Loving mum and tough career girl…?
How do role settings affect people's personality traits and behavior?
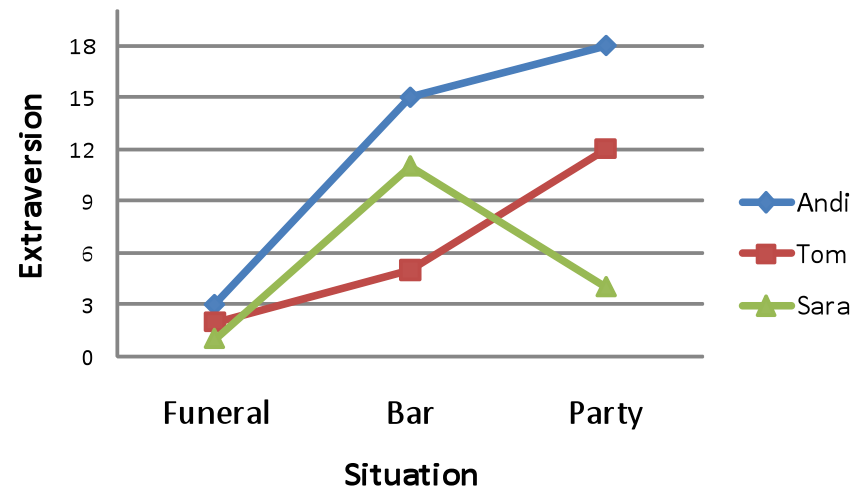
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Mobile Sensing meets Social Sciences Workshop, March 17, Cambridge

How do role settings affect people's personality traits and behavior?

How, when, and why personality changes?
- over the life-span ⟶ 'standard' questionnaires (e.g., yearly): "How do you perceive yourself in general?"
- from moment to moment (situation to situation) ⟶ experience-sampling methods (e.g., daily, hourly): "How do you perceive yourself at this moment?"

There is both…
…within-person change
…between-person differences

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Big Question: How do personal dispositions and situational cues interact and inform each other to produce stability and change in people's every day behavior?

Person: Big Five (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness)

Situation: Social roles (e.g., parent, husband, friend, club member, student,…)
- always associated with specific expectations, rules, goals, & demands
- behavioral guidance - as long as people confirm to role expectations they will be accepted and rewarded by the relevant social group, while failing to meet the given expectations might lead to negative sanctions

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Previous studies…

Experience-sampling studies with palm pilots – participants were asked to rate their current behavior* and role context (e.g., 6 times per day for 10 consecutive days)

- substantial part of people's within-person changes in behavior can be explained by changing roles
- significant between-person differences in how people adapt to similar role contexts

→ Causes and consequences of these differences (e.g., with respect to a person's wellbeing, affective experiences, social adjustment…)

still self-reports…

* On the basis of adjectives by means of a bipolar rating scale (e.g., "Which of the two terms is better suited for describing your current behavior: responsible or irresponsible?")

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In the near future…

…we aim to enrich our experience-sampling studies with mobile sensing technology to obtain a more accurate, complete, and contextually embedded picture of people's everyday behavior.

How to make use of…

- Sensors?
- Images?
- Videos?
- Audio information?
- …?

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