialized. Everyday cognition research is concerned with the informal, oral, traditional or 'popular' knowledge and meaning, the knowledge of ordinary people, in contrast with school or book based, expert or scientific knowledge.

The inner forces of human life are still largely hidden from us. Since Sigmund Freud made it alive, Psychology has gone far, but it is still a new science, mapping out the coast of an unknown continent. Fifty years hence, Psychologists will very likely smile at our ignorance of today! True scholarship is very humbling. It has been said that academic work starts with becoming a Professor. It does not end there.

An exploration into the person is both lively and frustrating. Lively, in that I am doing what I like to do and my subject is man. Wisdom starts with the knowledge of self. As far back as 2, 500 years ago, Socrates said, "Man know thyself". Later, Pope Alexander declared, "The proper study of mankind is man". No wonder then that even the Psalmist in Psalm 8 verses 4 to 8 wrote:

"What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man, that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings crown him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands, you put everything under his feet. All flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas".

"The study of the person is frustrating because it is close to being a wild goose chase. Psychologists struggle with obtaining a correct balance between making use of people as observers of their own behaviour and shying away from the pitfalls of subjectivity. 'The Psychologist', writes Zangwill in his *Introduction to Modern Psychology*

may be said to nibble at personality; he does not venture to swallow it as an indigestible 'whole', and Professor Notcutt in the *Psychology of Personality* goes so far as to say:

"Even now the study of personality belongs to the adventurous and not wholly respectable frontier regions of Psychology, which it is not altogether wise to explore without a safer academic reputation in some entirely reputable field, like colour vision, or the ability of rats to learn their way through a maze".

Despite all these intimidating circumstances surrounding the work of Personality Psychologist, this inaugurator is undaunted and believes that Psychologists occupy the most centrally important position in the world today. I say this because all the important problems of mankind will yield only to a better understanding of human nature and to this alone Psychology applies itself.

Personality Psychology is concerned with the individual and with differences among individuals. Personality Psychologists are especially interested in the motivational and emotional aspects of behaviour. Their interests range from the normal and even creative personality to the deviant, disturbed, or pathological personality. Much of the work in Personality Psychology has focused on ways to classify individual in a useful and predictive manner, or to devise dimensions that can be used to compare or contrast different people. Personality Psychologists have developed numerous psychological tests that distinguish among individuals and attempt to predict both normal and pathological behaviour.

Human beings are complex and multifaceted; the subject matter, which focuses, is study on them cannot be less so.

## A CATALOGUE OF SOME THEORETICAL VIEWS

From the earliest recorded history of man there has been evidence that he has sought to understand the causes of his conduct. Awareness of this quest and curiosity is found primarily in the context of religious thought.

Man is intensely interested in his own and other people's personalities. The portrayal of personalities and their interactions is the main theme of the literary, dramatic and visual arts. But despite the discussions of human nature by philosophers throughout history, the study of Personality was until recently ignored by most Psychologists. Partly this was due to its complexity, partly because early Psychology was concerned with processes common to all organisms like memory,

cognition, perception and learning which could be investigated in the laboratory, than with the whole-man and his motivation. The early conception and study of Psychology is germane and central to the Eurocentric perspective. The latter conception has been shown to be germane to the Afrocentric perspective of Psychology by Mundy-Castle (1970, 1976, 1989 and 1993), Omari (1983, 1989), Morakinyo & Akiwowo (1981) Yoloye (1983) Laosebikan (1986) Olowu (1989, 1990) Moghaddam (1987), Koech (1987) to mention a few. The list of names above is those of African and Third World workers. They are saying that we should have a second look at the study of the person (psychology).

Third world workers have for years rightly been questioning the appropriateness of Western Psychological concepts in cross-cultural settings; Lambo (1956), Prince (1962), Asuni (1967), Mbiti (1969) Nobles (1973) Olatawura (1973) Makinde (1976), Morakinyo (1976) Enriquez (1977).

There are few words in the English language that have such a fascination for the general public as the term personality. Although the word is used in various senses, most of these popular meanings equate the term to social skill or adroitness. 'An individual's personality is assessed by the effectiveness with which he is able to elicit positive reactions from a variety of persons under different circumstances. This in a sense comes under the social stimulus value. In the lay usage a business director has a forceful personality. A motor-park tout or a thug an aggressive personality; an airhostess or a salesgirl a glamorous personality. Clearly everyone plays varied roles and tries to display a personality acceptable to those he or she meets. Goffman (1956) observed that a person's self-concept may be self-deceptive.

A teacher may refer to a student as presenting a personality problem, which shows that the student's social skills are not adequate to maintain satisfactory relations with fellow students and teachers.

There are many theories of personality based on different methods and constructs. There is not much agreement on the data to be studied, still less on a definition. Allport (1937) had fifty definitions, Hall and Lindzey (1957) described fifteen approaches. On the whole, there is no substantive definition of personality that can be applied with any generality. As such, personality is defined by the particular empirical concepts, which are a part of the theory of personality employed by the observer. A consensus definition puts personality as the relatively stable organization of a person's motivational dispositions, arising from the interaction between biological drives, the social and physical environment. The term implies both cognitive and physical

attributes; but usually refers chiefly to the affective-conative traits, sentiments, attitudes, complexes and unconscious mechanisms, interests and ideals which determine a person's characteristic or distinctive behaviour and thought.

