

The Birth of MBTI Theory

Many theories have been developed to explain personality (Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998). The majority of these theories have formed their own assumptions, methods, and definitions to disclose individual differences. It can be given as an example of these different views and theories, Loevinger suggests that the first comprehensive studies of personality were based on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Freud's point of view influenced many theorists in the following periods and Schultz¹, who held a similar view; claims that every theory developed to explain personality is based on Freud's work. In progress of the time, various criticisms of Freud's classical psychoanalytic approach were directed and therefore new psychoanalytic approaches were born (Akdeniz & Erişti, 2015). The new psychoanalytic approach includes the thoughts of Alfred Adler, Carl G. Jung, Eric Fromm, Erik Erikson, Henry Murray, and Karen Horney (Wyspianski, 1999).

Carl G. Jung tried to classify the psychological types of people based on his researches' observations in the field of clinical psychology. Jung, the son of a priest, was born in Switzerland in 1875. The effort to make sense of his inner life started in his childhood. He graduated from the University of Basel in 1900, where he studied medicine and then studied psychiatry at the University of Zurich. During this period, he worked with Eugen Bleuler, who was working on schizophrenia. While working as a lecturer at the University of Zurich, he founded the International Psychoanalytical Association and started to work with his mentor and close friend Sigmund Freud on unconscious forces that affect human behavior. However, after a while, the views of these two geniuses of psychology diverged. Jung continued to develop his theory known as "*analytical psychology*". He wrote his famous book "*Psychology of the Unconscious*", which he published in 1912 (Naifeh, 2001).

Jung is also known for his discussions of introversion and extroversion, which are defined in terms of the management of libidinal energy. Jung argued that introversion and extroversion are part of the consciousness and the attitude to react in two ways to certain situations. Extroverts focus on events, people, and situations other than themselves and are influenced by environmental factors, and are confident. Introverts, on the other hand, are oriented towards themselves, their feelings, and their thoughts. They have a less self-confident nature (Boeree, 2006).

People are interested in both their inner and outer worlds, whether they are introverted or extroverted. While doing this, everyone prefers their own good and comfortable ways to deal with it. Jung says there are four basic ways or functions: thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuiting (Boeree, 2006)

- Thinking is a conceptual process that provides understanding and comprehension;
- Feeling is a subjective evaluation process.
- Sense is the conscious perception of physical objects;
- Intuition is a perception in an unconscious way (Schultz, 2013).

¹ Psychologist and author of more than a dozen acclaimed histories, including *Coming Through Fire: George Armstrong Custer and Chief Black Kettle, Crossing the Rapido: A Tragedy of World War II, The Fate of War: Fredericksburg, 1862, and Into the Fire: The Most Fateful Mission of World War II*, also from Westholme Publishing.

Jung identified eight psychological types by associating the two attitudes and four functions: extroverted thinking, introverted thinking, extroverted feeling, introverted feeling, extroverted sensing, introverted sensing, extroverted intuition, and introverted intuition (Ağaçcı, 2019). The basis of the MBTI theory was formed with this study of Jung's.

The study of Jung has spread over a wide range of fields from scientific research to industrial psychology. Jung's Personality Types Theory is a theory that looks at personality from a broad perspective, complex, and takes into account perception outside of the natural senses (Wypianski, 1999).

Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers decided to develop a paper and pencil test, by arguing that Jung's attitudes and functions reveal personalities. It was called as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Over time, it became a popular and most studied test (Boeree, 2006).

Katharine Briggs' vision is to understand human development, enable individuals to reach their full potential and discover the keys. She observed the personality differences of effective people around her and tried to understand and explain the causes and origins of the differences. After reading Jung's book Psychological Types, she discovered and adopted his ideas. Briggs, who continues the studies by taking Jung's perspective into account, tried to reflect Jung's ideas with a straight-forward approach in order to distinguish personality types more easily in daily life (Saunders, 1991).

Katharine and Isabel clarified and improved the theory as the basis of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator. Briggs Myers added a fourth function, Judging and Perceiving, to the three original pairs of Jung's typology. A psychological assessment designed to categorize individuals into one of 16 personality types. She created detailed descriptions of each of the 16 types and analyzed the implementation of her theory in academics, business, and personal growth (Saunders, 1991).

The MBTI theory, introduced by Katharine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, suggests that personality has four scales: Extroversion-Introversion, Sensing-Intuition, Thinking-Feeling, and Judging-Perceiving. Each individual pertains to one opposite on each scale. According to the theory, Extroversion-introversion division identifies "How do you respond and interact with the world around you?", sensing-intuition scale identifies "How do you obtain information?", thinking-feeling scale identifies "How do you make decisions?", lastly judgment-perception scale identifies "How do you organize your environment?" (Sears, Kennedy, & Kaye, 1997).

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