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## Review of the current status of the studies on personality traits

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### Abstract

This review paper on the current status of the studies on personality traits, aimed at summarizing the progress achieved in the study of personality traits and examining the evidences for the diverse study dimensions of the studies on Personality. As it seems that the study of personality traits is not a recent one (nearly a century old), the advances in the discipline can be identified as major ones as well as the recent ones. So, the present study engaged in summarizing (at least to a certain extent), both the major advances as well as the recent ones. Existing gaps in the study of the personality traits and the most outstanding debates at the time were also discussed briefly. Finally the paper will reviewed the future implications for the study of personality traits.

As the methodology of the study, Online searches were carried out for the collection of data and the searches those which were published in English language mainly from 1930 to 2017. The sample included 64 review sources and the period of the searches was between January 2017 to September 2017. The theme study areas of personality traits those were discussed in this study are basic personality dimensions, broad and narrow personality traits, causal evidences for personality traits, cognitive affective personality systems, comparison of individuals on traits, overlapping of traits, functions of personality traits across lifespan, consistency of behavior, traits-situation interaction, different aspects of personality traits assessment and cross cultural studies on personality traits.

**Keywords:** Personality traits, current status, personality research, trait research

### 1. Introduction

The discussions on personality traits are multifaceted. Some of the available findings and the review papers of personality traits simply refer to the concept of global personality traits, Historical importance of personality traits, broad and narrow personality traits, biological aspects of personality traits while some others focus on some of the recent trends such as overlapping traits, cross cultural notions on traits, traits situation interaction, temperament and traits as well as advanced measures of personality traits.

A Personality trait is not a single or specific behavior (a way of describing a person's single behavior) but just a pattern of behaviors which are related and carried by the person who is showing the consistency of such pattern from situations to situation (Funder, 1991) [16]. These patterns can be one or few behaviors, affects, cognitions, desires or all of them. Individual differences that are visible due to personality can be understood by referring to "why mostly one behaves in this way but not the other?". Personality traits are also associated with this and related but can further be explained in more advance terms. A more comprehensive or a simplified term for the definition of the personality traits are "Non contextual factors that shape the person and their activities" (Boag, 2011 quoted from Johnson, 1997) [4]. The early research on Personality which mainly aimed at description and explanation began with identification of the personality terminology in the lexical language. The later interest was shifted to more applied areas like Measurement of personality traits and prediction of future behavior. Personality traits are expressed through the person's behavior. The situations are barriers for personality traits (Boag, 2011 quoting McCrae and Costa (1995) [4] yet they traits are powerful to overcome them.

### 2. Objective of the Study

The present paper is a review paper on the current status of the studies on personality traits. As one of the objectives, this paper aims at summarizing the progress achieved in the study

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of personality traits. In addition to the above, this also aims at examining the evidences for the diverse study dimensions of the studies on Personality traits. As it seems that the study of personality traits is not a recent one (nearly a century old), the advances in the discipline can be identified as major ones as well as the recent ones. So the present study aims at summarizing (at least to a certain extent), both the major advances as well as the recent ones. Further this study will pay the attention to the existing gaps in the study of the personality traits and the most outstanding debates at the time will also be discussed briefly. Finally the paper will review the future implications for the study of personality traits.

**3. Methods**

Online searches were carried out for the collection of data for this review paper. The searches were limited to online the journal articles, soft copies of books which are available for free downloading, online versions of the classical papers in the area of the study of Personality traits. These online searches were those which were published in English language mainly from 1930 to 2017. The sample included 64 review sources and the period of the searches was between January 2017 to September 2017. The studies which were reviewed included those which were conducted at both study and outcome level. A summary of reviewed studies is given in the following table.