Probably no field of Psychology has been more perplexing to its student with respect to theory than that of personality.

Most psychologists are quite prepared to take one or another of many theories of human personality as a working hypothesis, very few would be prepared to suggest that it is anything more than a useful frame of reference. A lecture of this nature can only briefly touch upon some of the highlights of the major theories.

### **The Psychoanalytic Theory of Sigmund Freud:**

When psychology emerged as an independent scientific discipline in Germany during the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it defined its task as the analysis of consciousness in the normal, adult human beings. It conceived of consciousness as being made up of structural elements, which were closely correlated with processes in the sense organs.

Resistance to this kind of Psychology came from many directions and for a variety of reasons. There were those who opposed the exclusive emphasis on structure and who insisted with considerable vigour that the outstanding characteristics of the conscious mind are its active process and not its passive contents. Sensing and not sensations, thinking and not thoughts, imagining and not images- these it was asserted, should be the principal subject matter of the science of Psychology. Others protested that conscious experience could not be dissected without destroying the very essence of experience, namely, its quality of wholeness. Direct awareness, they said, consists of patterns or configurations, and not of elements joined together. Another large and vocal group asserted that the mind is not amenable to investigations by the methods of science because it is too private and too subjective. They urged instead that Psychology be defined as the science of behaviour.

Freud's attack upon the Traditional Psychology of Consciousness came from quite a different direction. He likened the mind to an iceberg in which the smaller part showing above the surface of the water represents the region of consciousness while the much larger mass below the water level represents the region of unconsciousness. In this vast domain of the unconscious are to be found the urges, the passions, the repressed ideas and feelings a great underworld of vital,

unseen forces which exercise an imperious control over the conscious thoughts and deeds of man. From this point of view, a Psychology, which limits itself to the analysis of consciousness, is wholly inadequate for understanding man's behaviour.

For more than 40 years, Freud explored the unconscious by the method of free association and developed what is generally regarded as the first comprehensive theory of personality. He mapped the contours of its topography, penetrated to the headwaters of its stream of energy and charted the lawful course of its growth. By performing these incredible feats, he became one of the most controversial and influential figures in modern times. Freud and his followers used clinical and intuitive rather than scientific methods. It is an idiographic approach. It is subjective. The unconscious motives of Freud are criticised as mythical, though useful in theory building and in Psychotherapy. In short, psychoanalytic theory is illustrative of a psychodynamic clinical approach to personality. The psychodynamic emphasis is clear in the interpretation of behaviour as a result of the interplay among forces, (id, ego & superego) in the emphasis on anxiety, defense mechanisms and in the interpretation of symptoms as compromises between instinct and defense. The clinical qualities of psychoanalysis are apparent in the emphasis on the individual, the attention given to individual differences and the attempt to assess and understand the total individual. The psychoanalytic approach is holistic and highly interpretive, making use of many constructs that are not open to direct observation to account for a wide range of individual and group behaviour.

The variables chosen for research reflect the theory. Thus, a good deal of the research emanating from psychoanalytic theory concerns unconscious processes, defenses mechanisms, the importance of early experience for later personality development and psychopathology. In its assessment procedures, the psychoanalytic approach emphasized the freedom of the individual to respond to the potential for his unique personality to come forth and the relationships among various aspects of his personality. The free association technique is illustrative of these qualities as in the Rorschach (Inkblot) and the Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.). The techniques are, called the 'projective' because they involve ambiguous stimuli and the subjects' – responses are supposed to reveal aspects of the unconscious. Olowu (1983), Pfeffer and Olowu, (1985; 1986a; 1986b); Vandiewele, Olowu & Pfeffer, (1988) have used other variations of the projective techniques to study the person in groups here on campus, at Omi-Okun in Ile-Ife and in Dakar. The analyst can make use of hundreds of hours of observations to

understand the behaviour of a single individual. The psychoanalytic theory is viewed as an excellent device for studying complex human behaviour.

Predictions follow from an understanding of the function of the entire individual. Research, where empirical, tends to be correlational and oriented toward construct validity.

The main structural concepts are those of id, ego and superego, which roughly represent drives (instincts), an orientation toward reality and morals (values) respectively. Psychic life is also described in terms of the extent to which thoughts and memories are available to awareness – ranging from unconscious (unavailable to awareness) preconscious (available to awareness) and conscious (part of awareness). The organism seeks expression or discharge of the life instinct (libido) and death instincts or sexual and aggressive instincts. In view of its association with a past trauma, expressing an instinct may signal danger to the ego and lead to the experience of anxiety. The individual then faces a conflict situation in which he seeks to gratify the instinct but also fears doing so. Often the result is the use of mechanisms of defense. They are, projection, denial, isolation, undoing, reaction formation, rationalization and repression which attempt to give some expression to the instinct in a way that does not produce anxiety. The use of mechanisms of defense always involves some distortion of reality. Only in sublimation is the individual able to express an impulse free of anxiety and without distortion of reality. In such a case, id, ego and superego are acting in unison and with freedom from conflict.

The psychoanalytic theory of development places great emphasis on states of development, they are (oral, anal, phallic, latency, genital) which are rooted in the biological processes of the organism. Experiences during the first five years of life are viewed as critical for the determination of later adult personality characteristics. This is particularly the case where frustration has led to fixation at a pregenital stage of development or where because of later frustration the individual regresses back to an earlier mode of functioning (like in a weeping adult). Oral, anal and phallic character types illustrate how adult personality characteristics may be understood in terms of partial fixations at early stages of development.

