

Call for Papers –
European Journal of Personality

Towards conceptualizing and assessing personality coherence and incoherence

Editor: Malgorzata Fajkowska, Institute of Psychology, Polish Academy of Sciences

Understanding personality coherence/incoherence, that is how and why different personality characteristics/components might be meaningfully organized as consistent/inconsistent wholeness, is one of the cardinal concerns of personality psychology (cf. Allport, 1937). This Special Issue of *European Journal of Personality* will address the status of personality coherence in the contemporary science of personality. Although this issue will be devoted to portraying novel conceptual and methodological approaches to personality coherence, it will also share historic commitment to the study of personality coherence.

I kindly invite you to contribute your best work to this special issue. Some of the benefits of publishing in this special issue of the *European Journal of Personality* includes:

- Pre-review and constructive feedback based on proposals
- Fast and professional review process of full submissions
- Increased visibility due to publication in a special issue packed with high-quality papers
- Publication in one of the most prestigious journals of the field (IF: 3.5)
- Wide dissemination and media outreach activities across relevant fields

If you are interested in contributing, please see further details below.

Background

Most scientist involved in the study of personality is likely to agree that it is always the right time to debate over personality coherence/incoherence seen as functional, structural and processual consistency/inconsistency among different personality characteristics/components, and this special issue is dedicated to this debate. And, although some scholars consider personality coherence as the central issue of personality science (e.g., Allport, 1937, 1961; Cervone & Shoda, 1999; McAdams, 2006; Ryan, Kuhl, & Deci, 1997) the study of personality coherence did not receive enough attention of scientific community. Moreover, a conceptualization of personality coherence has been dispersed across five different contemporary theoretical communities (Fournier, Di Domenico & Weststrate, 2015): *multivariate* (traits as units of analysis; studying personality-behavior congruence; e.g., Allport, 1961; Biesnaz & West, 2000; Sherman, Nave, & Funder, 2012; Human, Biesnaz, Finseth, Pierce, & Le, 2014); *social-cognitive* (self-concepts as units of analysis; studying compartmentalization and integration; e.g., Cervone & Shoda, 1999; Mischel & Shoda, 1995; Ditzfeld & Showers, 2014); *personological* (autobiographical memories as units of analysis; studying autobiographical reasoning and interactive storytelling; e.g., McAdams, 2006; Habermans

& Bluck, 2000); *cybernetic* (personal goal strivings as units of analysis; studying negative feedback loop, discrepancy reduction system; e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1998; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995), and *organismic* (basic psychological needs as units of analysis; studying internalization and integration as a function of need fulfillment; e.g., Ryan, 1993; Deci & Ryan, 2012). Obviously, this list of theoretical frameworks is not fully exhausted: there are other theoretical proposals built of those theoretical communities like *paradoxical theory of personality coherence* (Caspi & Moffitt, 1993) or built across those theoretical communities like *personality coherence/incoherence within complex system approach to personality* (Fajkowska, 2013; 2015).

While a number of general frameworks for conceptualization of personality coherence have been proposed, the field still lacks more specific theories providing a fine-grained description and understanding of personality coherence and, at the same time, having integrative and explanatory potentials. Personality psychology persists in tackling burning questions concerning the status of personality coherence that need to be answered. For example, modern personality coherence approaches should confront problems, such as relation between personality coherence and overt behaviors, adaptive meaning of personality coherence/incoherence, or organizing (patterning) and controlling mechanisms of personality coherence.

Additionally, most of theoretical frameworks of personality coherence are marked by methodological strategies, for example social-cognitive theories commonly bring both correlational and experimental methods relevant to questions about personality coherence. However, we observe the increasing use of novel assessment (e.g., digital footprints; the real-life data acquisition) and analytic tools (e.g., the recurrence quantification analysis (RQA) of nonlinear dynamical systems; cf. Richardson, Dale, & Marsh, 2014; Webber & Zbilut, 2005), which might be incorporated in studying personality coherence. Nevertheless, it seems that the field still waits for concrete suggestions of how they can be applied to provide psychometrically valid and reliable measures of personality coherence/ incoherence.

Thus, to advance the field of personality coherence this is a call for both: new approaches to the understanding of personality coherence and assessment of personality coherence.