Serial Number	Topic area of the study	Year of Online publication	Authors	Method/s followed
1	Behavioral Consistency	1991	Funder & Colvin	Experimental
2	Consistent individual behavior variation	2015	Mackay & Haskell,	review
3	Personality consistency	2015	Vainik <i>et al.</i>	Survey
4	Behavior Consistency	2012	Leikas, Verkasalo & Lonnqvist	Experimental
5	Behavior Consistency	2008	Church <i>et al.</i>	Survey
6	Personality and behavior	2015	University of Minnesota libraries of publishing	Introductory text book
7	Five personality Dimensions	2003	Heinstrom	Survey
8	Personality Test	2003	Goslin, Rentfrow & Swann	Test Construction
9	Basic Personality Dimensions	2013	Revelle	Personality Project-Northwestern university
10	Test of Basic Personality Dimensions	2009	Ashton & Lee	Test Construction
11	Test Comparison	1994	Ostendorf & Angleitner	Experimental
12	Behavioral measures of traits	2014	Dixon	Experiment and Survey
13	Behavioral measures of traits	2005	Daugherty <i>et al.</i>	Experimental
14	Behavioral measures of traits	2009	Meda <i>et al.</i>	correlational
15	Behavioral measures of traits	2015	Speer, Christiansen & Honts	Test Development
16	Behavioral measures of traits	2002	Mathias <i>et al.</i>	Experimental
17	Behavioral measures of traits	2002	Stabile	Review
18	Comparison of Assessment modes	2008	McDonald	Review
19	Behavioral Measures of personality	2016	Yuen <i>et al.</i>	Experimental
20	Narrow Personality traits	2016	Mrcus <i>et al.</i>	Survey
21	Broad and narrow personality traits	2010	Jelena <i>et al.</i>	Longitudinal
22	Narrow personality traits	2011	Slaughter	Survey

Serial Number	Topic area of the study	Year of Online publication	Authors	Method/s followed
23	Narrow personality traits	2015	Iversen & Rimol	Survey
24	Narrow personality traits	2008	Wright	Field Study
25	Traits causality	2010	Kressel & Uleman	Experomental
26	Cognitive- affective personality systems	N/A	“Boundless”	Review
27	Cognitive- affective personality systems	2012	Shoda <i>et al.</i>	Review
28	Cognitive- affective personality systems	1995	Mischel & Shoda	Review
29	Traits and Chronic illness	2009	Erlen <i>et al.</i>	Review
30	Comparison of individuals on traits	2017	Elsevier	Survey
31	Comparison of individuals on traits	2017	Smith	Review
32	Comparison of individuals on traits	2010	Nia & Besharat	Survey
33	Comparison of individuals on traits	2016	Colakoglu & Gozukara	Survey
34	Traits-Introduction	1991	Funder	Review
35	Traits-Introduction	2011	Boag	Riview
36	Cross-cultural study of traits	2009	Terracciano & McCrae	Review
37	Cross-cultural study of traits	2010	McCrae <i>et al.</i>	Survey
38	Cross-cultural study of traits	2010	Church	Review
39	Feature centrality of traits	2014	Geraudel & Salvetat	Survey

40	Traits-introductory notes	2000/2001	Baker	Review
41	centrality of traits	2012	Staiano <i>et al.</i>	Review
42	Feature centrality of traits	2000	Lassaline & Deniss	Experiment
43	Personality and Social Media	2013	Celi & Polonio	Survey
44	Genotypes and Phenotypes(personality)	2002	Fitzgeralds & Issacs	Experimental
45	Genotypes and Phenotypes(personality)	2008	Gonzalez <i>et al.</i>	Experimental
46	Overlapping traits	2012	Linden <i>et al.</i>	Survey
47	Overlapping traits	2005	Blonigen <i>et al.</i>	Survey
48	Traits and Disorders	2005	Furnham & Crump	Survey
49	Traits Overlapping	1997	Ackerman & Heggstad	Review
50	Personality Across lifespan	2015	Nelson-Guffey	Review
51	Personality Across lifespan	2010	Bates <i>et al.</i>	Survey
52	Personality Across lifespan	2003	Kersting	Review
53	Personality Across lifespan	2008	Donnelan & Lucas	Survey
54	Personality and Situations	2003	N/A	Review
55	Personality and Situations	2007	PsyBlog	Review
56	Personality and Situations	2001	Berge & Raad	Test Construction
57	Temperament	1999	Weijers <i>et al.</i>	Survey
58	Temperament	2011	Prabhat	Blog Article
59	Traits Situations Interaction	2011	N/A	Chapter Review
60	Traits Situations Interaction	2017	Abel	Introductory article
61	Traits Situations Interaction	N/A	Furr & Funder	Review
62	Personality Measurement	1973	Edwards & Abbott	Review
63	Personality Measurement	2016	Sharma	Blog Article
64	Personality Measurement	2014	Coaley & Aipas	Review