The above concepts lay the groundwork for an understanding of psychopathology. While all pathology is believed to centre in the Oedipus complex, representing fixations at the phallic stage of development, frustration and trauma can lead to regression to an earlier stage of development so that the exact form taken in a neurosis or a

psychosis is dependent upon the stage to which the individual regresses. In psychopathology there is a struggle between the striving of the id instincts for discharge and the efforts of the ego to prevent discharge and defend against anxiety. Behaviour change in the direction of growth occurs when the individual is exposed to conditions, which allow him to gratify his instincts in new, maturer ways which will neither lead to guilt nor external threat.

This theory has been criticised by behaviourists, humanists and existentialists. The African psychologists are of the opinion that the influences of the sex and death instincts are overplayed. This reflects only the prevailing atmosphere in Freud's days. The non-universality of the Oedipus complex has been observed in non-western society that Chaka's complex (after Chaka the Zulu) would be more appropriate in traditional African setting than the Oedipus complex. In a polygamous family the children (male and female) stay more with their mothers, the possibility of the boy wanting to kill his father to possess his mother is very remote. Freud considered the identification of the Oedipus complex to be one of his greatest discoveries. The Oedipus complex consists of a sexual cathexis for the parent of the opposite sex and a hostile cathexis for the parent of the same sex.

## THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

The Phenomenological theory considers personality wholly in terms of the person's perceptions of himself, of other people and his environment. Motivation, learning and adjustment are ascribed to man's need to resolve incongruities in his phenomenal field, and refashion his maladaptive interpretations. This theoretical position, which originated from Husserl, was developed by Snygg and Combs, and is implicit both in the Rogers' Self-Theory and Kelly's Psychology of Personal Constructs. Likewise, existentialism (though more a literary and philosophic movement than a personality theory) holds that man is free to strive for meaning and self-realization in a hostile and purposeless universe.

Roger (1961) has "Little sympathy with the rather prevalent concept that man is basically irrational, and that his impulses, if not controlled with lead to the destruction of other and self. Man's behaviour is exquisitely rational, moving with subtle and ordered complexity toward the goals his organism is endeavouring to achieve" p. 194.

The phenomenological approach has been part of a significant effort by many psychologists to come to terms with human experience as it unfolds itself in the drama of life.

The main structural concepts in the theory are the self, representing an organized pattern of perceptions relating to "me" or "I", and the ideal self, representing the self-concept the individual would like to possess. Although structural concepts are important in terms of representing particular parts of the phenomenal field and in representing stability in an individual's functioning over time, the main focus of the theory is on process and change. The basic tendency in the individual is toward self-actualization – toward maintaining, enhancing and actualizing the experiencing organism. Beyond this the individual is oriented toward self-consistency. Interpreted as congruence between self and experience. A state of incongruence is created when the individual perceives or subceives experiences that are discrepant with his self-image. Such experiences have been associated in the past with the loss of positive regard. The subception of such experiences is associated with tension or anxiety and leads to the use of defensive devices to remove the incongruence and reduce the anxiety. The basic defensive processes are distortion and denial, leading to an inaccurate symbolization of experiences or to a nonsymbolization of experience. This sequence of threat due to incongruence between self and experience and the consequent use of defenses form the basis for psychopathology. Purkey (1970), Burns (1977, 1982) Olowu (1983, 1984a) have shown the importance of the self-concept as being pivotal to adjustment processes and to some degree to all psychological motivation. In fact, Olowu (1988a) showed that the self concept determines whether one is a smoker or a non smoker. Relationships have been found between perception of self and satisfaction with school (Lawrence, 1981), between the perception of self and mood states by Wessman & Ricks (1966), and between self-conception and vocational choice by Super *et, al* (1963), and Olowu (1990a).

There has been relatively little elaboration of a theory of growth and development by Rogers. Basically growth is seen as involving increased differentiation, expansion, and autonomy. The critical theoretical and practical question is viewed as being the circumstances that maximize the opportunity for growth. According to Rogers, it is critical that parents provide for feelings of self-worth. Presumably the conditions for growth in the child to be provided by the parents correspond to the necessary and sufficient conditions to be provided by

the therapist for growth to occur in the client – congruence genuineness, unconditional positive regard, and empathic understanding.

In Rogers, we see a view of man and an approach to research that are quite different from those of Freud. Roger's theory emphasizes the constructive forces residing in man in contrast to the psychoanalytic emphasis on that which is "innately destructive". Also, in contrast to the psychoanalytic emphasis on hidden meanings, Rogers emphasizes the usefulness of self-reports, like answer to **who am I** and **myself as I am** and other direct sources of information. Olowu (1993) showed that "Myself" essays can be used with great insights. This inaugurator is an enthusiast of the phenomenological approach to the study of the person. This approach was highly recommended to African Psychologists at the Eastern and Southern African Psychologists' Conference held in Nairobi in 1989. A researcher interested in phenomenology needs to focus the study on the consciousness of people concerning a specific problem and indicate clearly how their insights will ultimately lead to an understanding there of from the point of view of the people. This makes the phenomenological approach most robust as it treats man as a person rather than a rat or a hydraulic system.

