

Module 13

Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling II



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND
FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

“Be patient . . . with the type of mind that cuts a poor figure in examinations. It may, in the long examination which life sets us, come out in the end in better shape than the glib and ready reproducer, its passions being deeper, its purposes more worthy, its combining power less commonplace, and its total mental output consequently more important.”

—WILLIAM JAMES



Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling-II

Module 13



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NCERT

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
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About the Module

You must have already understood by now that assessment and appraisal processes and procedures are the means of obtaining comprehensive understanding of students thereby fulfilling the goal of counselling. The module on Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling –II continues with some more aspects of theory and practice of assessment and appraisal

There are four units in this module. The first unit will help you to understand the meaning of interests, aptitude and achievement as well as significance for assessment and appraisal. It also highlights the importance to integrate interest, aptitude and achievement data particularly for use in educational and career guidance and counselling.

Assessment of personality is another important area for career and personal-social counselling. The second unit would help the counsellors develop an understanding of the use of different measures of personality assessment and their role in developing a holistic picture of the student for effective counselling. The third unit will help you understand the nature of creativity, basic assumptions and techniques to identify and assess the potential for creativity in school students. As counselors, you would need to know how assessment data can be used for nurturing creativity. Since the ultimate goal of assessment is its proper use and application in counselling, you need to develop insight and sensitivity in judicious selection and use of tools in gathering ability, aptitude, interests and personality data and for skillful application of such data. The fourth unit therefore will equip you to properly interpret, communicate, report and integrate appraisal data for counselling. Your competencies towards the end will be further strengthened during ‘Practicum in Psychological Assessment’.



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Assessment of Interest, Aptitude and Achievement

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Assessment of Interest, Aptitude and Achievement

1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Today is your first day at work after a long weekend. You have come to teach mathematics. While most students have responded to your presence, there are a few students in the first two rows who are deeply engrossed in some activity. Curious as you walk close to them, you find that Altaf is busy looking out of the window at some birds and trying to formulate his poem, which he loves to do. Sitting next to him, Bill is busy playing his computer game and trying to move to its next level. A seat behind is Renu, totally lost in the book she is reading. Her friends revealed that Renu is a very quiet girl and interacts only when others talk to her and she loves playing the piano. Hari is impatiently waiting for the maths class to be over to run out to play football in the field with friends. Evident a student may have a natural inclination to solve math's problems or writing poems, while others may enjoy expanding their vocabulary and so on.

As you look at the activities of the above students and others in the class, you recognise that individual difference is the law of nature. It is common to all humans of every age. The same applies to all human characteristics. Individuals vary in terms of their abilities, interests, aptitudes, achievement or the choice of activities and subjects as well.

As a counsellor, you would find it challenging to acquire a good understanding of the concepts of interests, aptitude and achievement. You will find that using the information on interests, achievement and aptitude will help you to understand your students and to help them develop their potential.

This unit includes a description of the concepts of interests, achievement and aptitude. You will learn how each of these are identified and assessed. By integrating the data on each aspect of a student, you can help them obtain a holistic picture of their unique characteristics and make suitable career and personal-social choices.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After completion of this unit, you will be able to

- *understand* the concepts of interests, and achievement, aptitude.
- *explain* the importance of interests, aptitude and achievement in counselling.
- *describe* the use of information obtained in assessment of interests, aptitude, and achievement.
- *integrate* the information obtained from interests, aptitude and achievement data into counselling of students.

1.2 INTERESTS

In order to help students make vocational choices, the counsellor needs to know his/her interests for activities. The study of interests would help you as counselor to better understand the student in terms of his/her likes and dislikes. In this section, you will learn about the concept of interest and its assessment.

1.2.1 What are Interests?

If you reflect on your own past experiences you would recall that you did not get involved in every type of activity. You found it easier to learn some subjects more than others. You practised some skills for long hours and yet did not feel bored or tired, while you preferred to abstain from others. Similarly you may have observed that one of your students likes a particular activity, despite having the ability to do other things. Why? It is because of her/his natural liking for that activity



over others. *Interest refers to activities that an individual likes to engage in and enjoys.* For example, Miriam enjoys singing more than reading; it indicates that Miriam is interested in music more than in language and literature. However, this does not imply that Miriam does not or cannot do well in language and literature but shows her preference for music, her natural desire to indulge in music over other activities.

Are interests acquired? Interests are acquired from one's environment and since environments are different for different individuals so are our interests. They develop within the context of a personal environment. For example interest in music is enhanced within an environment where music may be readily available. Interests change with one's motives, drives and emotional responses and hence are not permanent. Although interests begin to stabilise during adolescence they vary at different ages and need be assessed at various developmental stages.

As a counsellor, assessment of interests at the school stage can help you in predicting a broad spectrum, of choices a student can make, either in educational and career spheres or in everyday activities which one can enjoy as well as do well.



1.2.2 Type of Interest

Interests can be classified in different ways. A counsellor should find out whether the interests of the individual are *intrinsic* or *extrinsic*. Many students like or are interested in the study of science and so take up/opt for science subjects; these refer to their intrinsic interests. However, at times you may have come across students who do not do well and are forced by their parents to take up science subjects with the aim to join medical or engineering as profession since these are viewed prestigious in the society. In such situations the interests of the students are aroused by their parents and are referred to as extrinsic interests.

Super (1990) classified interests as: (i) expressed, (ii) manifest or observed, and (iii) measured or tested.

(i) *Expressed interests* are individuals' expression of their likes and dislikes such as "I like teaching" or "I dislike" Counsellors should keep in mind that these self-expressions of the client need to be supported by some data from tests, inventories, observations etc. Even when opinions about expressed interests are accepted, they are of little value for diagnostic purposes or for prediction, as they may be subjective.

(ii) *Manifest or observed interests* are judged from participation of the client in an activity or occupation. For example, when a student takes part in environment related activities, such as water conservation, in the colony where s/he is staying or spends time in similar pursuits, we may say s/he has social interests. A

student who spends time listening to music, playing different instruments, shows his/her interests in aesthetics. Even though these interests are judged by direct observation, as counsellor you need to be cautious in drawing inferences based on such observations. The observations must be made over a long period of time and pattern of interest must be recurrent. Observations made by parents, teachers or friends should also be taken into consideration and also need to be further supplemented with some objective data.

(iii) *Measured or tested interests* are those that are tested by objective tests. Interest inventories, academic tests and even sometimes achievement tests, can indicate the interests of an individual. For example, a high score in science over a long period and a low score in history over the same period are an indication of higher interest in Science over History.



1.2.3 Assessment of Interests

As counsellors if you help an individual make vocational choices, you need to know his/her interests, and preferences for activities. This study of interests would also help you as a counsellor to understand the client/individual. The simplest procedure of studying the vocational interests of a client is to ask him/her a direct question regarding the choice of profession. For example, the counsellor could ask the client, "Would you

like to be a doctor?” Answering yes to such questions would indicate a client’s interest in the medical profession. But these kind of responses are susceptible to variations. The meaning of the term “like very much” would have a different meaning for different people. Secondly, different people have different ideas about the nature of the job and its working conditions. For some clients ‘medical’ may signify carrying out surgery, or working in a laboratory, or a teaching job. These variations in the degree of likeness and understanding of the job would present an unsatisfactory indicator of the client’s interests as, in this case, medical profession. Asking direct and specific questions about interests is not a good or reliable measure of interest. There are more reliable measures of assessing interests. You will now read about these.

You can use (i) formal assessment techniques and (ii) informal assessment techniques to discover a student’s interests.

(i) Formal Assessment Techniques

Interest inventories are formal techniques for measuring interests. They are considered more reliable at discovering an individual’s interests than interviews as the inventories address a large number of questions representing a broad range of careers.