So, the content of this review paper will be a discussion on the current status of each theme area in the study of Personality traits which will be discussed under the Results and Discussion section as follows.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

##### Basic Dimensions of Personality Traits

Though, very earliest research aimed at explanations of the nature of the personality traits, it has been decades passed that the interest has been shifted for the measurement of personality traits. Personality psychologists believe that individual differences in behavior, or unique patterns of feelings or thoughts (which are indicators of Traits) should be able to be measured. The most popular way of identifying the personality traits through measuring those on which people self-report about their characteristics and as a result the researchers have identified hundreds of traits (University of Minnesota, 2015) <sup>[47]</sup>. Among many of such traits; Extraversion, Introversion, Psychoticism, The big Five traits (openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion and neuroticism) have been generally identified as trait models after the classifications by Allport, Eysenck, Cattell and McCrae etc. apart from those main categorization, some other researchers have identified hundred other traits. A few of them are Authoritarianism, individualism, internal vs. external locus of control, need for achievement, and need for cognition, regulatory focus, self-consciousness, sensation seeking and self-esteem (University of Minnesota, 2015) <sup>[47]</sup>. Base on the identification of diverse individual traits, the research field of personality has developed different taxonomies like those given above and the researches are still being continued.

To the present day, the most widely discussed and the most popular taxonomy is Big Five Personality approach or Five Factor model. This is considered as a summary of the personality concepts in a lexical language (Ostendorf & Angleitner, 1994) <sup>[35]</sup>. The broad traits discussed in this Model have been assessed through different Tools (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann 2003) <sup>[45]</sup>.

It may obviously be a difficult for a trait researcher to manage the time available for measuring large amount of trait descriptions in a given language or in a given individual. Though the number of items increases the accuracy of psychometric properties, it may cause a considerable behavioral discomfort for the respondent which may affect the responses. Due to this reason, most of the trait theorists seek to develop short measures of Traits. Big Five is also a kind of this category. Following the big Five approach, several current Shorts tests of personality traits have been developed and being researched (Ashton & Lee, 2009) <sup>[2]</sup>. The most important usefulness of the study of personality traits is their Predictive ability of individual's future behavior. These abilities reflect their relative individual differences from situation to situation (Heinstrom, 2003) <sup>[20]</sup>.

##### Study on Broad and Narrow traits

Examination of different aspects of Broad and narrow personality traits has become one of the key areas in Personality research. Personality traits which we already identified in the description above as Big Five Model, belongs to Broad personality traits. Each broad personality trait is a main personality dimension. Eysenck's three personality dimensions are also considered as broad traits (Mathews, Deary & Whiteman, 2009) <sup>[29]</sup>. They have been identified through a statistical technique called factor analysis and then each trait dimension is called as a global factor because it is estimated that in a normally distributed population an individual will fall in to one of the categories or more under the five proposed here. Then numbers of specifically correlated primary factors are also believed to gather around such global factor. In this sense these global factors are called broad personality traits while the other primary factors which are correlated or coexisting under one such broad trait are called "narrow personality traits. So the specific or narrow personality traits are often the components of broad personality traits (Credé, 2016) <sup>[9]</sup>. Some research has proven that studying the narrow personality traits than the broad ones, will help to or

beneficial in understanding their underlying specific behaviors (ex: Suicidal attempts) (Jelena *et al.*, 2008) and provides the interpreting convenience for the behavior. The researchers are interested in studying the relationship between one or more of the broad personality traits and other biopsychosocial variable.