In contrast with Freud's emphasis on the past. Rogers is essentially a-historical, preferring to deal with what is present or anticipating to deal with what is to come in future. These differences in points of view obviously translate themselves into differences in theory, assessment techniques and research. Instead of the use of free association, dream analysis, and projective tests, there is the use of verbal self-report and Q sorts. Instead of an emphasis on studies of the unconscious or on how cognitive controls mediate between drives and reality, there is an emphasis on studies of the conditions that promote positive change (that is, toward increased self-actualization and openness to experience) and studies of the characteristics of the self.

Roger has developed an approach to counselling that has a significant impact upon the field. He has opened up the entire area of psychotherapy for systematic research. He has focused both theoretical and empirical attention on the nature of the self. In his emphasis on self-actualization and openness to experience, he has provided one source of leadership for the human potential movement.

However, Nobles (1973) has noted that most of the theoretical approaches taken in the empirical investigation of the black self-concept have failed to incorporate African conceptions. His thesis is that only through a full understanding of the African self –concepts can valid or reliable research be done in the area.



Nobles has argued that in the establishment of self one must join with some and depart from others, or at least make salient characteristics similar to some while denying qualities similar to others. The self is thus established as a consequence of two processes of apposition and /or opposition. Even though most (Western) Scholars recognize the possibilities, most define the self as being established oppositionally, that is, the self is "individually", unique and different from other selves.

Some non-Western World-views, particularly the African, place a totally different emphasis on self (Mbiti 1969) conceiving of the self as coming into being as a consequence of the group's being, this contrast, with the Western view. The African World-view suggests that, "I am because we are and because we are, therefore, I am". This view makes no real distinction between the self and others.

One's self-identity is therefore always a people's identity, this could be called and extended identity or extended self. In traditional life the individual did not and could not exist alone, Lambo (1956) and Mbiti (1969) argued.

The individual owed his very existence to other members of the group. Not only those who conceived and-nourished him but also those long dead and still unborn. This concept is rife among the Ashantis of Ghana and other African groups. The individual did not exist unless he was corporate or communal; he was simply an integral part of the collective unity. Africans believed that the community made, created, or produced the individual, thus the existence of the community was not imagined to be dependent on individual ingression. Many scholars (Dubois,1908,Herskovits,1958 and Billingsley,1968) support this fact.

The inability of some researchers to document this aspect of African social reality casts doubt on their ability to understand the social psychology of these people.

It is worth noting that the picture of the African self-concept described is changing fast as a result of acculturation with the West, Olowu (1985) has argued that the communal relations have weakened. The old order changeth yielding ground to a new.

## THE NOMOTHEIC APPROACH:

Personality according to Cattell (1950), is that which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation. The exploration here is through the development of a personality theory that is based on rigour, objective tests, and sophisticated mathematical procedures. The psychometrically inclined authors such as Cattell, Eysenck and Guilford

accept the reality of stable personality traits of varying degrees of generality, but point out that they cannot be directly observed, they must be inferred from consistencies in speech and behaviour. Their aim is to isolate the main dimensions of personality through factor analysis, or correlations between tests.

Cattell's is a trait theory that emphasizes individual differences, and total personality like the preceding clinical theories. Unlike them, the study of the individual has not been a major thrust in the development of the theory, the research has been based mainly on the factor-analytic technique. Hence personality is conceived as a person's scores on all the measurable factors or common traits. In addition, Cattell proposes that unique traits and their organization can be quantified by Q or P techniques, that is factorizing persons or occasions. Emotional instability or anxiety and extraversion – introversion are widely accepted, but otherwise there is little agreement as to what are the major factors or how they can be reliably measured. The totality of the person is based on mathematical data. The psychological importance of personality traits is the degree to which they provide information useful in understanding and predicting behaviour.

The 16- Personality Factor Inventory has been developed to measure personality using questionnaire data. Using a variety of tests and subject populations, work goes on to discover the exact number of traits necessary to describe a person and to define the nature of these traits. Eysenck used personality inventory scores to ease out traits of extraversion – introversion on a continuum. The experience here is that low correlations are usually obtained when personality variables are studied (Olowu, 1984b). This approach is insightful but we know that persons are more than numbers or mathematical scores. The NOMOTHEIC approach to personality is very Eurocentric. For instance, the indigenous African draws no clear distinction between physical and spiritual world; mind and matter are one. Society's values are directed towards the maintenance of cohesiveness and solidarity, and one of the strongest social control agencies is the extended family, imbued with the general principle of collective responsibility. This is quite different from the dualistic patterning of the Western mind, reflected dramatically in the historical development of behaviourism, from Descartes through La Mettrie (The machine man), Hartley, Pavlov and Watson to Skinner. It arose in Europe with the transition from feudalism to capitalism and provided the conditions for the rise of science and unbridled individualism. It was facilitated by Gutenberg's printing press, and led to an increasing emphasis on "out-of-context

'thinking', or abstract as opposed to concrete, unreal as opposed to real. From it emerged the narrowly defined notion of intelligence as 'g' which in Mundy- Castle's language refers to technological ability. It arose as part of Western society's cultural tradition, and encouraged a facility for solving problems on models of reality rather than reality itself. It is important to explore the psychology of Africans as they are, not as they would be, or how others feel they should be.