Typically the assessment of interests by using inventories involves presenting a student with a list of activities and occupations, which have been previously scored by people in those occupational fields. The student is asked to select those activities that they would like to undertake and pursue, and those they do not like to do. A comparison of one’s responses with those marked earlier gives the person a basis to identify one’s interest pattern. Though the construct of interest normally transcends vocational and leisure activities, most inventories are found strongly oriented towards occupations, because the instruments are primarily used for the purpose of educational and career/vocational counselling.

Interest Inventories

The Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB) and Kuder Preference Record (KPR) are significant milestones in the area of interest measurement and a number of revisions of the original forms have been undertaken. Both the interest inventories however differ in terms of their approaches in construction and purposes for which they are used.

The first systematic assessment of vocational interests was the development of Strong Vocational Interest Blank by Edward K. Strong Jr. The SVIB helps to reveal the clients’ interest patterns by asking the subjects to indicate their preference in terms of like, indifferent or dislike. The SVIB is designed to measure the extent to which the interest of an individual corresponds to those of people who are successful in a given occupation.

The KPR constructed by G. Frederic Kuder, assess preferences for specific activities. Each item contains three choices. The subject has to select one of the three choices as his first choice, and another as his third choice.





An example of the choices given in an item are –

- build birdhouses,
- write articles about birds ,
- draw sketches of birds.

This particular item aims to test three types of interests, namely mechanical, literary and artistic.

It is important to keep in mind that a high score obtained by an individual on KPR does not indicate his/her interests in an occupation but points to similarity in his/her interests to a majority of those successful in that occupation. However, a positive correlation has been found between having interests in the occupation and having interests like those who are successful in the occupation.

The main difference in the two types of inventories is that in Kuder Preference Record the subject is forced to say which one of the three activities he likes best and which one he likes least, even though he may not like any of the three, hence it is called forced choice pattern type. In Strong Vocational Interest Blank, the subject has to differentiate between L (like), I (indifferent) or D (dislike). Hence it is called a category-response type of assessment. As counsellor if you want a description of a person so that inferences could be drawn regarding suitability for one of the very large number of jobs, Kuder Preference Record is your preferable tool of interest assessment. On the other hand if the purpose is to appraise the individual's interest for a limited number of specific jobs, then Strong Vocational Interest Blank is more useful. It is important to remember that the SVIB and KPR tell nothing about the ability or aptitude of an individual. These are to be assessed by other methods.

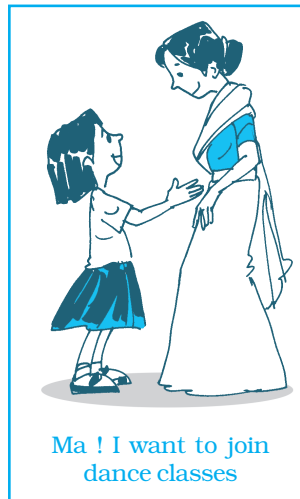
Results of interest inventories or tests are particularly useful to the counsellor as–

- The items of interest inventories are non-threatening and so the student is more likely to respond honestly.
- Interest data from inventories helps clients in reality testing i.e., they are able to view oneself as s/he has described him/herself. The student, with the assistance of the counsellor, is helped to see the discrepancy, if any, between his/her view of one's interests and those assessed by the interest inventories .
- It also provides the counsellor a view into whether the client's expressed interests are suited to what s/he is pursuing. For example, if the client expresses an interest in pursuing medical science as his area of study in order to become a doctor, yet, his measured interests show a high score in mathematics and low in biology, as a counsellor you may need to look at how realistic the client's aim of pursuing medical science is. Interest data also needs to be supplemented with aptitude and achievement test data.

You have read about two distinct types of Interest Inventories. Some other tools like Self Directed Search (SDS) (Holland, Powell, Fritzsche, 1994) and the Unisex Edition of the ACT Interest Inventory (UNIACT) (Swaney, 1995) developed on the basis of Holland's theory are also frequently used. SDS is self-administered, self-scored and self-interpreted, while UNIACT can be scored on computer and can give a computer-generated report to relate the scores to a World-of-Work Map. Increased

use is being made of personal computers in different phases of interest assessment from administration to integration of information into computerised career counselling sequences. It has proved to be time and cost economical.

(ii) Informal Assessment Techniques include client's expression of interests and observation. The client's interviews regarding his/her interests provide the counsellor a good beginning for understanding the client. For example, the books s/he reads, and the amount of time spent on reading provides an indication of the client's interests in the kind of reading s/he does. As counsellors you can supplement this information by using qualitative techniques of assessment such as observation of the activities a client participates in or information gathered from anecdotal records and written works as sources of informal information regarding client interests.



Cautions on the Use of Interest Inventories

As counsellors, you should keep the following cautions in mind while using the results of interest inventories–

- Interests are not permanent. They are related to experience; hence they may change as an individual matures. However, interests are known to stabilise at around 18-20 years of age; hence the results of interest tests should not be viewed in terms of permanent qualities possessed by the student in school.
- Interest data of an individual provides a profile of the pattern of their interests (what they like doing) and should not be taken as the strength of the individual.
- Interest results tell us only about the likelihood of an individual finding enjoyment in a particular type of activity or occupation and not what s/he is capable of.
- A high score on an interest inventory should not be considered analogous to success in a career.
- At times the interest inventory items are susceptible to distortions because of the transparency of items and the tendency to give socially desirable response. The students need to be told to be truthful while indicating their likings on an item.

You have read in the above section that assessment of interest indicates at a simple level what a person likes to do and enjoy. It is important to remember that interests indicate the client's liking and not his/her strengths. The emphasis of interest inventories is on self-exploration. One should know about oneself and be able to relate this information to what one is doing and how one is doing. It helps the student to see congruence in the interests expressed by him/her and those measured by the interest inventories. For example, s/he expresses his/her liking for computer programming whereas the assessment on interest inventory may not indicate the same. The results of interest inventories should not be seen in an isolated manner but should be supplemented with information from other techniques such as observation, interview, informal talk etc .



Interest results are of little value by themselves. They should be considered with achievement and aptitude scores to help individuals make educational and career choices. You will now read about the use of academic achievement data in understanding the student.



Self-check Exercise 1

Fill in the blanks with appropriate choices given below.

1. Individual's expression of their likes and dislikes are a measure of _____ interests.
2. _____ interests are judged from participation of an individual in an activity or occupation.
3. Interests tested by objective measures are called _____ interests.
4. An example of category response type of interest inventory is _____.
5. _____ measures relatively pure interest factor.
(a) tested/measured (b) Strong Vocational Interest Blank
(c) Kuder Preference Record (d) expressed (e) manifest/observed

1.3 APTITUDE

In the previous unit on intelligence, you have studied that traditional intelligence tests cover general mental abilities like abstract reasoning, memory, perceptual ability, clarity of thinking etc. However these tests of intelligence are not meant to provide valid evidence of the presence or absence of specific abilities or the fitness of an individual for a particular occupation. A single measure of intelligence was not considered a valid measure of special abilities. There are many special abilities like mechanical, clerical or musical abilities, which are not a part of the general measures of intelligence. Aptitude tests came into being with the emerging need for career guidance and counselling.

Aptitude is thought of as a natural tendency, special ability, or capacity or cluster

of abilities. Often these natural abilities are looked at in relationship to a person's readiness to learn or their suitability for a particular career. For example, in order to be a successful architect, one must possess the cluster of abilities such as a keen sense of observation, a sense of aesthetic visual memory, abstract reasoning, and an ability to sketch free hand. In general terms, aptitude is interpreted in terms of what an individual is capable of doing on a particular task or a function, a cluster of special abilities deemed

He loves reading and writing but let me see his potential for



central to perform some specific task or function. A cluster or combination of abilities form a particular aptitude required for success in a particular occupation.