But currently the trend is emerging where many of the researchers are attracted to study the contribution of specific narrow personality traits to different variables. Such variables can be job related ones (Bergner *et al.*, 2010, Slaughter, 2011) [22] or many other aspects of the life like academic achievement (Wright, 2008). but as a more interesting fact, studies have supported the idea that narrow personality traits are more notable in making predictions for the job related variables (Iversen & Rimol, 2015) [21]. It can be assumed that broad traits are more associated with making predictions about general or overall aspects of the behavior while the narrow personality traits are more accurate in predicting the specific behaviors caused by personality traits. But there is no doubt that it is the broad personality traits (mainly those in Big Five) are the ones which are widely researched, validated and correlations are established in variety of settings while making generalizations in a wide spectrum of demographic areas as well as cultural groups.

#### **What causes personality traits?**

This is relatively an old, but dominant question in the study of personality traits and still valid due to the new research questions addressed by interested group of personality researchers. It has been discussed in the research that personality traits can be studied as either explaining the individual behavior (causal) or summarizing the behavior (descriptive) (Kressell & Uleman, 2009) [26]. The descriptive function involves summarizing an individual's behavior in a given time (My Uncle is aggressive), or the behavior across situations (My uncle is usually an aggressive one). The causal function is more important while predicting the individual's behavior. The researcher describes the person "X" as impulsive which causes him to have angry outburst with others. Both descriptive and the causal functions of the traits are applied. Summarizing the behavior allows the researcher to create a profile for the present. Explaining allows making future predictions. Explaining can be applied in number of diverse situations where the individual encounters. And the traits can also be diverse. But the most important question in the study of causation of personality trait is "what exactly causes personality traits?" (Mathews, Deary & Whiteman, 2009) [29]. It is very difficult to establish the exact causality for a personality trait. We are not certain about whether the Person's disorder is caused by personality traits or personality traits cause the disorder. The genotypic influences on traits have widely been studied but counter arguments are also available in the wide variety of contexts. This argument stands for the idea that genotypes shape the way that an individual responds to various social encounters ((Mathews, Deary & Whiteman, 2009) [29]. A common question that a trait psychologist asks about the causation of traits on a given behavior is "are there certain people who perform certain behaviors consistently (Eysenck, 1978). The same question is asked in relation to diverse trait areas even in the today's research. Both supportive inconsistent results have been generated by the current research. This causality have been established by those researchers in the

areas of job performance (Paternit *et al.*, 2002) [36], Psychopathology (Widiger, 2011) [51], Criminality (Eysenck, 1978) and many aspects. One of the strongest arguments is that these two variables (Personality vs. trait indicative behavior) can influence one another either to appear or disappear by sharing a common etiology. This has been proven in the research that for example; the people with internalizing (mood and Anxiety) and externalizing (Antisocial behaviors) share a common etiology (Blonigen *et al.*, 2005). But, counter arguments have also been produced (Verhulst, Eaves & Hatemi, 2011) [49] for example, the researcher argue that having been correlated does not mean that there is causation. A more acceptable argument is that there is a genetic more agreeably a biological basis that mediates with how an individual select, and process the interactions with the society.

In one hand, the question that "how much of your personality is genetic" is a very difficult one to answer the nature or nurture debate is not limited to the study of personality traits on the other. Though the exact amount of influence of heritability cannot be traced, it is now a widely accepted idea that traits are influenced or caused by certain genetic make up to genotype. Then the way that the traits are being expressed is the phenotype. Early years' studies on genes and Personality were characterized by comparing identical (those who share roughly 50% of their genes) and fraternal (those who share 100% of their genes) twins (Kraus, 2013) [25]. The conclusions are, though the genes are not 100% contributing for variation of personality, genes matter. The current interest in the similar research area is occupied by the question "which genes play a leading role in determining certain personalities or traits?". Also the researchers are interested in asking which genes cause which personality traits specifically. Interesting findings related to cognitive social anxiety, psychic anxiety, socialization, inhibition of aggression and impulsivity (Gonzales *et al.*, 2008), information processing (Heinstrom, 2003) [20] and the correlations between personality traits like Belligerence, charisma, Cynicism, obsessive-compulsive behavior and gullibility with genotype and the phenotypes have been found (Fitzgerald & Issacs, 2002). So the study of the causation of personality traits along with more attention to the genetic contributions still remains dominant.