## LEARNING THEORY BEHAVIOURAL APPROACHES TO PERSONALITY:

### Behaviourism

Psychology according to Watson (1914) is a purely objective experimental branch of natural science. Its theoretical goal is the prediction and control of behaviour. Introspection forms no essential part of its methods. "The time seems to have come when Psychology must discard all references to consciousness". The behaviourists contend.

Skinner (1953) says the practice of looking inside the organism for an explanation of behaviour has tended to obscure the variables, which are immediately available for scientific analysis. These variables lie outside the organism, in its immediate environment and in its environmental history.

Bandura (1968) argued that when the actual social learning history of maladaptive behaviour is known the basic principles of learning provide a completely adequate interpretation of many psychopathological phenomena and explanations in terms of symptoms with underlying disorders become superfluous.

There is no one learning theory of personality. Included here are proponents of different theories of learning who share certain assumptions. A major shared assumption is that nearly all behaviour is learned. An understanding of the person is, for the most part, an understanding of learned behaviour. A second shared assumption is that objectivity and rigour in the testing of clearly formulated hypotheses is essential for the development of Psychology as a science.

Associated with this view is an emphasis on external determinants of behaviour and an emphasis on situational specificity. In assessment (functional analysis), one identifies the environmental conditions that control behaviour. In research, the emphasis is on the direct manipulation of variables toward the end of discovering laws for

all individuals. In most research, individual differences are minimized. Yet, as one moves from the laboratory to the clinic, there is considerable concern with individuals and their idiosyncratic behavioural repertoires.

This movement between laboratory and clinic, involving an effort to apply experimentally established principles to the treatment of individuals and an effort to use clinical observations as leads for empirical investigation, is a significant feature of the behavioural approach.

The four approaches of Pavlovian classical conditioning, Hullian instrumental learning, Skinner's operant conditioning, and Bandura's modeling or observation learning, place minimal emphasis on complex, internal structures and maximum emphasis on responses – external, observable pieces of behaviour that can be related to environmental events. They view growth and development principally in terms of the continued acquisition of responses and the control of these responses by an increasing array of stimuli. The four-view psychopathology in terms of learned maladaptive responses and adaptive responses that have not been adequately learned. A behavioral – psychological model is used rather than a disease-medical model. The basic principles of learning are viewed as providing a completely adequate interpretation of behavioural pathology. In behaviour therapy, there is an attempt to apply experimentally established principles of learning to the treatment of problem behaviour. The focus here is on specific responses, or target behaviours, and the systematic utilization of stimuli in the environment to affect changes in the client's behavioural repertoire.

This approach to the study of the person has oversimplified behaviour, important areas of behavioral functioning are neglected. It is not as objective and rigorous as claimed. The effectiveness of behaviour therapy has been questioned and serious moral issues raised. The ideology and enthusiasm of Skinnerian social engineering give cause for concern. This approach is reductionistic. A revolution is going on in Psychology, a (different image of man is being tried as a guide to research, theory and application. Over the years, theorists have conceptualized the person as a machine as an organism comparable to rats, pigeons and monkeys; as a communication system; a hydraulic system; as a servo-mechanism, as a computer – in short, he has been viewed by Psychologist as an analogue of everything but what he is, a person. Man is indeed like all those things, but first of all, he is a free intentional subject.

Currently many Psychologists feel that Psychology should concern itself more with the 'whole' person. It should centre more on

real human experience. A variety of vanities have caused Psychologists to turn their backs on the complete and purposeful person. A craving to be seen, above all, as Scientists has led them to favour the clockwork doll, the chemical interaction or the environmentally imprisoned rat as their models of humanity. This makes the phenomenological approach superior to behaviourism.

Scientism, Notcutt (1953) accused is to science what the Pharisee is to the man of God. In the Psychology of Scientism there is everything to impress the onlooker.

## CONSTITUTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

For the man on the street physical characteristics of his fellow humans illumine manifold aspects of personality. The study of physical and psychological factors and their relationships to personality variables has interested man from the time of Hippocrates and his speculative humours. Even William Shakespeare in Julius Caesar wrote about lean Cassius as sleepless, sly and dangerous.

Like Jung, Sheldon has concentrated on the inherited aspects of personality. His basic view is that our bodily constitution is a major determinant of our behaviour. Thus, personality can best be investigated through the study of Anatomy and Physiology. A vast amount of other related works had been done in Physiological Psychology and Psychiatry. Sheldon developed a system by which the human body is measured and classified along three dimensions. This classification yields the individual's somatotype, or body type. The somatotype is believed to be related to specific behavioural characteristics in the form of one's basic temperament.

The body type is determined through a procedure in which individuals are photographed in the nude from the front, side and rear; the dimensions of specific parts of the body are then measured. The individual receives a score ranging from one to seven with respect to each of the three basic body components (Sheldon, Stevens and Tucker, 1970). As can be seen in the slide. The first component is endomorphy, which consists of a soft and rounded appearance; and extreme endomorph would be classified 7-1-1- on the three components. The accompanying temperament is viscerotonia, which is described as including love of physical comfort, sociability, tolerance for others and extraversion. The stereotype of a jolly, outgoing fat person fits this type.

Mesomorphy is the second body component and it consists of an anatomy that is strong and muscular. An extreme mesomorph would be

classified 1-7-1. The corresponding temperament is somatonia, which includes love of physical adventure, boundless energy, boldness, aggressiveness, and the need for exercise and activity. The loud, assertive athlete is the stereotype here.