Since aptitude is a special ability or cluster of special abilities required to do a job or perform a task, it can indicate the probability of success in a particular area of work. Aptitude may also indicate how helpful further training to develop a particular ability can be. In the absence of aptitude, any training may be of limited benefit. For example, a person who does not have musical aptitude, in spite of training, can improve his / her performance only to some extent but may not be good enough to be successful.

Aptitude and Interest

Often an aptitude in a particular endeavour results in an increased interest in pursuing that endeavour. For this reason, the two concepts are linked, and are often confused with each other and used interchangeably. These are not the same concepts. Interest refers to a person's preferences, and is generally expressed in terms of likes and dislikes whereas aptitude is a potential. For example, a person may be fond of singing (an interest) but may not necessarily have any musical ability to sing well (aptitude) which may be indicated or assessed by the pitch of the voice, loudness, rhythm, timbre and tonal memory etc. Overall, aptitude is considered to be a relatively stable capacity for performing well on related tasks. Career choices should involve both interests and aptitudes. It is not necessary that interest and aptitude may go together though it is also believed that a person is likely to be interested in those things and areas in which he/she has the ability. Similarly, two persons with same aptitudes may have different interests.

Aptitude and Achievement

It is also important to make a distinction between aptitude and achievement. Aptitude indicates the individual's capacity to perform while achievement indicates the extent an individual has performed. Aptitude indicates the person's ability to perform on a task prior to any training to predict subsequent performance or experience whereas achievement indicates the individual's status on the completion of the training. Moreover, achievement is generally considered to be related to school related experiences while aptitude relates to general daily life experiences. Achievement tests are generally intended to measure the person's present knowledge. Aptitude tests are mostly used to predict future success. Achievement tests are generally used to assess educational aptitude whereas aptitude tests are used to assess occupational or career aptitude. Although such distinctions are made, sometimes achievement tests can also serve as indicators of aptitude. For example, achievement tests on pre-medical courses can serve as predictors of performance in medical field. If a student has got high marks in mathematics tests in school then these may serve as indicators of aptitude in mathematics. Sometimes, however, it may be misleading. If due to some reason, the student is not able to perform up to the mark then even though s/he has an aptitude, achievement test may not be a reliable measure of aptitude. It is important to note that consistency of performance is an important factor to consider. Achievement tests can serve as indicators of aptitude in scholastic areas if consistency in performance in a particular subject or area is maintained.





1.3.1 Types of Aptitude Tests

There are different types of aptitude tests. Some of them are single aptitude tests like tests of mechanical aptitude, clerical aptitude, teaching aptitude, musical aptitude and so on. Such tests covering a group of related abilities are necessary for performing in an occupation like becoming a mechanic, clerk, teacher, musician etc. Another type of aptitude test is work sample aptitude test. It requires the individual to perform all or part of a given job under the conditions that exist on the job. An example of a work sample test for the job of automobile mechanic is to repair a faulty carburetor. Besides this, there are Differential Test Batteries as well. A commonly known Differential Aptitude Tests (DAT) Bennett, Seashore and Wesman (1984) battery consists of eight sub tests of verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, abstract reasoning, spatial reasoning, clerical speed and accuracy, mechanical reasoning, language usage, spelling, grammar. Combination of such abilities is required for success in different occupations. Such test batteries can give comprehensive information about the relative picture of the student's specific abilities. Administration of total battery can prove to be costly in terms of time but one can make selective use of certain sub tests. For example, a student trying to explore whether s/he will have the required aptitude to go to engineering, may not be required to take tests like clerical speed, language usage, grammatical or verbal reasoning tests but may be required to take numerical abstract and spatial reasoning tests. Most of the batteries of tests available for assessment of aptitude at school stage are in the form of test batteries consisting of the underlying abilities required for success in different occupations rather than direct assessment of job aptitudes.

1.3.2 Interpreting Aptitude Test Data

You have read that different types of aptitude tests can be useful for providing educational and career counseling. These can be useful in helping individuals explore their aptitude in relation to different occupational areas, can be helpful in discovering hidden abilities and narrow down the range of career choices. However, knowledge of aptitude and tests measuring aptitude alone is not enough. It is important for a counsellor to have an understanding of the cluster of abilities, which underlie an aptitude for a particular occupation, or a group of related occupations. Let us take an example of clerical aptitude. Most of the clerical positions require a wide variety of abilities. Most tasks performed by clerical workers call for aptitude in both arithmetic and language. They are also required to deal with numbers and symbols rapidly and accurately. So quick observation is required for any clerical ability. This is measured by perceptual tests. Clerical personnel also need skill in spelling, rapid calculations, taking dictation, typing etc. No test measures all these abilities but some specific tests have been designed to assess clerical aptitude. Besides this, it is also important for counsellors to have information about the world of work, knowledge of various occupations and the underlying abilities required for success in those occupations. This aspect has already been dealt with in the Module - V on Career Information in Guidance and Counselling.

Not only this, it is equally important to have knowledge of assessment procedures, besides aptitude tests, which can give information about the strength area of the individual. These include different types of sources and information, like past achievements/ academic record, interest, and leisure time activities, non-academic accomplishments, reports from parents, teachers, self etc. Besides the knowledge of tests and procedure, it is also important that counsellors have the required skills in the selection, administration and communication of test scores. This has also been discussed in the earlier Unit -2 on Using Psychological Tests.

1.3.3 Cautions in the Use of Aptitude Test Data

The primary objective of counselling is to help students/clients develop an understanding of their personal characteristics in relation to the requirements of various occupations. This is a complex task, which depends on both test and non-test data and other background information. A trained counsellor knows when and how to use testing, when and how to utilise non-test data, how to interpret and communicate aptitude test data. You will learn more about this in the assessment practicum.

It is important that counsellors select and use aptitude tests carefully, keeping in view the student's/client's needs. Test scores in themselves do not provide complete information and matching of individual's aptitudes for different occupations is not an exact process. If aptitude test data must be used, it should be used along with previous achievement data, present interests, leisure time activities and work habits etc. in order to guide the students into various occupational possibilities. General mental ability, personality and temperament factors also play a significant role in career choice and adjustment.

The aptitude test samples certain abilities of the individual and helps to find what he/she can do now and how well it can be done further. On the basis of present performance, estimate of his/her future achievement is inferred which is in terms, of probability only.

It may also be kept in mind that aptitude tests score only provide leads or suggestions or clues to help in career planning and do not automatically match individuals to suitable courses or studies, and occupations. Such tests alone are not sufficient because, although one's attitude in a particular area sets a limit to the level of accomplishment or achievement, but there are other important factors which influence a person's achievement. For example, one must be motivated to apply one's aptitude to gain skills and knowledge in the area. So there are factors like willingness, hard work, that contribute to one's success in a career, which are not measured by aptitude tests.

Activity 1

List any five occupations. In each occupation, write down a set of specific abilities/aptitudes required for success. Justify why such abilities/aptitudes are required. Explore the related literature or sources of career information to identify the aptitudes required.



1.4 ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Achievement is what one successfully accomplishes in an area of study/activity/domain. In the case of students, it may be conceptualised as successful learning of the assigned educational material. Such learning is usually demonstrated to teachers and others either through a verbal presentation or a written examination. It is based on effort, ability, and persistence on the task. For example, when you note that Cheri has scored 84% in Mathematics, 65% in English language and 95% in Physics, you are made aware about his higher achievement in science as compared to language. Students need information about their achievements, their strengths and weaknesses in a particular subject. This information is collected by means of achievement tests – standardised achievement tests and tests prepared by teachers.