#### **Cognitive- Affective System Theory of Personality**

Research on this theory stand for the idea that there is an underlying system of individual differences of cognitive affective units which mediate with how the individuals behave across situations. But this unit is not a part of overt behavior rather a mediating internal personality organization. Due to this cognitive affective system (which mediate with how individual receive and respond to the information, how he or she become selective to the stimuli), the system is called in personality psychology as behavioral dispositions or trait that will cause the person to differ individual in the way that he or she exhibit his behaviors (Mischel & Shoda, 1995) [33]. This is one of the fascinating research areas in the field of trait psychology. Further, these researches focus more on the cross situational consistently of such cognitive affective system in terms of the individual differences and discuss how invariable the personality in different context, situations and events that an individual encounters. So the micro focus of the research in this theory is how an individual understands of constructs like self,

people and situations, the ideas about the social world, values and competencies, executive abilities are stable and not across the situations (Mischel & Shoda, 1995, Shoda et al., 2012) <sup>[33, 40]</sup>.

### **Trait based individual comparison**

Trait psychology's the first and foremost debate is identifying the differences and similarities of individual for which the comparison is a major task. The studies on comparing individuals on the traits began in the early examinations of trait psychology. At present the examination area of the variables in question has been applied to wide array of dimensions of individual's behavior ranging from personal life, academic life to work life and all the interpersonal and intrapersonal encounters. Though these comparisons in the past were mostly concerning on psychiatric populations, now the question has been extended to healthy persons' underlying stable patterns of emotional and behavioral function (Erlen *et al.*, 2011) <sup>[13]</sup>. Their main objective is to understand the role of personality traits for health promotion. One of the widely debated researches in this type is how excessively high levels of neuroticism causes or correlates with the risk of cardiac diseases (Erlen *et al.*, 2011) <sup>[13]</sup>. The understanding on how traits are associated with psychiatric or other diseased conditions has lead to the advancements in the prevention research on suicidal behaviors of the individuals (Sharif *et al.*, 2014) <sup>[39]</sup>. The comparison research on personality traits are widely discussed related to the Broad traits in Big Five model. The variables like success in the team and individual sport behaviors (Besharat, 2010) <sup>[34]</sup>, Development across lifespan (Smith, 1952), organizational and vocational attitudes behaviors (Colakoglu & Gozukara, 2016) are some of the one under researchers' common interest in this field.

### **Consistency of Behavior**

The consistency of personality traits and the behavior caused by such traits remain as the main quest in trait psychology. The definition of trait itself stands for the consistency of patterns overtime in a given individual personality. The theories which advocate for the core of the trait approach say that there is relatively less or no change of a behavioral pattern in the individual in different situations. Almost all the studies in trait psychology attempts to advocate for this idea in a more or less manner. The behavioral consistency goes even beyond the scope of trait psychology. It gets associated and become a part of with the so called "Personality triad"; personality, situation and behavior (Leikas, *et al.* 2012) <sup>[38]</sup>. Many of these studies on behavioral consistence have been evaluated between individual behaviors ((Leikas, *et al.* 2012) <sup>[38]</sup>. and the intraindividual examinations are relatively rare. Any unhealthy behavior of which the consistent pattern is an expression of trait, influence the individual's health (physical or mental. Such behaviors may be Eating (Vainik *et al.*, 2015) <sup>[48]</sup>, or other disordered behaviors (MacKay & Haskel, 2015) <sup>[28]</sup>. But many of the personality trait theorist put the weight upon the consistency of trait itself to the traits and consistency of behavior to the situations (Funder & Colvin, 1991) <sup>[16]</sup>.