The third physical component is ectomorphy and the 1-1-7 person would be thin, flat chested, and delicate. The accompanying temperament is cerebrotonia, which includes love of privacy, emotional restraint and intellectual intensity. The stereotype here is the shy, introverted scholar. The average person is 4-4-4.

Endomorphs are most likely to develop disorders involving extreme variations in emotion, mesomorphs are most likely to become paranoid and suspicious and ectomorphs are most likely to be withdrawn and schizophrenic. Despite the promising evidence, there has been only limited research interest in Sheldon's approach to personality. Other related studies are Phrenology, Physiognomy, Graphology and Palmistry, which are referred to as armchair psychology. It is important to note that Constitutional Psychology, Graphology, fingerprint study are vital to police science and Military Psychology.

Illnesses, diet and ethnophysical traits confound this approach. Olowu (1983) found that the plump Yoruba was the ideal person though fadism and modern health trends favour and advocate the obverse.

This leads me to the last approach for consideration.

## THE CULTURE PATTERN THEORIES:

Anthropologists and Sociologists tend to think of personality as the product of the social groups in which people are reared. Thus Malinowski's and Margaret Mead's observations of the non-universality of the Oedipus complex mentioned earlier under the discussion on the psychoanalytic approach, non-universality of adolescent instability and the extended self also discussed earlier under the phenomenological approach which is documented in Olowu (1990a) show that different cultures meet man's needs in different ways and lead to different modal organizations. While accepting that personality always develops in a particular social milieu, Psychologists are still more concerned with variations from the cultural norms.

For instance among the Yorubas the head *ori* has two meanings, *ori* literally meaning, the biological head in which case it is the seat of intellect. It is also related to a person's destiny, as the element, which pre-determine his success or failure in the world. An individual chooses the 'head' before his birth, creating limits within which success in the

world can be expected. In contrast to this rather fatalistic model, the head (*ori*) is said to be the 'ancestral guardian soul & a spiritual entity which can be influenced by man in his efforts to improve his life on earth.

These varied conceptualizations of the spiritual components of the person have parallels with those of other West African people, and represent similar attempts to deal with the same underlying reality: the structure of the personality. In his discussion of the Tallensi and Kalabari, Horton (1961) draws a parallel between, the Freudian ideal of an unconscious self- a purposive agency whose desires are unknown to consciousness and are frequently in conflict with it, chosen by a part of the personality before birth, a course both hidden from the post-natal consciousness and frequently opposed to the latter's aims. The Yoruba concept of *ori* in some accounts has rather similar characteristics. An individual can confront, and exercise and unsatisfactory destiny, through rituals as in the case with the Tallensi and Kalabari. Makinde (1976) noted that Yoruba students delight in finding out what their *ori* can do for them by making nocturnal visits to the *Babalawo*, the diviner.

Iwawaki (1991), in Japan observed that the concept of the self (person) has been understood differently by the different philosophical traditions and cultures. Several authors have pointed out that there are differences among the concept of self in Western and Eastern thought.

Japan is a culturally homogeneous nation. Japanese modes of thinking have inherited a Buddhist and Confucian heritage common to oriental cultures. In Japan, members of a group are expected to act within the framework of the group and to conform and cooperate with one another. Japanese culture is characterized by collectivism. Ho (1979), suggested that the self is sometimes either ignored or circumscribed in a collectivist society. Johnson (1985), describes features of the Western self as analytic, monotheistic, individualistic, materialistic and rationalistic as opposed to the predominant African conception.

## OVERVIEW:

Every man is a Psychologist to some extent. Every person develops a view of man and a strategy for predicting events. This lecture represents the efforts of Psychologists to systematize what is known about human personality and to suggest areas for future exploration.

Although Psychologists as a group are more explicit about their views of man than is the average layman, and are more systematic in

their efforts to understand and predict human behaviour, there is individual difference among them. The few theories here are representative of the diversity of approaches that can be considered reasonable, useful and relevant. It has been demonstrated that theory, assessment and research are related. The theories of personality covered need not be considered to be mutually exclusive, each represents a glimpse of the total picture. Human behaviour is like a very complex jigsaw puzzle. The theories of personality discussed have offered us many possible pieces for the puzzle. Some will fit and some will be discarded.

The search for more reliable personality assessment in Clinical Psychology, Educational Psychology and Industrial Psychology continue unabated. The implications of personality studies fall squarely on the laps of these three areas of applied Psychology. Educational Psychology is concerned with psychological factors affecting educational performance. In a similar way, Clinical Psychology is the study of psychological factors affecting mental health, while Industrial Psychology – also called Personnel Psychology, is concerned with improving workers morale/welfare, selecting appropriate personnel and developing effective methods of training.

Apart from these three areas of applied psychology, the person has been studied in the terrain of Social Psychology. We (Olowu and Lamikanra, 1986), have looked at compliance and drug use among persons who dwell on this campus. Our sample consisted of all grades of students and workers, we found apart from non-compliance that predominantly all groups supplement their drugs in varying degrees with native medicine and some believe that some ailments were beyond Western medicine. In the same vein, Odebiyi, Olowu and Vive-Kananda (1991) studied how shame has fallen on the earth and persons through **Aids** in Africa.