An achievement test measures knowledge and skills attained by the student in a particular area, usually acquired after classroom teaching or training. In an educational system, achievement test scores are often used to determine the level of instruction for which a student is prepared, to indicate academic strengths and weaknesses, and to indicate the relative standing of the student in a group/class. Achievement test data, in combination with other data, is used to help guidance counsellors plan students' future educational programmes.

1.4.1 Types of Achievement Tests

Achievement tests are of different kinds, each serving a different purpose and providing different information on students' academic proficiency. These have been classified in various ways, and understanding of which helps the counselor to understand their functions. The Educational Testing Service, USA, classifies achievement tests into three types (i) end-of-course achievement test – measuring what a student has learned in a particular subject (ii) general achievement test – covering the students' learning in a broad field of knowledge. These are also called survey tests, and (iii) tests that measure the critical skills of the student regarding what they have learned and their ability to use these skills in solving new problems.

Achievement tests are classified as *formative* and *summative* measures. Formative measures are indicated by achievement tests that are used to measure progress made in knowledge and skills before and during instruction. Summative measures are when achievement tests are given at the end of the course instruction, so as to assess the outcome of the instruction.

Readiness or *prognostic* tests are used to predict how well an individual is expected to profit from training. These are often used for judging a child's ability in learning to read, write and compute numbers. These are often used by administrators, teachers and school personnel for making school entry level decisions about assigning a child to kindergarten or first grade.



Diagnostic achievement tests provide information on performance of the students in different subjects and indicate their strengths and weaknesses in reading, arithmetic and language usage.

Achievement tests can be either *criterion referenced* (CRT) or *norm referenced* (NRT). The two tests differ in their intended purposes, the way in which content is selected, and the scoring process which defines how the test results must be interpreted. NRTs are designed to highlight achievement differences between and among students and provide a rank order of students across a continuum of achievement from high achievers to low achievers. These types of tests are used to help counsellors/teachers to classify students for remedial or gifted programs. Criterion-referenced tests (CRTs) determine the strengths of the test taker i.e. what they can do and what they know, not how they compare to others. They report how well students are doing relative to a pre-determined performance level on a specified set of educational goals or outcomes included in the school curriculum.

An achievement test is designed to measure how much a person knows about a specific topic or area such as math, geography or science. Achievement tests can be standardised tests or teacher-made tests. You will read about these later in this unit.

Uses of Achievement Test Data

Data from standard achievement tests can be used for promoting, classifying, diagnosing or evaluating students. Counsellors can also use achievement tests for–

- promoting a client's *self-understanding*. The strength or weakness of a client in a particular school subject is revealed by the results on an achievement test. These results make it possible for the client to reflect on his/her performance in the light of personal characteristics.
- helping clients in *decision making*. Students often approach counsellors with questions such as “Should I study science? Can I become a lawyer? or Will I be able to take engineering?” Answers to these questions can be partially answered by their achievement test scores. A counsellor can use the achievement test scores to initiate discussions on appropriate choices for a career.
- encouraging *self-study*. Since achievement test data help the student/client to learn about himself or herself, these tests can be used to encourage self-study. The student through achievement data, is able to gain insight into his/her strengths and weaknesses in different subjects which can motivate him/her to put in the desired effort.
- assisting in *diagnosis*. Counsellors can make use of achievement test data to diagnose problems faced by the students in different subject areas. Accordingly corrective remediation can be planned and carried out.
- usually a client's acceptance of unfavorable achievement marks is more in comparison to being told that their ability level is low. This helps in developing *positive test taking* attitudes.



1.4.2 Standardised and Informal Achievement Tests

An achievement test is a measure of what has been learned by a student. Achievement tests may be standardised tests used on large populations, or may be designed for specific groups based on specific content. There are a wide variety of standardised achievement tests that are administered at the national and state levels and those related to different academic domains. Basically, these tests indicate the position of the student on specific subjects relative to the national and state/institution specific sample. The informal tests and examinations on specific subjects conducted by teachers in every school and class may qualify as tests of achievement. Table 1.1 illustrates a comparison between standardised and informal achievement tests.

Table 1.1 Comparisons of Standardised and Informal Tests of Achievement

Dimension	Standardised Achievement Tests	Informal Achievement Tests
Learning outcomes and measured contents	Measure outcomes and content common to most schools. Tests basic skills and complex outcomes; does not reflect local curriculum.	Well adapted to outcomes and content of local curriculum. Flexibility makes it possible to continuously adapt measurement to new materials and changed procedures. Neglects complex learning outcomes.
Quality of test items	Is generally of high quality	Quality unknown unless one uses test item analysis. Generally lower quality because of teacher's limited time and skills.
Reliability	High between 0.80 to 0.95	Unknown, but can be high if carefully constructed.
Administration & Scoring	Standardised procedures; provision of specific instructions.	Uniform procedures but flexibility in instructions.
Interpretation of Scores	Comparison with norm groups possible. Test manuals help interpretation and use.	Comparisons and interpretations limited to local school situation.

A comparison of the two types of tests indicates that each type of achievement test can be used for different purposes. Standardised achievement tests have broader content coverage, require more rigidly controlled procedures of administering and scoring, and have norms for evaluating scores. This makes the standardised achievement test especially useful for the following purposes–

- Evaluating student's general educational development in the basic skills and in those learning outcomes common to many courses of study.
- Evaluating student's progress over the course of the school year.
- Grouping students for instructional purposes.

- Determining a student's relative strengths and weaknesses in a subject or skill area.
- Comparing student's general level of achievement with his/her scholastic aptitude.

Achievement tests of both kinds i.e. standardised and teacher-made tests are based on the content taught and are considered valid. These are used to assess the level of overall proficiency to meet the entry requirements to certain programs or the proficiency in a particular subject. The informal classroom achievement test is suited to a select performance of a group of students. It is flexible and accommodates testing students on a local curriculum. The two types of tests can be used in a complementary manner.

1.4.3 Cautions in the Use of Achievement Test Data

Achievement test data may appear very simple to use, however, as counsellors it is important for you to know that the achievement data alone will not provide complete information on the client. Counsellors need to use data from different sources to create an overall picture of the student achievement. You will now read about some of the cautions in the use of achievement test data.

- Achievement test scores are no guarantee that the measured performance is a typical performance. As counsellors it is important to remember that students who have put in less effort or habitually attack problems emotionally may show below average performance on an achievement test. Therefore, it should not be inferred that his or her performance would always be at a low level. The counsellor should interpret achievement test scores in terms of an individual's habitual mode or response, along with record of school marks over time. This provides more useful data for counselling purposes.
- Supplement achievement test data with grades or marks given by teachers. They are important indicators of students' performances. Even though teachers' marks have their limitations, it is important that counsellors take this in consideration while interpreting achievement test scores.
- Search for patterns and trends in achievement performance of an individual. Counsellors need to integrate data of achievement test, grades obtained, teacher's marks and study the relationship among the data to form a pattern. Appraisal must be based on pattern of information rather than from a single datum as you have read in Unit-1 on Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling.

You have read that assessment of interest indicates at a simple level what a person likes to do and enjoy; achievement refers to degree of successful learning in an area after having received some instruction. It is also important for you to know the students, capacity to learn prior to training/instruction which is assessment of aptitude. You will read about aptitude assessment in the next section.





Self-check Exercise 2

Fill-in the blanks with appropriate choices given below.

- (a) prognostic (b) norm referenced (c) summative (d) criterion referenced
1. _____ tests determine the strengths of the test taker.
 2. _____ tests assess the outcome of instruction.
 3. _____ tests predict how well an individual is expected to profit from training.
 4. _____ tests highlight achievement differences among students.