### **Study on How traits overlap with each other**

The overlapping of a personality trait with one another can be seen in many of the research evidences done on

personality traits, especially those in broad category. For example, the behaviors accounting for one dimension of personality traits can account for another dimension too. The researchers have proven that this kind of shared variance exists in a continuum of behaviors where a certain group of behaviors are belonging to one trait dimension and the other group belongs to the others. Researches done on General Factors of Personality (GFP) (especially those in Big Five and Esenck's), are found to overlap with others to a considerable extent (Linden, Tsaousis & Petrides, 2012) <sup>[27]</sup>. The psychological variables like intelligence, trait emotional intelligence (Gonzalez & Ruiz, 2014, Siegling, Furnham & Petrides, 2015) <sup>[37, 41]</sup> have shown accounting for this shared variance when compared with other classifications of trait dimensions.

### **Personality traits across lifespan**

Personality traits accounts for the relative stability of behaviors across different situations. But the question that whether personality traits are same across the life span of a given individual is another interesting area where the current trait researchers seek to generate in depth understanding. The major contributions to the stability of personality traits across lifespan are given by Costa and McCrae in national institute of aging in Baltimore (Nelson-Guffey, 2015). According to Nelson-Guffey (2015), those two researchers have some of the key personality traits are stable across the lifespan where a person who is emotionally stable at young adulthood would remain same even at the age of 65. They have concluded that the key personality traits are consistent across the lifespan. Even for two day the findings of these two researchers remain as one of the major contribution to the trait psychology. But some of the recent contradictory findings report that personality traits can be stable as well as subject to change over the time. Investigating the changes in mean levels and rank orders of Big Five personality traits, Specht, Egloff & Schmukle (2011) <sup>[44]</sup>, reported that in a sample of 14718 Germans, age effect on the changes in personality traits across the lifespan, they also reported that the fluctuations can be seen in the stability where the peak years of influence of personality traits are 40-60 and personality can subject to change due to some other factors than intrinsic motivation. The idea that personality traits can change overtime is supported by some other recent findings too. APA (2003) <sup>[45]</sup>, quoting a study by Oliver, Samuel, Gosling & Potter done with 132515 adults reports that the changes are possible in the personality traits, they further says that conscientiousness is likely to increase with the age while the agreeableness doesn't change after the age of 30. Further neuroticism tends to get narrower with the age and openness shows a small decline with aging. These findings about contentiousness and neuroticism are consistent with the findings of the studies done by Donnellan & Lucas (2008) <sup>[10]</sup>.

### **Personality traits and Situations**

The power of situational variable in the traits assessment was first emphasized in the trait psychology by Walter Mischel in 1968. Because of an individual's tendency to behave differently depending on the situation, he concluded the research findings saying that people do not behave in the same way in different situations though they have the same trait (PsyBlog, 2007). For example, the way I respond to a situation of getting late due to the traffic jam will be

different in a situation of my everyday travelling and traveling to a very important interview. Currently the researcher who bridge between Traits and Situations attempts to set an agreement between the two debated of “personality is fixed” and “Personality doesn’t determine the behavior, situation do”.

Traits-situations interaction is another aspect of this debate. Following the ideas presented by Mischel, several current day researchers are interested in examining the interaction between traits and situations rather than putting more weight on either. This stands for the idea that behavior is a product of interaction between traits and situations (Abel, 2017, Raad, 2001) [3]. A common example for the interaction between the trait and the situation is “trait anxiety may interact with an immediate situational threat to produce a transient state of anxiety (Mathews, Deary & Whiteman, 2009) [29]. One of the famous examples that they present is a person with high level of impulsivity would respond in the destined way when only a situation demands but not on the other. Abel (2017), further clarifies that one of the function of personality traits is to select the situation which will fulfill the needs of the traits to be expressed. Here the personality traits are capable of evoking specific responses from the environment and the personality traits functions to manipulate the behaviors of the others. This also supports the idea that humans are not behaving on the reflexive action rather on selective behavior (Khilstrom, n.d.) supporting the social cognitive aspects of situation selection. But still, some of the current researchers eager to reject the idea of competition between person-situation interaction (Furr, n.d) indicating that situation sometimes gain power over the dispositional sources and vice versa. So their argument is neither the claims are fully acceptable.