Our explorations into the person took us into the newly emerging area of Environmental Psychology. This is concerned with the effects of the environment – both physical and social – upon the person/ behaviour. Thus it seeks to examine the manner in which such factors as heat, war, drought, bad-governance, noise and crowding influence our feelings, **actions and even health**. Though new, Environmental Psychology promises to make important contributions to such fields as urban planning, architecture and even transportation. A pioneer book of readings in Environmental Psychology was edited by this inaugurant, published first by the Educational Material Centre of Egerton University

Njoro-Kenya in 1990 and by Shaneson Limited, Ibadan in 1991 (See Olowu 1984 and 1991).

We should not shrink from recognizing the role of personal-social forces in psychological inquiry and the implications our findings may have for social policy. While any scientific discipline is affected by these forces, personality theory and research are particularly vulnerable to them for three reasons: (a) the field is currently fairly unstructured; (b) there remains dispute concerning ideal and acceptable research strategies; (c) most significantly, the subject matter lends itself to strong involvement of personal and social concerns. This makes personality psychology relevant in today's Nigeria, Africa and the world. Nationhood starts with the person. We all know that a nation that is made up of preponderantly undisciplined and corrupt persons would have its social integrity tarnished and hope for a genuine development dashed.

Contemporary nationhood demands scientific and technological development for economic reasons if no other. There is no way out of modernization, whether we like it or not. We may however learn from the western experience of technological growth, which has been one of greater environmental control at the cost of dehumanization and alienation. It seems the kind of cultural pattern required for preventing such social ills is more like that of traditional African societies than those of Modern Europe or America. African cultures are socially oriented with powerful group-ties. Compared with western culture they emphasize a more economically sensitive approach to the solution of problems. That is, they give consideration to all rather than a selected few of the aspects of a problem. In contrast, western culture thrived on individualism, fragmentation and abstractionism. Its approach to technology was unidirectional and single-minded, aiming to get what was wanted out of the environment as quickly and cheaply as possible for a while this approach seemed to work, that is, until the side effects began to show themselves with ominous frequency. Also it depends on cutthroat capitalism, which necessarily carried with human injustice, hypocrisy, fraud (419), armed robbery and all forms of human degradation. It is now recognized that technology must be coordinated with human, social and psychological needs in order for it to properly serve man. The approach has to be total, not partial or fragmented. Everything has to be accounted for. Only in this way can meaning in life be preserved. It is essential that developing nations be aware of this in their planning, to guard against dehumanization and to adapt their traditional cultural values accordingly. This conclusion is based on

studies of adolescents in transitional societies. Olowu (1985) found that persons who live in transitional societies; where the traditional ways of life are in jeopardy have their self-concepts warped. These require professional psychological intervention. The implications of long absence of a parent or two from the home on the children are well enunciated (Olowu, 1990b). The child is father of man. Parents are the architects of the family. It is they who serve as models for the children in sex dominance, aggression, and attitudes towards works and authority. God has given us the children as heritage. He will ask from us what we have done with them.

Several studies Lambo (1960, 1961), Geber, (1958), Knapen (1958) in contemporary African show that in the urban centres today, the care of a child is left in the hands of the housemaids many of whom are themselves under the stress of transition, inadequately prepared and emotionally immature. Most of the attention given to the child by the mother is physical and limited. The mother after a long day at work is prone to emotional difficulties herself. The dilemma with which we are now faced as a result of social change is that we are moving toward a type of human development, which is incompatible with human growth.

Asuni (1974) observed that children of the elite constitute an especially vulnerable group of children in Nigeria and perhaps all over Africa. Their parents had an upbringing that is sharply different from that of their children. Their parents were born in an extended family situation. They were brought up in an emotionally warm environment. They were weaned at two or three years. Whatever weaknesses there were in their upbringing were buffered by other built-in systems in the social set-up.

Whereas the children of the elite are born usually in a nuclear family, they live in houses in the new residential areas where neighborhood feeling is less. Where everybody is to himself. Greater force is made on toilet training. They are kept in cribs instead of crawling about the house/compound. The children are left to their devices without much guidance and leadership. The parents are too busy pursuing money and position at the detriment of the children. Life is becoming increasingly difficult for the children. The problem of these children is the failure of their parents, who do not appreciate the added and different responsibility of parenthood in a socio-cultural and economic environment different from that in, which they had grown. What type of persons do we want to produce? Persons who take solace in drugs, who become spineless sycophants, psychopaths and other forms of abnormal personalities?

In agreement with Graziano (1974) in his book, **Children without Tomorrow**, it is believed that these parents need practical professional advice and skill training regarding interacting with their children. Some could learn to actively help train their children. Some could learn to actively help train their children. The psychologist can provide this professional intervention. Our churches and other social agencies have an active role to the play here. We must get behind today so that we can get ahead tomorrow.

Developmental Psychology is the science of **psychological** development through the span, from conception to death and beyond the concept of discipline embraces much than its dictionary meaning (in modern usage, discipline refers to systematic training, exercise, development and control of the mental, moral and physical faculties; in the military sense it implies a system of instruction and control, inculcating submission to established authority, obedience to command of superiors, self-control and orderly behaviour; to discipline someone can mean to punish or chastise that person in order to induce correct behaviour, thoughts and moral values. The broader meaning of discipline in developmental psychology is well –enunciated by Beatrice Tudor Hart in her book: *Toys, Play and Discipline in Childhood*, 1955.