1.5 INTEGRATING INTEREST, APTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT DATA FOR COUNSELLING

Interest in an activity is not the same as aptitude or achievement in that area. There is certain amount of overlap yet the three concepts are different, and these need to be carefully distinguished in a counselling situation as well as in making assessments.

A counsellor's knowledge of a student's interests, aptitudes and achievements allows for better advice on course and career selections. Since interest inventory items are in non-evaluative terms they are non-threatening. Therefore, administration of these makes a good beginning for counselling. Since interests indicate the client's liking and not his/her strengths the results of interest inventories should be supplemented with the individual's hobbies, attitudes etc. Interest inventories help in self-exploration i.e. to know about oneself and be able to relate this information to what one is doing and how one is doing. Achievement tests are designed to measure how much a person has already achieved or learned, and have relevance for a person in educational decision making, to know where one stands in relation to cohorts at the local, district, state and national levels and where one can go. A counsellor can use the knowledge of various characteristics of achievement, and merits and demerits of various tests (teacher made tests, standardised tests, criterion-referenced and norm-referenced tests) in informing students about personal and educational decisions. Achievement testing is becoming ever more important as the accountability increases to prove that students are learning. But for guidance, aptitude might be a better measure for showing potential.

Knowledge about aptitudes is important for you as counsellor, to help the student find his/her area of likely success and a right career. The assessment of aptitudes is found useful in institutional school level as well as in individual decisions. As you have read, you can use separate tests to assess different aptitudes or a battery of tests to know the general as well as specific aptitudes. Knowledge of aptitudes helps you in preparing a career plan for students with some options based on their scoring on specific aptitudes. For instance, a student who has not learned "the basics" in primary and secondary education - for any number of reasons - can have the "aptitude" to do well in a career and related studies - especially if they are interested, although they might have some catching up to do academically.

If the score of a student on the Interest Test shows his/her interest in engineering, but his scores on achievement tests show that he is not good in mathematics and science, he would be advised not to enter the field of engineering. However, if the scores in all the three (Interest Blank, Achievement Test and Aptitude Test) point to the same thing, as counsellor you may tell the client that entering engineering field can be a suitable option. Suppose the interest scores of a student are high on the engineering scale and low on the law scale, but his/her score on the achievement and aptitude test are high for both the fields, then s/he should carefully consider going into engineering and also consider not to take up law.

It is important to remember that interest measures and ability measures are two different things. If a student gets a high score on the computational interest scale or the public accountant interest scale, it does not mean that s/he necessarily possesses the intellectual capacity required to learn and gain mastery over the techniques of accountancy and become a good accountant. S/he may or may not possess the requisite intellectual ability. Similarly nothing can be said about his aptitudes for the job. Interest measures and ability measures provide different kinds of information, though they supplement each other. Ability to learn the skills of a job does not indicate the success or satisfaction for a job. However there is a relationship between interest and ability. Both types of information must be collected by the counsellor to make sound evaluation of the suitability of an individual for choice of occupations.



Self-check Exercise 3

Indicate whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F).

1. A counsellor can gain better understanding of a student by knowing more about his aptitudes than interest and achievement as aptitude helps in training further for career.
2. Knowledge about interests can truly guide educational decisions.
3. A sound decision-making requires the counsellor to know about student's interests, aptitudes and achievement scores.

1.6 Summary

Interest refers to activities that an individual likes to engage in and enjoys. Results of interest inventories or tests are useful to the counsellor as the items of interest inventories are non-threatening and hence can help in establishing rapport, developing positive test-taking attitudes and in reality testing by the client. Interests can be classified as (i) expressed interests, which are an individual's expression of likes and dislikes, (ii) manifest or observed interests as judged from participation in an activity or occupation, and (iii) tested or measured interests, which are those tested by objective tests.





Achievement is what one successfully accomplishes in an area of study/activity/domain. Achievement tests are classified in varied ways. Counsellors can use achievement tests for promoting a client's self-understanding, helping clients in decision-making, encouraging self-study, and diagnosing problems faced by a student. Achievement test scores are no guarantee that the measured performance is a typical performance. Counsellors need to supplement achievement test data with grades or marks given by teachers and search for patterns in achievement test performance.

Aptitude is understood as a special ability or a cluster of special abilities deemed central to perform some specific task or function. It indicates the probability of success in a particular area of work or a field and, also the extent to which the individual will profit from training or experience. There are different types of aptitude tests. It is important that counsellors select and use aptitude tests carefully, keeping in view the student/client's needs. Test scores in themselves do not provide complete information. Aptitude test data must be used along with previous achievement data, present interests, leisure time activities and work habits etc. in order to guide the students with various occupational possibilities.

Aptitude test measures certain abilities of the individual and helps to find what s/he can do at present and how well it can be done in future. On the basis of present performance, estimate of his/her future achievement is inferred which is in terms of probability only. Factors like willingness, hard work, are contributes to one's success in a career, and not measured by aptitude tests.

Interest in an activity is not the same as aptitude or achievement in that area. The significance of knowing, assessing and integrating individuals' interests, achievement and aptitude data helps counsellors to make should educational and career choices.


1. Explain the concept of interest, achievement, and aptitude in two-three sentences giving an example of each.
2. Explain with examples the significance of knowledge about interests, achievement and aptitudes in counseling?
3. Renu shows interest in engineering, on the aptitude test she scores 'average' and her achievement scores are 'low' in mathematics and science. As a counsellor how would you use the interest, aptitude and achievement information of Renu to help her make a decision regarding career choice?
4. What is the difference between general aptitude and special aptitude?
5. Explain the use of an aptitude test in career counselling of high school students.
6. A standardised achievement test can be more useful than an informal classroom test. Explain why?

7. John is 16 and has finished his Class X examinations. From his recent exposure to a couple of career fairs, he finds that his interest is to go into commerce stream and ultimately choose a corporate job. His parents however, made him join the science stream. John has failed his first term examinations in Mathematics and Biology, and is referred for educational counselling. What will your advice be?

Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises

1. Elaborate on the following points–
 - Interest refers to activities that individuals like to engage in and also enjoy. For example, a child may like music more than reading; that reflects his/her interest in music rather than in language and literature.
 - Achievement refers to what one successfully accomplishes in study, activity or domain. For example, if a child scores 85% in mathematics, 95% in science and 75% in English language, it indicates his/her higher achievement in science as compared to language and mathematics.
 - Aptitude refers to cluster of abilities that are central to perform some specific task or function. For example, to be a successful architect one must possess qualities such as good sense of observation, a sense of aesthetic visual memory, abstract reasoning, ability to sketch etc.
2. A counsellor's knowledge about a student's interests, aptitudes and achievement would help him/her in counselling students to make appropriate educational and career choices. Elaborate on the following points–
 - Interests indicate client's liking. Items are in non-evaluative items, hence non-threatening. Emphasis of interest inventories is on self-exploration.
 - Aptitude data helps to find what the client can do now and how well they can do it in future. Aptitude test data should be used in conjunction with achievement data and interests of the client.
 - Achievement data helps clients in self-understanding, decision-making, encouraging self-study and diagnosing problems faced by them.
3. A counsellor can help Renu to explore other interests and aptitudes and look at achievement in other areas. In view of Renu's average scores on the aptitude test, low achievement scores in mathematics and science, she would be advised to take up other areas such as science, humanities or commerce.
4. General aptitude is based on averaging of all areas of likely success, while special aptitude is a particular area that may be very high or average to benefit from training.



