

Personality Test

On the completion of this chapter, the students will be able to:

- understand different types of personality.
- list different methods for assessing personality.
- indicate the factors affect personality.
- assess the merits and demerits of personality testing.

Introduction

"Personality is the dynamic organisation within individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment."

-G. W. Allport.

In our day - to - day life, we generally discuss about the personality of others. Sometimes, this very concept gives a wrong notion about somebody. Like many men many mind, we assess personality of others according to our taste and temperament. The term, 'personality' is derived from the Latin word 'persona', which means 'mask'. The 'persona' or 'masks' were wore on face by the Greek actors in the theatres in ancient time, when they were performing any plays on the stage. In India also, when the people go for any drama or play, they also put colours in their face or use mask in now-a-days. According to the concept of mask, personality was thought to be the effect and influence which the individual wearing a mask left on the audience.

In a nut-shell, personality refers to the external appearance and internal qualities of an individual. It is something unique to every body and it is the result of the interaction of heredity

and environment. Personality refers to individual's unique and relatively stable patterns of behaviour, thoughts and feelings. We can't draw a watertight compartment between personality and all the psychological traits. Personality is a summative approach which assesses all the integrative qualities of an individual. **Learning and acquisition of experiences in every platform of life contribute towards growth and development of personality.**

Definitions

Stuck (1971) : "Personality is the more or less stable and organised organisation of a person's character, temperament, and physique, which determine his unique adjustment to environment."

Binet (1930) : "Personality is the sum of activities that are covered by actual observations over a long period of time and are reliable informations."

Binet Prince (1929) : "Personality is the sum total of all the innate dispositions, impulses, tendencies, appetites and the individual and the dispositions and tendencies of the individual and the dispositions and tendencies of experience".

Characteristics of personality

Characteristics of personality are:

Personality is built by heredity and environment.

There is individual difference in personality.

Personality determines one's adjustment to his environment.

Personality emerges from the interaction of psychological organism.

Personality may be intrinsic or extrinsic.

Personality is the reflection of all the psychological and physical traits of an individual. **Personality can be assessed.**
Personality means man within the man.

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- (9) Personality refers to social adaptability.
- (10) Personality is a dynamic organisation.
- (11) Behaviour is the reflection of personality.
- (12) Personality permits a prediction about an individual.
- (13) Personality is more or less stable in nature.
- (14) Personality exhibits self consciousness.
- (15) Personality includes all the behaviour patterns conative, cognitive and affective.
- (16) Personality includes conscious, semiconscious and unconscious activities.
- (17) Learning and acquisition of experiences contribute towards growth and development of personality.
- (18) Personality should not be taken as synonymous with one's character and temperament.
- (19) Personality of an individual is directed towards some specific ends.

Determinants of personality

An individual is the by-product of his heredity and environment.

The hereditarians overemphasise that heredity has great contribution towards personality development but the environmentalists say in their way. So, no one factor can be given credit of influencing personality. Personality is the by product of many factors which are reflected below.

1. Heredity
2. Environment
 - (a) physical environment
 - (b) social environment
 - (c) cultural environment

(1) *Heredity: A child takes birth with the chromosomes* from its parents. In most of the cases, children are more similar to their parents and siblings. Heredity influences physique, motor-sensory equipment and level of intelligence. Physical

appearance of an individual contributes a lot for his personality. So heredity plays an important role in the development of personality.

(2) *Environment*: Here, we will discuss about three types of environment like:

- (a) physical environment
- (b) social environment
- (c) cultural environment.

(a) *Physical environment* - Physical environment refers to the physical, geographical and geological structure of the area where an individual lives in. In case of the cold countries, the people are white, but in hot countries, the people's colour is black. The people of North-East of India are different from the people of South India in their colour and physical appearance. This difference is mostly due to the physical environment.

(b) *Social environment*: Social environment of an individual includes all social agents like -parents, siblings, peer groups, school, teachers, neighbour etc. All these factors play their role in the development of personality of an individual. Children from homes where morality, honesty, spiritualism, religiousness are given importance, are different from the children from the homes of poverty, family disorder, formal relationship among all etc. A child's most of the time is devoted in school with teachers and friends. Teachers are the role models before the children. The principle of discipline, living co-operatively, respect to teachers, feeling brotherhood and sisterhood in uniform dress, all these are acquired by schools. Teacher's open mindedness, democratic look, enthusiastic and industriousness, leave a mark upon a child which develop its personality. Interpersonal relationship among the members of a society are important means which help in the development of certain social personality characteristics. All these factors help in the development of personality.

