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A KICK-START TO EXPLORE THE CONCEPT OF PERSONAL QUALITY

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Abstract

This paper explains the concept of personal quality through the lens of the Big Five Personality Model and Self-Efficacy Theory. Personal qualities are described as a visionary, accountable, consistent, always motivated, tolerant and always committed individual. The Big Five Personality Model identifies five fundamental dimensions of personality, including openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. These personality traits play a crucial role in determining how individuals interact with others, handle stress, and approach challenges, thereby influencing their personal quality. In conjunction with the Big Five Personality Model, the Self-Efficacy Theory posits that highly motivated behavior as a conscious cognitive process that involves the ability to anticipate objectives and rewards, as well as the application of judgment, evaluation and decision making. Understanding personal quality through the integration of these psychological frameworks allows for a comprehensive evaluation of human behavior and individual differences. By recognizing the role of personality traits and self-belief in shaping personal quality, researchers and scholars can design effective interventions to enhance personal growth and well-being, thus contributing to a more fulfilling and productive society.

Keywords: Personal Quality, Big Five Personality Model, Self-Efficacy Theory, Personality, Psychology

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Introduction

Personal quality has always received considerable attention from scholars conducting studies on the subject. Various terms and definitions have been proposed to explain personal quality. However, in order to explain personal quality in more detail, the definition of the term "personal" must be explained in more detail. Personal or personality is defined as a person's pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving that is relatively consistent and continuous across both context and time (McDonald and Letzring 2020)¹. Personality is also understood as a set of stable psychological characteristics that distinguish a person from others (Griffin, Philips, and Gully 2020)². Schultz & Schultz (2017)³ defined personality as internal and external qualities that are fixed and distinctive and that influence a person's behavior in different situations. Cervone & Pervin (2013)⁴ defined personality as a psychological trait that leads to the development of unique and distinctive patterns of feelings, attitudes, and behaviors that remain consistent across time and environment. Personality is also defined as the general way a person behaves and interacts with others and includes a consistent style of behavior and feelings (Robbins and Judge 2017)⁵. A. Rahman (2012)⁶ interprets personality as a dynamic psycho-physical system that guides an individual to determine the behavioral characteristics that are appropriate for his or her environment. Ewen (2010)⁷, on the other hand, explains personality as the thoughts, feelings, and physical behaviors that manifest in a person when he or she is in front of others or alone.

Traits are associated with personality. Allport (1927)⁸ describes a trait as a tendency to respond to different types of stimuli in the same or an equivalent way. In other words, traits are consistent and enduring methods of responding to any environment. Allport claims that personality traits are true and exist in each of us. Costa & McCrae (1992)⁹, on the other hand, define traits as character traits, enduring patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving that remain stable over time and describe a person's behaviour in any situation. Personality traits are not theoretical constructs or labels created to describe behaviour. Rather, personality traits can cause certain behaviours to occur. However, they do not exist only in response to certain stimuli. Personality traits are able to motivate an individual to find appropriate stimuli to produce behaviour through interaction with the environment. Personality traits can be empirically demonstrated. A personality trait can be inferred from the consistency of a person's response to the same or similar stimuli. Although personality traits represent different characteristics, personality traits are related to each other and are interrelated.

Reeves & Bednar (1994)¹⁰ explain that the definition of quality is subjective and depends on the individual's perspective. The definition of quality also varies to explain a phenomenon. However, he believes that quality is something valuable, outstanding, excellent, meeting established standards and specifications and meeting or exceeding expectations. Personal qualities or people who have superior personality are defined as someone who has sensitivity, seriousness and sense of responsibility, energy, self-confidence and ability to work with people (A. Rahman, 2012)⁶. Personal qualities are therefore described as visionary, responsible, consistent, always motivated, tolerant and always committed. Hence, models and theories that

can be associated with personal quality are the Big Five personality model and the self-efficacy theory.

Big Five Personality Model

The Big Five personality model explains personality in terms of five broad dimensions, with each dimension comprising a group of personality traits (Wan Shahrazad et al. 2015)¹¹. The development of the Big Five personality model began in the 1940s by Raymond Cattell to measure individual personality. The model developed by Raymond Cattell is based on the approach of using 68 languages to describe personality and does not use psychology. The development of this model eventually gave rise to the 16 Personality Factors Questionnaire (16PF). In 1961, Ernest Tupes and Raymond Christal analysed the personality data produced by Cattell and created a significant and stable Big Five personality model, namely Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. Since then, many researchers studying personality have used the results in further studies. In fact, the Big Five personality model is increasingly used in different languages and cultures, and various research findings have found a significant correlation. Figure 2 shows the Big Five personality model.