Possible Contributions

Referring to this special issue, papers that provide novel conceptualization and/or assessment of personality coherence are very welcome. I welcome both theoretical and empirical contributions. Also, I am willing to consider theoretical papers presenting totally new models on personality coherence *prior to* their empirical validation, and methodological papers presenting novel methods of data acquisition and analysis with reference to the existing theories of personality coherence. Below, I propose some exemplary topics and areas for both conceptualization and assessment of personality coherence. Please note that my intention is to inspire you by these examples and obviously submissions are not limited to the outlined topics. In other words, you will be able to submit a paper on any issue listed below or combine adequately related issues listed below in a one paper, or relate to the one or more below issues (points 2-9) when you present your own model of personality coherence/incoherence (point 1), or provide a completely new topics and ideas in your paper.

1. *Author's novel model of personality coherence/incoherence*, e.g., key principles of approach; definition of personality coherence/incoherence; units of analysis; organizing and mechanisms of personality coherence; possible operationalization and assessment of personality coherence/incoherence; relation to the existing models of personality coherence.
2. *Historic vs. modern perspective on personality coherence/incoherence*, e.g., some philosophical thoughts on the topic; from Allport's unity of personality to modern approaches to personality coherence/incoherence; critical view on some selected modern approaches to personality coherence.
3. *Personality coherence/incoherence, self, and character*, e.g., how these personality characteristics/components might be conceptualized and meaningfully organized as system; what are their functions within personality; how do they relate to the regulatory processes?
4. *Personality coherence/incoherence and other related constructs like consistency, stability, integration, congruence*, e.g., does personality coherence relate to internal structure and is a lawful patterning and organization of attributes within an individual or it is just a temporal stability and situational consistency of behaviors? Is integration the best understood in the context of regulative processes while coherence in the context of integrative process? Does congruence mean adequacy between behavior and trait of personality? How can we conceptually and empirically distinguish those terms?
5. *Personality coherence/incoherence and development*, e.g., what are sources of influences on the development of personality coherence/incoherence? What are predictors of personality coherence/incoherence identified in early childhood? At what age personality coherence/incoherence can be validly assessed? How does personality coherence/incoherence change across a lifespan?
6. *Personality coherence/incoherence and overt behaviors*, e.g., here the one possible question might be - how to identify and establish the patterns of the relations between internal personality coherence/incoherence and behavioral consistency/inconsistency across situations and connected with them underlying mechanisms? or if transsituational consistency of behavior is a key criterion of personality coherence/incoherence?
7. *Understanding of personality coherence within different cultures*, e.g., how personality coherence/incoherence is conceptualized across cultures? Is it always a consistency among elements of personality, traits and behaviors (e.g., western cultures) or balance between opposed forces (e.g., eastern cultures)?
8. *Functional/adaptive meaning of personality coherence/incoherence*, e.g., associations of personality coherence/incoherence with, for example well-being, health, psychopathology, cognitive functioning, quality of interpersonal (e.g., marital or parental) relationships.
9. *Assessment-related issues*, here research questions might include (but are not restricted to) the following: how standard self-report instruments can be used to validly measure personality coherence/incoherence? What other beyond traditional measurements might be adapted for optimal assessment of personality coherence/incoherence? How to measure and analyze dynamics of personality coherence/incoherence? How novel assessment techniques/approaches might be applied to existing/or novel theories of personality coherence/incoherence? How to validly interpret data when a coherence of personality can be appreciated by considering personality as a complex system and by examining personality coherent/incoherent organization combining measures of multiple response classes (e.g., physiological, affective, cognitive), across different situations and from a long-term perspective?

Submission Process and timeline

If you are interested in contributing to the planned special issue, please send an initial proposal by June 30, 2019 to the action editor (see below). Proposals should be no longer than two pages and should outline the purpose, rationale, methodology and expected results of the proposed study (as appropriate). Full papers that are invited after the review of the proposals will undergo the regular review process via the editorial system of the EJP.

Submitted papers should adhere to the author guidelines of EJP <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/10990984/homepage/forauthors.html>. Also, please note in particular that all submitted empirical papers need to follow the transparency guidelines outlined in EJP's author guidelines.

The anticipated schedule is as follows:

June 30, 2019 – Deadline for submissions of initial proposals (via email)

July 31, 2019 – Initial comments and decisions on proposals and first invitations

August 31, 2019 – Revised proposals (upon requested revision)

September 15, 2019 – Final invitations for revised proposals

March 31, 2020 – Full papers due; papers are submitted via editorial system of the EJP

April 2020 – October 2020– regular review and revision process via editorial system of the EJP

March/April 2021 - Issue Published

Proposals and questions regarding the special issue can be sent by email to the action editor:

Małgorzata Fajkowska (malgosia.fajkowska@gmail.com)