

Determinants of Personality



What determines your personality? Is your personality inherited from your family or something that evolved over the years as you encountered many psychological changes and events that transformed you? Psychologists say that our personality is mainly a result of four major determinants, i.e. Physical (Biological/Hereditary), Social (the community you are brought up in and your role in the community), Psychological (your behaviour, emotions and inner thought patterns) and Intellectual (your values and beliefs). These determinants of personality further also include various cultural, situational and environmental factors that you might come across in life. Let's further understand the meaning of personality, its types, determinants, characteristics, nature, perception and more!

What are the Major Determinants of Personality?

There are four major determinants of personality:

- **Biological/Physical Determinants:** Hereditary and physical features
- **Social Determinants:** Sociological aspects related to the community and his/her role in the community
- **Psychological Determinants:** Behaviour, emotions, sentiments, thought patterns and complexes of an individual
- **Intellectual Determinants:** Values, Humour, Morality, etc.

Other determinants of personality include cultural, situational, environmental factors, etc.

Biological/Physical Determinants of Personality

Biological traits are the foremost parameter that reflects various factors of one's personality. Being the essential determinant of personality, it incorporates a majority of other factors as well which bring out the various insights about an individual. Some important constituents under the physical determinants of personality are:

- **Hereditary:** The features that can be determined from the time of conception are generally put under hereditary. Sex, physical stature, temperament, muscle composition, facial features, height etc are the characteristics that one usually inherits from parents. Thus, through the hereditary approach, it is evident that the genes located in chromosomes are the ultimate explanation of personality.
- **Physical Features:** Physical appearance is also amongst the integral determinants of personality. How one appears physically actually plays an important role in how they are perceived by others. Whether one is short, tall, slim, fat, black or white will obviously have an impression on others and this will have an influence on the self-conception of the individual.

Psychological Determinants of Personality

Considering a personality as a particular style pertaining to each individual, the psychological approach is amongst the major determinants of personality. This specific style which is different for each individual actually gets determined through the accumulative characteristics of mental trends, emotions, sentiments, thought patterns and complexes. Further, it also studies an individual's mental conflicts, wishes, aspirations, feelings of repression, sublimation and emotional well-being.

Cultural Determinants of Personality

Just as we are born with biological determinants, cultural determinants of personality are the ones which we grow up with. The ritual and norms in the family, the early conditioning, the way we are raised up, the social group in which we hang out are the factors which have an impactful emphasis on our personality formation. Each culture trains and expects its members to behave and breathe in a way that is acceptable by society. Hence, factors like aggression, independence, cooperation and competition are major cultural contributors to personality determination. Thus, it is quite evident to filter out the individuals brought up in the western part of the world from the citizens of our country as the cultures we have been brought up are poles apart.

Family Factors

The most significant out of the different determinants of personality is that of familial. The environment at home blended with the direct influence of the parents are the major contributors to the traits that build our personality. A critical impact is driven by the family especially in the early and naive age. For example, a child brought up in a violent household will be quite different and emotionally and socially timid and cold as compared to a child reared in a warm, adjusting and healthy environment.

Let us understand the importance of parents and family as crucial determinants of personality with the help of the American-Australian Psychologist Walter Mischel's theory:

- Identification can be done by observing the similarity of the behaviour like feelings and attitude between the child and their parents.
- Identification can be viewed as the child's desire and aspiration to be like their parents.

- It can be looked as the method through which the child actually takes on the attributes of the personality from their parents.

Social Determinants of Personality

The social determinants analyse a personality as per the status of the individual in their social group or community and consider the individual's conception of their role in the group is like. The key factor that this approach weighs in is what others perceive us as plays a greater role in the formation of our personality.

The era has seen the widespread emergence of communication tools, especially through social media. Social media influencers hold an authoritative power to influence masses around the globe. Hence, anyone's personality is majorly persuaded by the social lives they lead and are a part of. Through socializing, be it virtual or real, one encounters a plethora of other individuals which some way or the other leave a mark on our personalities. The process starts as soon as we step into the real world from the playschool we go to peers and friends, amongst others. Our social life is one of the essential determinants of personality and that's why we are always advised to choose our social circle wisely.

Situational Factors

In our discussion of various determinants of personality, a vital mention should go to the situational category. It would not be difficult for you to relate with the fact that we as humans, react differently to distinct situations. Although, it would not be correct to say that situational factors determine an individual's personality in the most correct manner but it surely reflects how a person's behaviour is and how they react in a given situation. The traits shown through situational factors usually vary a lot as different people exhibit different situational personality traits. For Example: You may behave differently in front of your boss in the office than at a club with your friends.