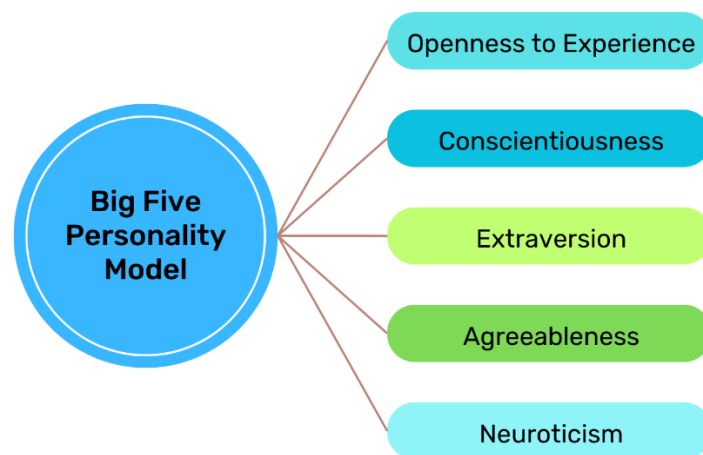


Figure 1 Big Five Personality Model

The Big Five personality model has gained worldwide acceptance as one of the frameworks for conceptualising human personality in a broader and more diverse framework. In fact, there are also some scholars and researchers who specifically describe the Big Five personality model by explaining personality tendencies such as NEO-PI -R, HEXACO-PI -R and so on. This illustrates that the Big Five personality model is the main pillar in describing the characteristics of human personality and also encompasses cross-linguistic and cross-cultural concepts and other related constructs. The model is also widely used to construct personality instruments to test individual personality traits (Azad Iqram et al., 2022b)¹².

Openness to experience is a personality dimension associated with the willingness to engage with complex and new environmental stimuli such as ideas, people, cultures, sensations and other experiences. According to Stoll et al. (2020)¹³, openness to experience is the tendency to appreciate new ideas, values and behaviours. Openness to experience is also a dimension characterised by the desire to expand and supplement one's intellectual experience by seeking out new information (Azad Iqram et al. 2023; Boyd 2020)^{14,15}. This dimension enables individuals to be imaginative, curious and creative. According to the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI -R) described by Costa & McCrae (1992)⁹, this trait consists of personality components such as imagination, interest in art, emotionality, interest in challenges, intellectuality and independence.

Conscientiousness represents stable individual differences in thinking, feeling and behaviour that make an individual unique (Turiano 2020)¹⁶. Individuals with high levels of conscientiousness have more focused, controlled and responsible behaviour, apart from planning things wisely and always adhering to established rules or norms. Conscientiousness is the tendency to always be careful, be punctual, follow the rules and be diligent (Stoll et al., 2020)¹³. This trait consists of personality components such as self-efficacy, orderliness, responsibility, achievement, self-discipline and caution (Costa & McCrae, 1992)⁹. In general, the group of people belonging to this personality trait is considered to have a high level of efficiency and rationality in decision-making. This group is also described as neat, punctual and organised (Azad Iqram et al., 2023b)¹⁷. However, this group sometimes does not follow the rules too closely, but still does everything correctly and carefully (Azad Iqram et al., 2022a)¹⁸. This is also a group that is always ambitious and strives hard to excel in everything they do. It can be concluded that a person who shows a high level of concern is a person who can be trusted and a realistic person.

Extraversion is a dimension of personality variation that includes individual differences in social behaviour, assertiveness, always positive emotions, ease of influence and motivation (Lukaszewski 2020)¹⁹. Extraversion is defined as the tendency to talk, socialise and be happy with others, as well as a tendency to have a more dominant style (Stoll et al., 2020)¹³. Conceptually, the nature of extraversion shows implications for individuals who are always socially active (John 2021)²⁰. Costa & McCrae (1992)⁹ explained that this trait consists of personality components that are friendly, sociable, pushy or assertive, fun-seeking, always cheerful and active.

Agreeableness is associated with altruistic, appreciative, obedient, trusting, generous, compassionate and friendly attitudes (Furnham 2020)²¹. An altruistic attitude is a personality that values the welfare, happiness and interests of others more than the welfare, happiness and interests of oneself. According to Stoll et al. (2020)¹³, agreeableness is defined as the tendency to agree and get along with others instead of imposing one's own opinions and decisions. Therefore, this trait also distinguishes high scorers who are more likely to exhibit traits such as benevolent, polite, sympathetic and cooperative compared to low scorers who like to argue, be hostile and find fault with others (Redzuan & Abdullah 2004)²².

Neuroticism is a personality dimension often associated with strong negative emotions and a perceived inability to overcome painful and bitter experiences. Neuroticism also means the tendency to experience negative emotions such as anger, anxiety and sadness and to be sensitive towards others (Stoll et al., 2020)¹³. According to Costa & McCrae (1992)⁹, this trait consists of personality components such as fear, worry, anxiety, depression, temper, lack of self-control and vulnerability. Individuals belonging to this group are considered to be easily anxious, always worried and tend to worry all the time. Therefore, this neuroticism can be associated with a person's emotional control in dealing with situations that affect them.

