

What Type of Individuals is More Likely to Join Cults?

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

What Type of Individuals is More Likely to Join Cults?

People behave and respond to situations in diverse ways depending on their experiences and more importantly their inherent personality traits. Psychologists agree that human the variations in personalities can be distinguished based on several classifications. Some of the most known theories of classification include Hippocrates' four temperaments theory and the big five personality traits (Lim, 2020; Asamoah, 2019). Most of the approaches used to distinguish human personalities recognize primary traits where their combination determines an individual's personality. Personality traits that are common in the major classification theories include introversion, extroversion, decisiveness, agreeableness, steadiness, influence, contentiousness, thoughtfulness, self-confidence, and self-esteem (Lim, 2020). This paper seeks to identify the personality type that is more likely to join a cult or any social group with unconventional beliefs. Based on the big five personality traits and Hippocrates four temperamental theories, individual likely to join cults are primarily self confident, thoughtful, and sacrificial or agreeable, indecisive, and compliant depending on whether they are joining the group as leaders or followers respectively.

According to psychologists the development of personality is significantly determined by inherent characteristic present in genes and the person's experiences with his or her surroundings from birth. Therefore, part of an individual's characteristics are inborn and cannot change, while another part can change over time (Asamoah, 2019). Human personality consists of traits acquired from learning and inherent qualities that form the basis for developing the personality. For instance, traits such as introversion and extroversion are deeply ingrained in an individual's core personality. Introversion is characterized by the tendency to think inwardly, causing an

individual not to be talkative in most situations (Lim, 2020). On the other hand, extroversion is the tendency to think outwardly, causing the person to be more talkative in many situations.

The capacity to join a group with unconventional belief involves the willingness to withstand criticism and overcome popular opinion. For this reason, the person has to be self-confident but not necessarily to have a high self-esteem. Self-confidence enables an individual to be independent in thought and to make decisions based on personal conviction rather than outside influence (Asamoah, 2019). Individuals who exercise their self-confidence in joining a cult are likely to occupy leadership positions and influence others to join the unconventional group. In this case, their tendency to be introverts or extroverts does not matter. As members of the group, they will not be influenced by popular opinion or outward forces to abandon the group.

Likewise, individuals who are agreeable, indecisive and complaint are likely to join unconventional groups based on the influence of other people who are important to them such as spouse, sibling or parent (Lim, 2020). It is worth noting that agreeable and compliant individuals prefer to follow others who are significant to them rather than make their independent decisions. Primarily, this type of personality is introverted and indecisive, making them to shun leadership positions (Asamoah, 2019). The membership of this type of personality in the groups with unconventional beliefs entirely depends on the opinion of significant people in their lives, which means they will abandon the group if the influential people abandon or influence them to it.

Individual who are self confident, thoughtful, and sacrificial or agreeable, indecisive, and compliant are likely to join cults depending on their role as leaders or followers in the group respectively. The development of personality is determined by inherent characteristics present in genes and the person's experiences with his or her surroundings from birth. The capacity to join

a cult includes the willingness to withstand criticism and contradict popular opinion; therefore, the person has to be self-confident. Likewise, individuals who are agreeable, indecisive and complaint are likely to join unconventional groups because of the influence of people who are important to them. While individuals who join as leaders are likely to influence others into becoming members, those who join as followers are likely to be passive.

References

Asamoah, G. (2019). A synoptic view of the four human temperaments. *Interdisciplinary*

Research Journal of Theology, Apologetics, Natural & Social Sciences, 1(1&2).

Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335612382>.

Lim, A. (2020). *The big five personality traits*. Simply Psychology. Retrieved from

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/big-five-personality.html>.