According to Milgram, "Situation exerts an important press on the individual. It exercises constraints and may provide a push. In certain circumstances, it is not so much the kind of person a man is, as the kind of situation in which he is placed that determines his actions".

Intellectual Determinants of Personality

Intelligence is another essential factor that can play an important role in the development of our personality. Our intellect can influence various aspects and areas of our behaviour which in turn, can determine our personality. Here are the intellectual determinants of Personality:

- **Humour:** Humour is one of the integral intellectual determinants of personality as it helps us get a realistic view of things, facilitates social acceptance and further also ironically brings forward a lighter perspective of life.
- **Morality:** Our intellect and worldview plays a crucial role in the development of our morality and how we see certain things as moral or immoral. Thus, morality is another factor that determines our intellect and thus overall personality as well.
- **Values:** An individual learns about values from his/her upbringing as well as from the society they are brought up in. These values and beliefs also form our intellectual behaviour and thus are an important determinant of our personality.

The Meaning of Personality

Derived from the Latin word '*persona*' which can be translated as 'mask', personality can be simply defined as an individual's experiences, values, habits and traits which collectively determine his or her behavioural patterns. Psychologists and social theorists have found that there are two main approaches or determinants that one can utilise to study personality, i.e. Psychological and Sociological. Apart from this, a biological approach can be additionally used but since it centrally assesses the individual's biophysical characteristics, it is an adequate approach to study a personality in a holistic manner.