(c) *Cultural environment*: Cultural values moulds the personality of people belong to that culture. A child internalises the values, ideas, beliefs, norms and customs of a culture through

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the interaction with the culture and the society. Every society has its own cultural heritage and this cultural heritage transmits from generation to generation successfully which is known as enculturation. The personality of the people of eastern society is different from the personality of the people of western society, it is due to the cultural change. Margaret Mead conducted a study on the adolescents of Samoa, a primitive culture. She concluded that the cultural pattern of a society influence to a great extent the personalities of individuals. So all the mentioned factors influence the personality patterns of individuals.

Types of Personality

Psychologists have developed various typologies of personality. They have classified human beings according to their personality in various kinds. Let's have a glance upon the types of personality.

- (1) According to Ayurvedic classification:
 - (a) Vata type personality
 - (b) Kapha type personality
 - (c) Pitta personality
- (2) Hippocrates classification:
 - (a) Sanguine type personality
 - (b) Choleric type personality
 - (c) Melancholic type personality
 - (d) Phlegmatic type personality
- (3) Kretschmer's classification:
 - (a) Pyknic type personality
 - (b) Asthenic type personality
 - (c) Athletic type personality
 - (d) Dysplastic type personality
- (4) Sheldon's classification:
 - (a) Endomorphic personality
 - (b) Mesomorphic personality
 - (c) Ectomorphic personality

- (5) Jung's classification :
- (a) Extrovert personality
 - (b) Introvert personality
 - (c) Ambivert personality
- (6) Freud's classification:
- (a) Oral-erotic type personality
 - (b) Anal type personality
 - (c) Phallic type personality
- (7) Spranger's classification:
- (a) Theoretical personality
 - (b) Economic personality
 - (c) Aesthetic personality
 - (d) Social personality
 - (e) Political personality
 - (f) Religious Personality

Assessment of personality

The concept of personality is a subjective concept. It is very difficult to assess or measure subjective concepts objectively. Still the psychologists have tried to measure personality of human beings through different tools and techniques. In the primitive society, physical strength was the norm of personality measurement, during the Vedic and Upanishadic period, the memorisation of Vedas and Upanishads were the norms of personality measurement. Then astrology, palmistry, physiognomy and phrenology were considered as the measures of personality. With the passage of time, new tools and techniques are developed to measure personality of individuals which are mentioned below.

- (1) Observation
- (2) Interview
- (3) Questionnaire
- (4) Rating scale

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- (5) Check list
- (6) Autobiography
- (7) Biography
- (8) Sociometry
- (9) Anecdotal Record
- (10) Personality inventory
- (11) Projective techniques
- (12) Situational or Behavioural tests.

Some of the techniques are explained below.

(1) *Observation*: One's personality is reflected in his behaviour and the behaviour is assessed properly through observation. Through observation in real life situation, the personality of an individual can be known. This observation is of two types - participant observation and non-participant observation. In case of participant observation, the observer becomes a part of the group or becomes a part of the life of the individual, whose behaviour is observed. But in case of non-participant observation, the observer remains away from the group or from the individual. Observation is a first hand information, so it is more valid and reliable. But sometimes the observer's biasness affects the assessment. Some people also hesitate to reflect their natural behaviour when they know that somebody is observing them. Behaviour is a subjective concept and it varies from situation to situation. But still, observation has a great role in assessing personality.

(2) *Interview*: Interview is a technique of eliciting response from an interviewee by a couple of interviewers. In the words of Maccoby & Maccoby, "Interview refers to a face to face verbal interchange in which the interviewers attempt to elicit information or expression of opinion or belief from the interviewees". Interview is verbal. It is a face-to-face contact between the interviewers and interviewees through which the real personality of individuals are assessed. Within a limited period of time, the interviewers ask questions to the interviewees and elicit responses from them. Interview may be of two types

- structured interview and unstructured interview. In structured interview, some questions are pre-fixed to be asked. The type of behaviour to be assessed is also pre-planned. But in unstructured interview, the questions are situational. Open interrogation takes place between the interviewers and interviewees. The scope of unstructured interview is more than structured in view because the interviewers are not restricted to a particular set of predetermined questions. Interview techniques has its own limitations also. Skilled interviewers are necessary and this technique is also more time consuming. It also suffers from the personal biasness of the interviewers.