### Measurement of Personality traits

The trait model of personality is sometimes called psychometric model because it heavily relies on objective assessments of personality traits. Questionnaires, self-reports, inventories, and other forms of metric tools have been developed to assess the personality traits. These measurement tools have been beneficial to number of applied settings such as clinical practice (hospitals and other health settings), organizational practice (practices associated with organizational behavior) (Stabile, n.d.), academic and educational settings and many others. The advanced nature of the statistics, computer science and other related interdisciplinary areas of psychology itself have been supportive to establish highly approximate accuracies of such tools though assessing their psychometric properties. Vast array of literature have documented the advantages of questionnaires, self-reports as well as behavioral measures (McDonald, 2008) [31]. Almost all the trait measurement tools are quantitative.

Behavioral observations are another aspect of the traits assessment. Some of the trait researchers are interested in relying only on the behavioral assessment of traits while other attempts to understand the consistencies between the self-report measures and the behavioral assessments. Here most probable the researcher examines the availability of a given trait, such as impulsivity (Meda, *et al.*, 2009) [32] and the consistencies of the results generated by self-reports on impulsivity as well as behavioral measures on impulsivity. Behavioral examinations are mostly coming from but not limited to laboratory settings (Dougherty *et al.*, 2003, Pillay

*et al.*, 2016) [11, 52]. One of the advantages of behavioral measures in trait assessment is, it overcomes the limitations presented by self-report measures of traits (Dixon, 2014). But it seems, it is sad to say that behavioral assessments of traits are one of the ill controlled aspects in the trait research (Leichtman, 2017). With such limited support from the discipline itself, the researchers are interested in using behavioral measure to such settings as work situations etc (Speer, Christiansen & Honts, 2015) [15]. Currently, Experimental measures of trait exhibited behaviors have been developed to understand how the particular trait is exhibited (Mathews, Deary & Whitman, 2009) [29].

### Cross cultural research on Personality traits

This is one of the fascinating and recent domains of personality trait research. The early studies on this topic were mostly focused on but not limited to how; traits are exhibited in different cultures. One of the major research works in this area is the Eysenck’s three personality dimensions. He believed that three personality dimensions are a kind of universal constructs for humans. Some of the researchers are interested in studying the relationship between culture and exhibited traits within the individual (Migliore, 2011). But most of the researchers focus on how the same trait characteristics are exhibited in the individuals in different culture when measured in a similar or same tool (Church, *et al.*, 2008, McCrae, *et al.*, 2010) [7, 30]. When it comes to understand how traits are exhibited across the cultures, the variables include healthier aspects of the personality traits as well as the disordered conditions (Terracciano & McCrae, 2006) [46]. The Big five model is one of the heavily researched theories for its cross cultural validity (McCrae, 2002) [29].

### 5. Summary

Although several decades have been passed in the study of personality traits, the Big five model which was introduced during 1980s, still remains as the master question for many of the researchers. But it is not sufficient to say that there are no other taxonomies of personality traits. Several attempts have been made to check the possibility of reducing the number of factors even from the Big Five model. Some other attempts have been made to propose alternative taxonomies of traits.

The present day traits researchers are more interested in studying the narrow specific traits and their utility in the everyday situational and applied context. Further it has been found that narrow specific personality traits, when compared to broad traits, more accurate in making predictions in such applied settings like work life and psychiatric disorders. The inquiry into the causal factors of traits remains same with minor modifications, but surprisingly the key findings have been challenged that the entire trait related tendencies cannot be attributed to genes. The overlapping of the traits and personality across lifespan are for the much interest of the current day trait researchers. The stability across the life in a given individual has been studied widely in relation to the exhibition of Big Five traits. Some of the dimensions are found to consistent but not the others. When it comes to measurement of personality traits, the help of statistics and computer technology have made the study area more progressive. The number of the tools that are being invented is increasing. The accuracy of the psychometric properties

of such tools is found to be advance. But still there is a need for the attention paid to behavioral measures of traits.

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