



Social-Cognitive Approach Considers the Situations under the Human Behaviour

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DESCRIPTION

Can personality be “dynamic”, i.e., changing through time, and opposed to an unchanging “structure”? “The term “structure” as applied to personality has come to connote stability and relative permanence of organization as opposed to states in flux or change which have been termed “dynamic”. On the one hand, research on personality has been based almost entirely on the study of the subject differences in stable traits, which are temporally invariant and can be slightly influenced by situations. This is known as the personality trait perspective. Although this approach has been fruitful and has shown important results about the personality structure, the dynamic aspects of personality have not been sufficiently considered. On the other hand, the social-cognitive approach considers that situations underlie the human behavior differences, but it does not accept traits as an explanation of behavior. Both approaches have been competitors historically. An integrative approach to personality that takes into account both stable and dynamic aspects is necessary. This approach has to incorporate both traits and states, thereby reconciling both the stable and the dynamic aspects of personality differ not only when regarding their average trait level, but also in how their personality states vary. Besides, the network models of personality are based on the idea that personality emerges from the connective structure of different elements. Moreover, the cognitive-affective processing system (CAPS) model of personality considers the person-situation interactions, and the model considers the trajectory of personality states, which is captured by means of three model parameters: baseline, variability, and attractor strength,

as well as the temporal order of the states. Finally, the Complex Dynamical Systems model is a dynamical approach that can exhibit a complex and unpredictable behavior (chaos). Observe that these approaches attempt to build bridges between dynamics, fundamental in Physics, and personality, fundamental in Psychology. In fact, in science there exists a close attempt to connect dissimilar disciplines, even those whose fields of study seem to be greatly distant, for instance, General Systems Theory (GST). The long-term objective of GST is to construct a universal language common to all scientific disciplines, trying to economize inside knowledge representation and searching for its basic principles. However, a realistic way to reach this objective deals with searching general interdisciplinary theories. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to present a bridge between Physics and Psychology, concretely between analytical dynamics and personality theory, playing a main role in this objective the concept of energy. Thus, to make these sciences converge, a correspondence is proposed: on the one hand, the one between the potential energy and the trait as capacity or disposition to perform some behavior and, on the other hand, the one between the kinetic energy and the dynamic process of the personality system. Thus, we resort to the laws of Physics, concretely to analytical dynamics, in order to be applied to Psychology. In fact, this approach is not completely new. On a hand, cognition and decision-making, from the mathematical formalism of quantum mechanics is a good example, and, on the other hand, certain psychological mechanisms, such as the action and perception, appeal to the principle of free energy imported from thermodynamics. The UTPT claims for a single trait to understand the overall human personality. This single

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trait is substituted subsequently by the equivalent concept of General Factor of Personality (GFP) in order to follow the generally accepted scientific term. In order to measure the GFP, these authors created a validated questionnaire, the General Factor of Personality Questionnaire (GFPQ). This questionnaire is a good instrument to measure the GFP as a personality stable trait in a trait-format scale. However, the same authors had previously developed the Five-Adjective Scale of the General Factor of Personality (GFP-FAS) which offers the possibility to measure the GFP dynamical or situational response, composed by five adjectives in a state-format starting from that first stage, a bridge between Physics and Psychology can be second order differential equation. From this new formulation the analytical dynamics of the stimulus-response model can be developed. On the one hand, the Newtonian formulation, the minimum action principle and Hamiltonian that it is a straightforward way

to state the announced bridge or “isomorphism” between Physics and Psychology. In fact, the Hamiltonian function provides a first definition of energy as an addition of a kinetic energy and a potential energy. This new formulation provides an epistemological validation of the stimulus-response model, due to not all second order differential equations can be derived from a minimum action principle.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares there is no conflict of interest in publishing this article.