Self-Efficacy Theory

Self-efficacy theory explains highly motivated behaviour as a conscious cognitive process that involves the ability to anticipate goals and rewards, as well as the use of judgement, evaluation and decision-making. This theory explains the degree of confidence a person has in their ability to perform a particular task (Bandura 1978)²³. Based on this theory, the concept of reciprocal determinism, i.e., the cycle of interaction between cognitive factors, environment and behaviour, is used in this theory to enable a person to study his or her environment in order to develop appropriate behaviour based on the knowledge available. Bandura (1978)²³ explains that efficacy expectations are different from outcome or result expectations. Efficacy expectations refer to an individual's belief in the success of shaping the behaviour required to decide. Outcome or result expectations, on the other hand, refer to the belief that a particular behaviour will produce a particular result. Based on self-efficacy theory, Bandura (1978)²³ predicted that individuals with a high sense of self-efficacy will perform more carefully and conscientiously, even in difficult situations, than individuals who doubt their own abilities. Indeed, it is important for individuals to believe in their own abilities because it can help them control their behaviour, effort, perseverance, emotional state and mental processes. Individuals with high self-efficacy are therefore able to cope with difficult activities because they see the difficulties as challenges to be overcome. To achieve their goals, they set goals and see failures and challenges as obstacles that can be overcome through more effort, knowledge and skills.

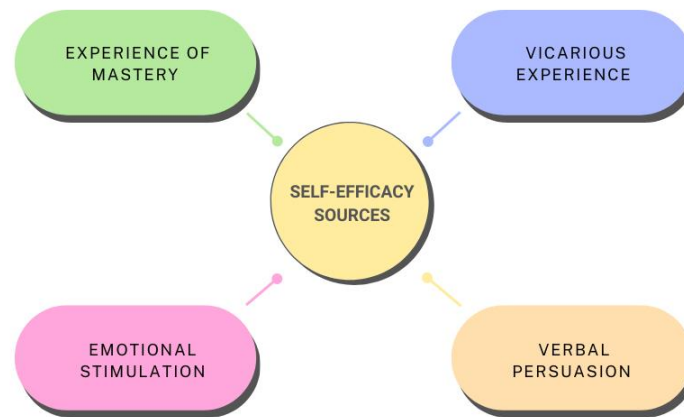


Figure 2 Self-Efficacy Sources

Bandura (1997)²⁴ stated that this self-efficacy is not expressed and is genetically present, but that self-efficacy is generated and developed through four main sources, namely experience of mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and emotional stimulation. The first and most important source of self-efficacy is the experience of mastery. The experience of mastery is the real experience that a person has, and it is the most influential source of self-efficacy. In fact, there is nothing like a practical experience to improve self-efficacy. For example, succeeding in a task or controlling the environment boosts self-confidence, whereas failure undermines this belief. Resilient self-efficacy therefore requires experience in overcoming obstacles and challenges through effort and perseverance. The second source of self-efficacy is vicarious experience. Vicarious or vicarious experience arises from observing people in the environment, especially people who are considered role models. Observing others who are successful through continuous effort increases one's confidence in one's ability to master something that is necessary for success. The next source is verbal persuasion, a method or type of self-efficacy received from influential people in one's daily life such as family, teachers, friends or department heads through guidance and encouragement, which can strengthen one's belief in one's strength to succeed. The final source, emotional stimulation, is the physiological state of the individual, which can influence the way a person assesses their self-efficacy. This physiological state depends on whether the situation is positive or negative. For example, negative physiological states such as depression can inhibit and weaken confidence in one's own abilities. In comparison, a happy situation can strengthen confidence in one's own abilities and skills.

Conclusion

The Big Five personality model can contribute to personal qualities as it shapes the way a person interacts with others, deals with stress and faces life's challenges. For example, high levels of conscientiousness and conscientiousness can lead to higher personal qualities, as these traits are associated with responsible and considerate behaviour that promotes healthier relationships and

overall life satisfaction. Self-efficacy can have a significant impact on personal qualities as it influences a person's motivation, resilience and perseverance. Individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to set challenging goals, strive to achieve them, and recover from failures with greater determination. This positive thinking and proactive approach to life can contribute to higher personal quality. In summary, the concept of personal quality is influenced by both the Big Five personality traits and self-efficacy. Individuals with certain personality traits, such as conscientiousness, agreeableness and emotional stability, are more inclined to display traits associated with personal qualities. Furthermore, high self-efficacy can enable individuals to strive for personal growth, overcome obstacles and ultimately improve their personal qualities. However, it is important to note that personal qualities are a complex and multi-layered construct and that various other factors may also contribute to their development.

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