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5. Aptitude tests form a major part of career counselling since aptitude tests indicate whether the student has the required cluster of abilities that are required to be successful in a particular profession. For example, a child showing interest in engineering scores high on an interest blank depicting his interest in engineering, but scores low on aptitude test will not be advised to take up the field.
 6. Standardised achievement tests are more useful than an informal classroom test because they have high reliability, validity and also have norms. They allow for comparison of an individual in a group. Furthermore, the procedure of administration and scoring is also standardised and the quality of test items is better as compared to informal achievement test. Also, standardised achievement tests measure outcomes and content common to most schools rather than only local curriculum as an informal achievement tests would do.
 7. You have to be, first, relatively certain, based on the qualitative and test data that John will do quite well in commerce. Then you may advice John to go for commerce. You may also advice parents that John's going to commerce is in his best interest as they may also want their son to be a motivated and successful student.

Answer Key to Self-check Exercises

Self-check Exercise 1

1. d
2. e
3. a
4. b
5. c

Self-check Exercise 2

1. d
2. c
3. a
4. b

Self-check Exercise - 3

1. False
2. True
3. True

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2

Personality Assessment for Counselling

- 2.0 Introduction
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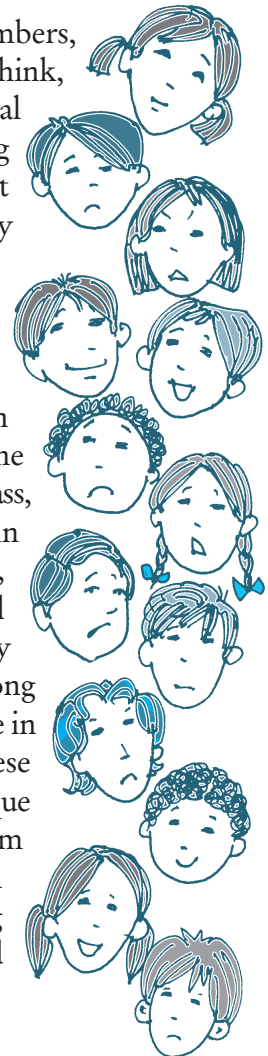



Personality Assessment for Counselling

2

2.0 INTRODUCTION

You make a casual visit to a family and find that the family members, who share the same physical, social and emotional environment, think, act and behave differently from each other. Mother likes social service, talks to people and socialise with them along with holding an office job, works at home and shows no stress; father does not like to go anywhere after returning from work; brother likes to play cricket for long hours and invite friends for outing and sister enjoys being mostly by herself once she returns from school. You may have noticed twin boys in the school or class both, neatly dressed up and smart looking. One shows tremendous self-confidence in, solving problems, in doing the group work and participates in debates, while the other does the class work well but refuses to participate in any group activity. Then there are two girls in the class, both approximately fifteen years old, who have been together in the school from nursery onward and are bright. One is very friendly, pleasant, outgoing and does not mind sharing her personal belonging with others in the class, but the other one is very aggressive, possessive and vocal. We observe such differences among closely related as well as unrelated persons as a matter of routine in life in many ways. The more you become conscious of these variations, the more you tend to believe that people do have a unique pattern of personality make up. This uniqueness makes them different as persons now and they are likely remain different from each other in future. Their ways of thinking, building and keeping relationships, and behaviour need to be accepted and understood as unique in their personal and socio-cultural context.





Counsellors recognise, understand and assess the differences in the personality of their students, as these hold relevant clues for predicting future success and adjustment. You need to understand how differences in personality characteristics affect behaviour, how to assess a personality, and how to make use of personality assessments in counselling situations.

In this unit, you will learn the meaning and relevance of assessing differences of personality, and various approaches to personality assessments. You will also be exposed to some situations in which personality assessments have been used in counselling.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- *elaborate* the meaning and significance of personality and its assessment.
- *describe* the approaches to personality assessment that can be used in school situations and recognise the merits and demerits of different approaches.
- *select* and *use* appropriate personality assessment approaches/measures for a given student/group.
- *develop* understanding of personality profiles and their use in counselling.

2.2 MEANING OF PERSONALITY

Often lay persons use the term personality to indicate the physical make up of an individual. The term “personality” however, signifies much more than simply the physical looks of a person and has a very broad meaning. It includes the emotional, motivational, inter-personal, attitudinal, and even moral aspects of a person. Some researchers have included intelligence also as part of personality.

Personality refers to a unique combination of characteristics of an individual, which pre-disposes the person to behave in a particular and consistent way. Consistency of an individual to behave in a particular way across situations lies at the core of the concept of personality. For example, when you say that “my friend has an *optimistic personality*”, it suggests that the person has a fairly consistent tendency to behave in a cheerful, hopeful and enthusiastic way, looking at the bright side of things across a wide variety of situations. It is also agreed that no one is entirely consistent in his/her behaviour but by and large consistency in a person’s behaviour over time, across situations is the fundamental assumption in understanding personality. Another characteristic which is central to the concept of personality is distinctiveness. Each one has characteristics which are similar to every person but each individual has his/her own distinctive set of personality qualities or traits. Thus each person is unique. The distinctive feature of one’s personality explains why people do not act in the same way in similar situation.

You have already studied about some theories of personality in Unit 2 of Module 3 on *Perspectives on the Nature and Development of Personality*. The major approaches to personality are classified as (i) Psychodynamic (Freud), (ii) Behavioural (Skinner), (iii) Humanistic (Carl Rogers), and (iv) Biological (Eysenck). Why are there so many

perspectives to understanding personality? One reason is that one single theory cannot adequately explain everything that we know about personality. Sometimes, different theories focus on different aspects of a personality. It does not mean that one view has to be right while others are wrong. It is best to think of various theoretical orientations as complementary view points, each with its own advantages and limitations.

2.3 PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Teachers as well as counsellors often make snap judgments of others based on little more than cursory observation. For example, when you think to yourself that “this person is untrustworthy” or when you make a remark to a friend that she is too timid and submissive, you are making a snap judgement.

Such judgments are part of our daily life. However, a trained counsellor should use procedures which provide systematic and standardised assessments. Such assessments are more reliable and valid.

It is also important for you to understand that personality assessment is required for helping and guiding students. Personality assessments are important in personal and social counselling, as well as career and educational counselling, to help shape and prepare students to achieve their full potential.


2.3.1 Assessment for Personal-social, Educational and Career Counselling

The role of personality assessment has been most recognised in personal-social counselling, focusing on helping the student for better adjustment, healthy relationships with others and self. The personal-social counselling is seen as a helping service offered to students to learn how to manage effectively their personal, emotional and social needs, and problems that tend to interfere with their day-to-day lives.

In school situation, some of the personal and social problems for which students commonly seek help are related to the need of coping with the developmental tasks of adolescence itself, like acceptance of body changes, onset of puberty, need for independence, identity, and intimacy with friends etc. You find these present in student behaviour in the form of test anxiety, anger, low self-esteem, stress, relationship and family problems, communications, sexual behaviour, emotional and conduct problems, adjustment at school, managing peer group pressure, depression and so on.

A student may be quite good at studies and disciplined in personal life, but may get extremely nervous in a group situation and thus have low self-esteem and fail to succeed in a test. A student may be above average in class performance, but as the examinations approach s/he may begin to get extremely restless, sitting with books but not able to remember anything, and going blank as soon as s/he sees the question paper. A student tends to initiate fighting on the slightest provocation, and once angry, loses control over emotions. Some students talk very little, not because they do not know how to express themselves, but because they want to be by themselves, even





remain lying in bed for hours, and not participate in any constructive activity. Some refuse to adjust with classmates, some have ill feelings towards some teacher and some may have adjustment problems at home. Some are uncomfortable in dealing with members of the opposite sex. Use of personality assessment may help in providing systematic information which could be used for counselling.

