

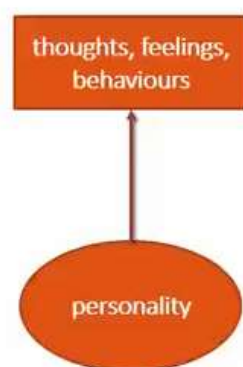
Learning Objectives for HPS307/791 - Personality

Topic 1 - Theory and Research in Personality

At the end of this topic, you should have insight into the following concept and issues:

1 The general definition of personality

Personality is defined generally as the psychological structures underlying consistent patterns in thoughts feelings and behaviours – not always the same for people.
Some people are more impulsive and others more careful



2 The value of theory (generally)

theory= understanding

The Key idea is if understand something you have the power to change it

Two Key ideas:

- 1. If you understand some process or outcome you have greater ability to intervene and change that process or outcome
- 2. In the context of personality psychology, if you have expert understanding of human behaviour, you can help a person change in a way that is more effective than a non-expert

3 Conceptual issues relevant to the study of personality:

a How is personality studied?

A key question = what is the best way to understand behaviour?

Or, if the theory represents our understanding the q that can be framed is – what is the best way to develop personality theory?

Answer is complex and people disagree

Majority of academic psychologists pursue psychology scientifically =

Idea → proposition → evidence

In simple terms – this involved using systematic, objective (i.e., free from bias) observation to test theory.

The idea needs to be a theory, an understanding. If it is just a proposition, the line of enquiry might be empirical in nature, but not really scientific as no generalised understanding is being developed