(3) *Check-list*: A check-list consists of some items and the subject is supposed to respond the items according to his interest. From the responds, the personality of the subject is assessed by the psychologists. For example, in the list given below, the subject is asked to check the items which are applicable to him.

- (a) I want to work whole day.
- (b) I want to lead a comfortable life.
- (c) I want rest whole day.
- (d) I want to pray God whole day.

Some examples of standardised check lists are given below.

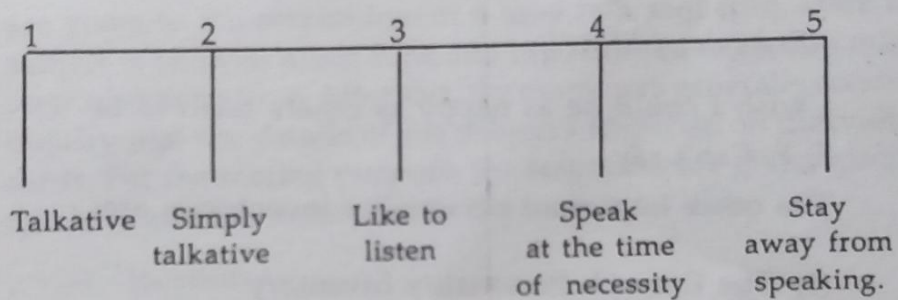
- (a) Money problems checklist.
- (b) Student problem checklist by Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance.

(4) *Rating scale*: Rating scale was developed by Galton in 1883. According to Van Dalen, "A rating scale ascertains the degree, intensity or frequency of a variable." In the words of Good & Scate "The rating scale typically directs attention to different parts or aspects of the thing to be evaluated, doesn't have as many items or categories as the checklist or score card." Through this device, rater can record judgements of another person or of himself upon the traits defined by the scale. It covers much wider range of more natural behaviour than any

practicable battery of personality tests. There are different types of rating scales like:

- (a) Numerical scale
- (b) Graphic scale
- (c) Cumulative points scale.
- (d) Standard scale.
- (e) Forced choice rating.

Let's have an example of graphic rating scale. A subject is asked to put a tick mark on the point which is applicable to him.



Some important examples of rating scale are:

- (a) S.V.U. Personality Scale by S. Narayan Rao.
- (b) A Measure of Authoritarianism by V.K. Kool
- (c) Personality Word List by Pratibha Deo etc.

(5) *Personality Inventory* - The tool was developed by Woodworth in 1919. But at that time it was named as personal data sheets. In personality inventory, an effort is made to estimate the presence and strength of each specified trait through a number of items representing a variety of situations in which the individuals generalised mode of responding may be sampled. Personality inventory is of two types - uni-dimensional personality inventory and multi-dimensional personality inventory.

Personality is of multi-dimensional quality. That is why mostly the multi-dimensional personality inventory used in mosts of the cases. The reliability of personality inventories ranges from very low to satisfactory coefficient .8, depending

on the traits being measured. Personality inventories are particularly useful in group trends i.e. in differentiating between groups of adjusted and maladjusted, rather than among individuals.

Minnesota Multiphasic. Personality Inventory (MMPI) is mostly used in assessment of personality. It was developed in 1940 and the first manual was used in 1943. It is available in individual card form and group booklet form. It consists of total 550 items and it is used for the individuals of more than 16 years of age. MMPI consists of three answers: True, False and Can't say and its main use is clinical and diagnostic. The time required for administration of MMPI is 90 minutes and its reliability ranges from .50 to .90.

Example of MMPI:

I wish I could be as happy as others seem to be
T, F, Can't say

The other important personality inventories are:

- (1) The Eysenck Personality Inventory
- (2) Bernreuter Personality Inventory.
- (3) California Psychological Inventory etc.