Personality assessment is also important for career counselling. Career counselling focuses on helping students to discover their identity, learn about best career options, and design a blueprint for best possible future students. There are certain careers which are best suited for particular personality types. For example, salesperson can be successful if he/she is an extrovert, an outgoing and bold type of person. Similarly, an introvert can be more successful in an occupation dealing with research and writing etc. However, there may not be direct and clear cut demarcation of personality types and occupations. These can only serve as pointers.

In the context of educational guidance and counselling, you might have observed that there are many students who seemingly are very bright but do not perform well in examinations or otherwise. The reason is that besides mental abilities, certain personality-temperamental factors play an important role in academic success. Sense of commitment, willingness, hard work, proper study habits etc. also contribute to academic success whereas low self-esteem/self-confidence, emotional disturbances etc. have known to hinder academic performance. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that in some cases the low achievers or under achievers perform below their potential due to lack of some such qualities.

The range of issues at the school stage thus can be quite large for which personal-social and career counselling are needed, particularly by students in the age group of 11-18 years. The problems, may also vary across different social groups and cultures, as social norms determine the perceptions of persons and problems, and therefore a counsellor has to be highly gender-sensitive and culturally-sensitive.

Activity 1



Explore and analyse job requirements of ten different occupations and list the essential personality qualities required for success in that occupation. You may consult different sources from literature, talk to employers or employees. Also specify the sources used for obtaining information.

2.4 APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT OF PERSONALITY

There are many approaches to personality assessment. These have evolved from different theories of personality. You as a counsellor can choose, depending on your orientation and experience, either a single or multiple approaches. These can be classified in terms of method of obtaining data from the individual. Although some personality tests are used as group instruments, the majority are used individually in clinical and counselling settings. The approaches to assessment of personality range from very basic descriptive to very technical and sophisticated ones. These may be grouped as self-report measures,

projective techniques and behavioural assessment. There may be different types of classifications. The important point however is to understand what information is provided by each. In this section you will learn about different approaches to personality assessment and get to know a variety of personality assessment tools. It is important to understand the logic and limitations of such tools. Personality tools assess various aspects such as attitudes, values, interests, motives, temperamental qualities, habits etc. Many psychologists prefer to term these tests as personality measures as the questions do not have right and wrong answers, as is the case of mental ability tests.

2.4.1 Self-report Measures

The vast majority of personality tests are self-report inventories. These are personality scales that ask individuals to answer a series of questions/statements about their characteristic behaviour. When you respond to a self-report personality inventory, you endorse statements as true or false as applied to you. You indicate how often you behave in a particular way or you rate yourself with respect to certain qualities. The logic underlying this approach is simple. Who knows you better than you do? A variety of personality characteristics can be measured through self-report inventories. However, some inventories or scales measure one dimension at a time, others simultaneously assess a variety of characteristics. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality inventory is most widely used for determining personality type. It captures the fundamental differences between people, and provides a positive and constructive way of enhancing personal development, and approaching challenges in different ways. The MBTI is applied in business, educational, career guidance and counselling settings to the most used widely questionnaire for determining personality type. The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16 PF) developed by Cattell and his colleagues, used widely in researches, is a representative example of another self-report inventory.


- *Strengths of self-report inventories*

Self-report inventories are much more precise than casual observations. For instance, you want to assess how assertive you are in an objective manner; you need to have a great deal of comparative information about others' usual behaviour. A self-report inventory inquires about your typical behaviour in a variety of circumstances requiring assertiveness and generates an exact comparison with the typical behaviours reported by many other respondents for the same circumstances. However, you must remember that these inventories are only as accurate as the information that the test takers provide.

- *Problems related to self-report inventories*

Deliberate faking can be a problem with the inventories as some people are unconsciously influenced by social desirability factors. Without realising they endorse only those statements that they think will make them look good. It is because of this reason, that personality inventories are regarded as suggestive rather than definitive.





Test taking attitudes and respondents' biases are some other problems associated with self-report inventories. Most of the items on such inventories have one answer which is socially more desirable or acceptable than the others. The respondents may be motivated to fake, i.e. to choose the answer for creating favourable impression. Faking can be to "fake good" or "fake bad." The tendency to "fake good" happens when the respondent chooses the answers to create a favourable impression whereas "fake bad" occurs when the respondents want to appear more disturbed than they actually are. The tendency to choose socially desirable responses on a self-report inventory may not be deliberate deception but may sometimes indicate lack of insight into one's own characteristics or unwillingness to face one's own limitations. Thus, it may be related to the need for self-protection, avoidance of criticism, social conformity and social approval. The individual who fakes bad on unfavourable items may be motivated by the need for seeking attention for help in meeting personal problems and may therefore fake to appear more maladjusted on a self-report inventory than they actually are.

Acquiescence is the tendency to give response consistently either in terms of Yes or No. Acquiescence or response set has been regarded as a source of error.

The problem of "faking" and related "response" sets in self-report inventories may be reduced by construction of neutral items. The way instructions are given and the rapport established during test administration to motivate the test taker to respond frankly, also reduce the tendency to fake. Some personality inventories also have "lie scale" to detect the tendency to give socially desirable responses as well as careless and random responding. For example, to an item "Are you a short-tempered person?" a short-tempered person may say "no," which is not true about her/him. If a person scores high on the lie scale, the responses given by him/her are not taken as genuine. As a result of the above mentioned factors, the behaviour measured by personality tests may not be as reliable as measured by test of abilities.

Nevertheless, the above method can provide you valuable insights into the personality make up when used as a supplement to other methods such as information based on interview, ratings, observation, etc. You may find such simple tools extremely useful in your every day counselling.

If used systematically and with care, such information should provide you the much needed valuable support in predicting academic success as well as adjustment of students in different domains.

2.4.2 Projective Techniques

As the name itself implies, test materials serve as a screen on which respondents project their feelings, thought processes, anxieties and conflicts. Compared to the self-report inventories, projective techniques are aimed at global appraisal of personality. Unlike self-report inventories which focus on assessment of separate traits or qualities, projective techniques focus on a composite picture of the personality as a whole. However, the projective tests have been criticised due to the inadequate evidence of the reliability and validity, compared to self-report inventories.

Projective techniques are generally used in a clinical setting. These techniques are considered to be effective in revealing unconscious aspects of personality. Anastasi (1990) has given a detailed description of various types of projective techniques. The technique most popularly known is the Rorschach Inkblots test and Thematic Apperception Test.

The Rorschach Inkblots Test consists of a series of ink blots; the respondents are asked to describe what they see in the blots. Each card has a symmetrical ink blot printed on it similar to the one illustrated in Fig. 2.1. The respondent is shown the inkblots one at a time and is asked to say what the blot represents. The series are used for diagnostic purposes to assess the personality as a whole.



Fig 2.1 : An Illustration of Rorschach Inkblot


Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) consists of series of pictures of a scene which are presented to the subjects and they are asked to say what is happening in the scenes and what the characters are feeling. For example, one TAT card shows a young boy looking at a violin lying on the table in front of him. A competitive person might make a story about how the boy is thinking about a musical competition at which he hopes to excel. The same card shown to a highly impulsive person might prompt a story about how the boy is planning to sneak out of the door for a ride with friends.



Fig 2.2 : An Illustration showing the Drawing of a Card of TAT

The other types of projective techniques are **Free Association Tests** and **Sentence Completion Tests**. The “Word Association Test” is a series of disconnected words;





the individual is asked to respond to each word by giving the first word that comes to his/her mind. The test helps in exploring areas of conflict. The Word Association Test is also used as lie detector with a view to uncovering the area of emotional conflict. Kent-Rosanoff's Free Association Test (1910) is an example of the standardised word association test. Sentence completion as a projective technique has also been used in research and clinical practices. Incomplete sentences such as 'My ambition is _____', 'Women are _____', 'What worries me most _____', 'My mother is _____' are given so that the sentence stems elicit responses relevant to the personality domain under investigation. A widely used example is the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank (1950) consisting of 40 sentence stems rated on a seven-point scale according to the degree of adjustment and maladjustment.