Tudor-Hart, says discipline is a human characteristic which has existed ever since man became human. This would be at least 100,000 years ago (Mundy-Castle, 1976). Any community lacking discipline will surely disintegrate. Discipline serves to hold individuals together enabling them to work, live and interact with each other harmoniously, constructively and cooperatively. Discipline allows man to live with man so that all can survive and benefit from their association.

The modern world contrast with the traditional, whether in Nigeria or elsewhere, is riddled with deep cleavages, showing flagrant extremes of wealth and poverty, ownership and lack of possessions, ethnic and class divisions which cause bitterness and harm. Parents in modern times are themselves prey to the conflicting social pressures around them, rendering them insecure and lacking in confidence in themselves and their beliefs. Their position is made worse by the fragmented context of modern living and working typified in metropolitan centers like Lagos, where crime, hooliganism and gangsterism (area boys) are the order of the day, communications and essential services are unreliable, all against a backdrop of environmental and ecological desecration. The press, radio and television give spectacular expression to the extent of people's greed, brutality and lust for power. These observations whether direct or through the media, have

a great impact on children making very difficult, the task of parents and teachers trying to instill high social and moral values.

Tudor-Hart argues that if discipline is to be of any service to the community/nation it must be self-discipline. Educationally, this is nurtured in a social setting, and in children, it is best produced through socially constructive play. These contrasts with self-discipline with 'drill-hall' discipline, which relies on externally – induced fear, whereas self-discipline derives from internally inspired judgement.

## CONCLUSION

The main aspiration of this inaugural is to move Psychology as a discipline and profession beyond where he met it.

The major thrust of our work is that African Psychologists and other African social Scientists should insist, to speak for themselves, we need to move away from the pathology oriented notions about the behaviour of African peoples toward creating, interpreting and re-interpreting the psychological literature on Africa and blacks. This does not mean that we want to debunk the psychic unity of mankind correctly propounded by Pythagoras and Kroeber. This is right and appropriate because the character of social intelligence favoured by Africans and other Third World cultures fits the newly emerging post-positivist paradigm of behaviourism which has so long dominated the patterning of psychological theory, research and teaching. This may be seen in the following characterizations.

POSITIVIST PARADIGM	POST-POSITIVIST PARADIGM
Objective	Intersubjective
Scientific	Spiritual
Fragmented	Holistic
Data-Driven	Belief-Oriented
Differentiated	Undifferentiated
Withdrawn	Emotional
Philistine	Cultural
Closed	Open
Cold	Warm
Technological	Social
Linearly Causal	Mutually Causal
Mechanical	Holographic
Hierarchic	Heterarchic
Simple	Complex
Determine	Indeterminate

The post-positivist paradigm is essentially one of humanism and intersubjectivity. It recognizes that reality is essentially a social contract, as long ago advocated by Vygotsky and more recently, by Moscovici (1984) in his theory of social representation. It is now clear that the social is primary, the technological secondary and derivative. The pattern of our teaching, research and theorizing psychology should follow in this vein. It fits the African traditional way of life far better and, in the long run, may serve to reinject soul into the coldly logical, over-rational world of the west- to retrieve the soul from ice.

Mr. Vice Chancellor Sir, to God be the glory, some awareness have been created all over the world that **Ife is a Centre for Psychological Studies**. This inaugurator admires what Carl Rogers did by setting up the Institute of the Person at La Jolla, California but admires Professor Thomas Odhiambo of Kenya the more for what he has done and is doing for Entomology and he wishes he can do same for Psychology. This looks a tall order but I am undaunted, when there is a will there is a way. **This aspiration is in its embryo through the *Ife Psychologia: An international Journal***. In this discipline, the harvest is plenty but the labourers few.

Through the grace of God, this lecturer represents Africa on the International Association of Cross-cultural Psychology Executive Council. He has also assisted in the move towards the expanding of the

role of Psychology as a discipline and profession in many Nigerian and African Universities and organisations.

He was opported to present the case of Psychology at the Environment and Development Conference at the University of Swaziland in 1991 under the auspices of the African Academy of Sciences. I wish we could still ameliorate and avoid the alienated conditions induced by rapid modernisation and associated loss of identity, and meaning. If this is a late call then we are the end of a precipice and need a divine intervention. Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people.

The old dominant themes of behaviourism should not be discarded, but used if needed as techniques within the post-positivist paradigm.

The subject matter of Psychology is real life. The laboratory is the community. This approach to Psychology is favoured to accomplish meaningful and effective national development. Funds should be made available for initiation of coordinated research, incorporating the conceptual and theoretical perspectives discussed in this lecture.

Nigeria should stop seating on a goldmine, she should tap it by using her psychological resources to the full. Prosperous nations have done so. Nations in search of economic and political stabilities have made use of their psychologists. Persons constitute the active agents' in the development process. The success of any political or economic system depends on the quality, orientation and commitment of the operators (persons). A few mindless persons have plundered the resources of this country. To transform a system all the operators (persons) must become new creations! **Self-discipline** derives from internally inspired judgement.

The Nigerian Psychology Association should be up and doing. It must do more than it is doing at the moment. It should have more say in the affairs of the nation. A very virile group of Psychologists can rid the leadership of this country of charlatanism. This should be an impetus for the formation of the Pan-African Association of Psychologists (PAAP) whose function should be to nurture and develop Psychology which is fitting for African peoples. And that means not in the foreign tradition of neo-colonialism but in the African tradition of humanism.

Mr. Vice- Chancellor Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you all for listening.

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