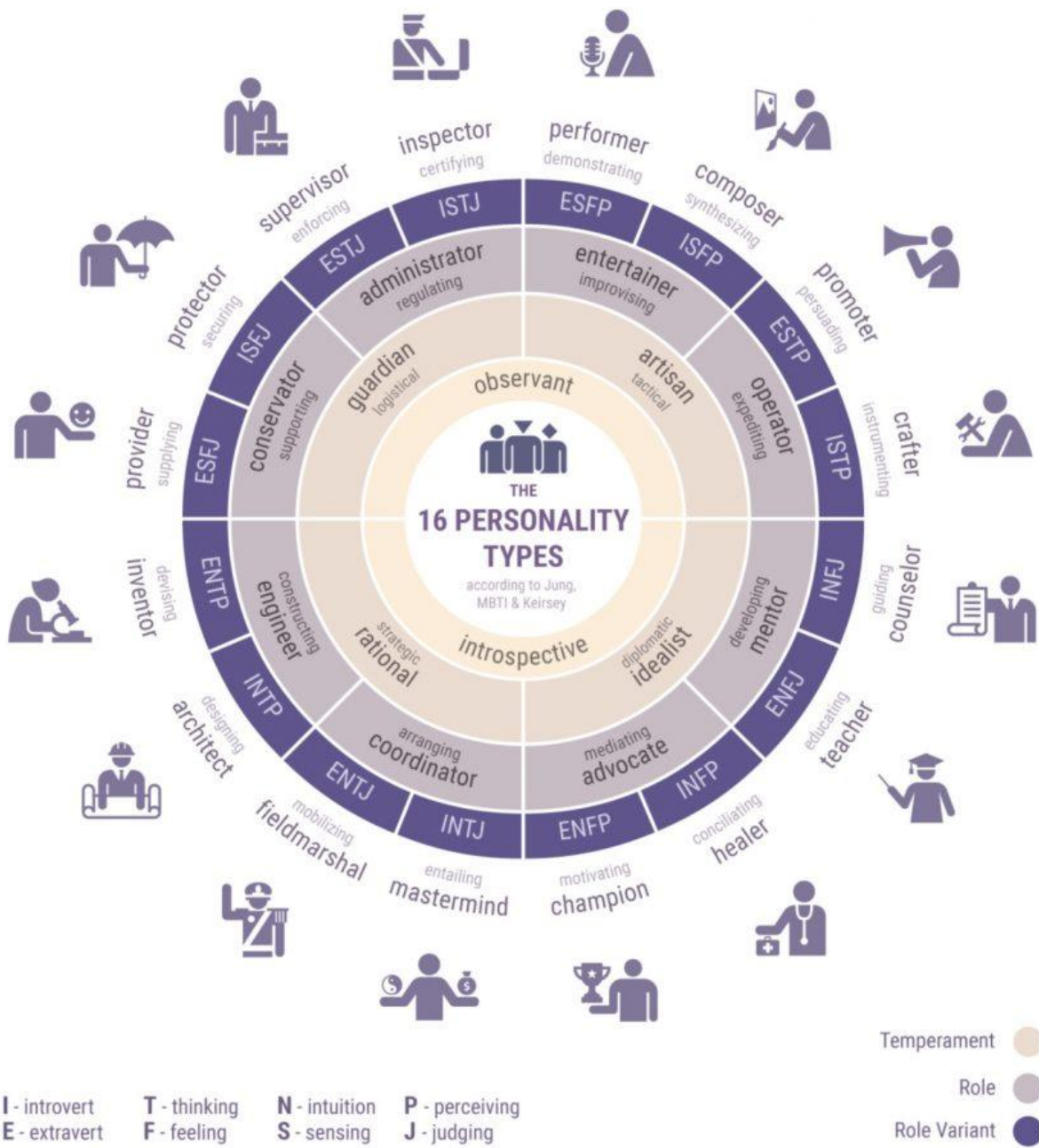
Types of Personality

There are different types of personality as per several theories. The most popular theory of the types of personality is by Greeks which says there are four types of temperaments. Thus, the four types of personality are:

- **Sanguine:** Highly talkative, social, extroverted and enthusiastic

- Phlegmatic: Quiet, easy-going, and reserved
- Melancholic: Deep thinkers and analytical minds
- Choleric: More extroverted and ambitious

Other than this theory, there are 16 modern types of personality which are as follows:



Sources: K. Jung Psychological Types,
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI),
D. Keirsey Temperament Sorter

visualized by Mark and Anna Vital



Courtesy: Adiomia

Personality Characteristics

Neither there are set types of personality nor there is any determined set of characteristics of personality. Some of us tend to reflect similar traits even after being not related by blood, while on the other hand, members of the same family have different personality. Understanding the uniqueness of personalities, mentioned below are some of the common characteristics of personality-

- Self Efficiency
- Locus of Control
- Self Esteem
- Risk-Taking
- Positive/ Negative Affect
- Self Monitoring
- Type A and Type B Personality

Factors Influencing Perception

Perception simply refers to a process through which an individual interprets and organizes sensations in order to comprehend a meaningful understanding of the world. There are many factors that can consciously or unconsciously affect perception.

Here are the major factors influencing perception:

- Characteristics of the Perceiver: Beliefs, Expectations, Needs and Motives, Self Concept, Past Experience, Current Psychological State, Situation, Cultural Upbringing
- Characteristics of the Perceived: Appearances, Manners of Communication, Personality Traits, Age, Gender, other forms of behaviour
- Characteristics of the Situation: The context we perceive certain objects or people in.

Determinants of Personality: How Psychometric Tests Help?

You might have heard of psychometric analysis utilised to screen candidates for a job profile or either in career counselling sessions to map a student's interests and skills. A

psychometric test incorporates a standard and scientific analysis to evaluate an individual's mental capabilities as well as behaviour. It gauges the merit and aptitude of a person while also examining their personality traits.

Especially in career counselling, a psychometric test plays an essential role in helping the counsellors gauge the student's interest and skill areas and find suitable career paths for them. Comprising a basic framework of multiple-choice questions, there is no passing or failing in this test. They are designed with factoring the determinants of personality and ensure equal opportunity to every aspect. So, to get deeper into what traits and skills you have and which career they align with, a psychometric assessment has an integral part in helping you solve your career confusions whether it be choosing from [streams after 10th](#), finding the right academic program, choosing an ideal career path or making your way towards [personality development](#).

FAQs

- **What are the major determinants of personality?**
There are 4 major determinants of personality which include the physical environment, heredity, experiences and culture.
- **What is personality and determinants of personality?**
Personality is a collection of qualities, disposition, values and characteristics.
- **What are behavioural determinants?**
Behavioural determinants commonly defined by lifestyle abilities, culture, attribution, perception and attitude.

Hence, we hope that now you are familiarized with the different determinants of personality and how you can explore your own through psychometric assessments. At [Leverage Edu](#), our experts can guide you towards the right career path through our meticulously designed 70-minute psychometric test that evaluates your behaviour, interests and choices combined with one-on-one career consultation with our expert behavioural scientists. Don't wait up, book your free 30-minute consultation session with us today!