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Intro Essay Questions

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1. Personality from a scientific perspective is, “the dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations. This is a great definition because it doesn’t assign traits as good or bad. It establishes that personality comes from a set of traits. Personality seems to be something that is difficult to understand because each person has a unique set of characteristics and even if they share similar traits with others, their behaviors may still be different. Another reason it is a difficult definition from a scientific perspective is that it’s a very broad and general statement. In science or experiments, it’s beneficial to be precise, and that is more difficult when studying personalities. This means that experiments, hypotheses’, and theories could be endless.

2. The definition of personality in terms of social attractiveness is inadequate to use by psychologists because there isn't an objective and clear-cut overall definition for what that means and it does not have a general measurement for when used in experiments. Social attractiveness can mean different things to everyone. Where one might find someone socially attractive, another might find them annoying and henceforth, see them as having a "bad" personality. When doing experiments on personality traits, social attractiveness does not have a precise enough definition to be measurable. It could mean someone who's kind, quiet, and reserved, or to someone else, it could mean someone who is assertive, loud, and spontaneous. For that reason, it is not a good enough definition.

3. Three research methods are the experimental method, correlational method, and case studies. The experimental method is when the researchers manipulate variables and record the effect of an independent group and a control group. A strength of this method is that by having a control group that isn't manipulated, there can be more confidence in the assessment of the experiment. A weakness of this method can also be that participants could quit the experiment at any time and it can affect the outcome or results. The correlational method helps to determine if there is a relationship between two variables. It uses correlation coefficients to determine which type of relationship is seen between two variables. If it is a positive correlation, then it means that one variable increases as another variable increases as well. If there is a negative correlation, it means that as one variable increases, the other variable decreases. If there is no relationship or reliability between two variables, then there is no correlation. A strength of this method is that it can inform us of a relationship between two variables, however, the weakness is that the relationship isn't always related. There can be a third variable that is causing the correlation coefficient. Case studies are research performed on one person's life over a long period of time. The strength of this study is that it is more intensive and complex than the other two methods, however, a weakness is that the findings are only applicable to that individual. In studying any phenomenon, it is best for researchers to rely on several methods to best understand it because they will yield similar or different results. It provides more accuracy when assessing the findings of each method.