(6) *Projective Techniques:* The term 'project' was used for the first time by Sigmund Freud in the field of psychology. Projection, according to Freud means externalizing of conflicts or other internal conditions that had given rise to conscious pain and anxiety. Projection refers to encourage an individual to use his imagination as per his interest. Projective techniques are those which draw out responses from the unconscious. It enables an individual to reflect his internal feelings like aptitudes, attitudes, values, philosophies etc. All the projective techniques are dealt with complex mental processes which reflects the whole personality of an individual.

The characteristics of projective techniques are:

- (1) Unstructured and ambiguous materials are used in

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projective techniques.

- (2) It studies the unconscious mind of individuals.
- (3) It studies the total personality of individuals.
- (4) It evokes multidimensionality of responses.
- (5) There is freedom to respond on the part of the respondents, when responding the techniques.
- (6) The answers to projective techniques are not right or wrong.
- (7) The purpose of projective techniques are disguised.
- (8) The validity and reliability of projective techniques are more.
- (9) Projective techniques have holistic approach in assessing personality.
- (10) These techniques are specially useful for children.

Projective techniques also suffer from certain limitations like:

- (1) Projective techniques are subjective.
- (2) Experts are required for use of these techniques.
- (3) It is difficult to construct, administer and evaluate projective techniques.
- (4) It lacks objectivity in evaluation.
- (5) It lacks norms.
- (6) Interpretation of the test is time consuming.
- (7) It is very difficult to measure its validity and reliability.
- (8) In most of the cases, directions for the administration of the projective techniques are not standardised.
- (9) The evaluation of projective techniques varies from evaluator to evaluator.

Some important projective techniques are mentioned

- (a) Word Association Test.
- (b) Sentence Completion test.
- (c) Story Completion test.
- (d) Rorschach Ink Blot test.
- (e) Thematic Apperception test (TAT).
- (f) Children's Apperception test (CAT).
- (g) Blacky Picture test.
- (h) Psychodrama.
- (i) Sociodrama.
- (j) Toy & Doll playing test.
- (k) Draw - a picture test.
- (l) Mosaic test.

Some of the projective techniques are explained in this following manner:

(a) *Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)* : This technique was developed by Morgan & Murray in 1935 at the Harvard-Psychological clinic. This technique is called story telling test because the respondents are to tell stories according to the pictures shown to them. TAT pictures are administered individually as well as collectively to group of individuals. The test material consists of 31 cards, 30 reflecting various pictures and one blank card. All the pictures are related to real life situations through which an individual passes. All the pictures are given in two sessions and the number of pictures depend upon age, sex and aspect of personality to be assessed. After the administration of the test, the examinees are interviewed and asked why they wrote such type of stories. According to Tomkin the reliability of projective techniques is .9. The interpretation of the stories takes place with the help of these following points:

- (1) The hero
- (2) Theme of the story

- (3) The end of the story
- (4) Punishment for crime
- (5) Defence and confidence
- (6) Emotional expressions etc.

(b) *The Rorschach Inkblot Test*: This technique was developed by Swiss Psychiatrist Herman Rorschach in 1921. The test consists of 10 symmetrical ink blots on ten separate cards of 11 x 9 inches.

Five of the ink blots are black and white and others are multicoloured.

All the inkblots are completely unstructured. All the cards are given to the respondent at a time in a sequence. Here the subject is allowed much time and is permitted to give as many responses as he likes. After this, the examiners generally conduct inquiry into the details of the subject's response on individual cards. For the scoring purpose, the responses are given specific symbols and are entered into four columns like:

- location
- contents
- originality
- determinants

The reliability of Rorschach Inkblot test is .75 and the validity ranges from .5 to .8. The test requires trained and skillful persons for scoring and interpreting it and therefore the work must be taken carefully and done only by experienced and trained psychologists.

Limitations of personality assessment

Every coin has two sides, so like personality assessment has its two sides like - merits and demerits. The demerits of personality assessment are:

- (1) Personality is a subjective and relative concept. So it is very difficult to assess personality.

- (2) Personality assessment can't be purely objective.
- (3) The techniques followed for personality assessment are subjective also.
- (4) Sometimes, the result of personality assessment affects the individuals.
- (5) Sometimes, the result of personality assessment are different from the real life situation.
- (6) Personality assessment varies from technique to technique.
- (7) Personality assessment varies from evaluator to evaluator.