Drawing technique and *play technique* are other sets of projective techniques. These performance techniques are considered to be the means of self expression of the emotional difficulties. Most often these difficulties are useful for the assessment in case of younger children. A well known example is "Draw-a-Person" test. In this, the student is asked to draw a person on a given blank sheet. When the drawing is complete the student is normally asked to draw the figure of another person of the opposite sex. Finally the student is required to make up a story about a person as if s/he were a character in a novel or play. The figures are interpreted in terms of body parts.

There are two main merits of projective tests. First, the subject does not come to know how the test provides information to the examiner. Hence chances of faking are reduced. Secondly, the indirect approach helps in eliciting unconscious motives and desires which s/he may not otherwise express. Hence, these tests continue to be widely used in clinical settings.

2.4.3 Behavioural Assessment

The manner in which a student/client behaves in different situations can provide you with meaningful information about his/her personality. Observation of behaviour serves as the basis of behavioural analysis. As an observer, a counsellor can obtain data by observation, ratings, interviews and situational tests.

You have also read about these in the Unit on Qualitative Techniques in Assessment and Appraisal.

- Observations and discussions (teacher/counsellor's own perceptions and reports about emotional, social, physical development and participation in various activities): Use of anecdotal records in observation help in documentation of important past events in a student's life (student's developmental history, relationships among family members, any critical/traumatic events to which as a child one may have been exposed to followed by changes in attitudes and behaviours). These could be supplemented with family reports (narrations by family members about the relationships and behaviour) of the student and the personal records (records of milestones, sickness and injuries as well as achievements) of the student.

- Teachers' assessments and observations (reports on class work and achievement, ratings on different aspects of personal and group behaviour such as effort, discipline, team spirit, helpfulness, and sociability etc.): Direct observations can be very useful as these provide benefits of extensive sampling in natural settings.
- Interview (responses to questions asked by the teacher related to personal, family, friends and academic work, inclusive of the language and mannerism): This may be structured, unstructured or a combination of the two types. Interviews provide two kinds of information: 1) an opportunity for direct observation of behaviour manifested during the interview; 2) to elicit life history data. The interviewer needs good skills in gathering and interpreting data.

2.4.4 Other Techniques of Assessment

Situational Tests

- In situational tests, the test taker is put in a situation which closely resembles a real life situation. Use of situational test for personality assessment is generally in terms of assessing the emotional, inter-personal, attitudinal aspects rather than in terms of abilities and knowledge. The classical examples of situational tests are by Hartshorne May and their associates (1928-1930) which can be adapted to assess various characteristics of personality. One of the tests which was developed under Character Education Inquiry for assessing "honesty" is the Circle Puzzle Test. The child was asked to make a mark in each of 10 small irregularly arranged circles while keeping the eyes shut. A score above 13 was considered as an evidence of peeking. Situational stress test developed by United States of Strategic Service (USSS) requires the examinee to perform a task with two helpers who are uncooperative. Another type of situational test is a Leaderless Group as a device for appraising characteristics such as team work, resourcefulness, initiatives, leadership etc. Role play is also used as a situational test. Teachers and counsellors can design situational tests to assess aspects of behaviours they intend to assess with reference to the needs of the situation and the client/ student.


You have read about the different approaches to assessment of personality. Each of these approaches have certain merits and demerits which are dealt in the next section.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Approaches

Each of the different approaches to personality assessment has some advantages and disadvantages. You as a counsellor have to make a judicious choice considering the demands of the situation and the student's needs.

Personality tests have the strength of standardisation on large and varied samples and thus are more objective. These also yield reliable and valid scores. The use of personality, particularly projective type, tests demands that the teacher/counsellor has both the technical qualifications and experience in their usage. The tests require a good deal of expertise in statistical techniques and an understanding of the underlying psychological theory to make sense of the data. Many of the counsellors may not have adequate knowledge of these. Situational tests require that the counsellor is able to





construct/design an appropriate and contextually meaningful situation and present it to the client in a bias-free manner. S/he should carefully observe the client's responding pattern, record it, and then interpret it in terms of personality makeup of the person in focus, such as the required level of maturity, commitment etc. Other approaches are easy to use but suffer from limitations of control, standardisation, reliability and validity.

2.4.5 When to use Personality Assessments

When using a personality tool you will have to consider two factors: (1) when to use it and (2) why you are using it. The issue of why of personality assessment is also related to 'when of personality assessments. Students come from diverse family backgrounds and are at different stages of schooling. Their needs for help may be different from each other thereby making the assessment needs different.

Some considerations for when to use a personality assessment–

1. When the need arises for some students/groups or it can be made a periodic activity in the school calendar. For example, you may find it quite meaningful to make regular personality assessments during passage from elementary to high school years, as at this stage students in general encounter the multi-faceted pressures of adolescence (developmental, relational, school achievement) and need help.
2. Students finishing elementary school encounter adjustment problems at home and school, in addition to maintaining school performance.
3. Personality assessments may help you in getting an insight into their difficulties/comfort in making adjustments with class work (academic), with friends/peers (social, emotional) and family members, and coping with growth related demands (physical/health).
4. You may also consider regular assessments of students of class X who need to make a decision for choice of subjects in line with their personal qualities. They may benefit from personality assessment. This may help students finishing class XII as they are under tremendous pressure to do well in the school final exams and choose an appropriate future career path. The choices they make are, as you know, influenced by their personality traits, and the interactions of these with their intelligence and pressures from parents/peers/teachers, and may not always be congruent to their personal, disposition.

Personality assessments are not preventative; they do help in making better choices. As illustrated above, the assessment in many cases is reactive to identified adjustment problems and are used to aid in readjustment.

Personality assessment can be a regular ongoing part of guidance for personal-social and career development which can help prevent likelihood of problems. This approach is more proactive and developmental. The other usual approach is assessment in case of problem situations.



Self-check Exercise 1

Fill in the blank from the alternatives given below.

- a. lie scale b. academic c. situational d. acquiescence e. projective
1. Personality assessment can be helpful in understanding student's _____, personal-social and career needs.
 2. Self-report inventories have problems of faking and _____.
 3. _____ helps to detect the tendency to give socially desirable response.
 4. _____ techniques reveal unconscious aspects of personality.
 5. _____ test requires the client to be put in situations resembling real life.

2.5 SOME CONSIDERATIONS IN CHOOSING AN APPROPRIATE PERSONALITY MEASURE

By now you know that the task of a counsellor to understand student behaviour is complex. A good understanding of the personal strengths and weaknesses of the students requires that you obtain data from all possible sources. You need to remember that qualitative data can be as revealing and helpful as test data, making it unnecessary for you to rush for a test, until and unless your situation dictates such a need. Your sources of qualitative data can be the school records, teachers' reports and assessments, teacher and family reports and observations. You can also have discussions with persons (teachers, peers, family members), who know the concerned student.



Activity 2

Identify at least two students with behavioural and adjustment problems (in or outside classroom) who need counselling. Identify the areas of personality assessment and the tools on the basis of observation/discussion/interview, etc. (Examples—low self-esteem, negative attitude towards studies and teachers, problem in peer relationship and the like). Give justification to support your plan in about 300 words.

You need to keep in mind that the administration of a personality test and interpretation of test scores is a highly technical job requiring good training in test theory in addition to grounding in personality theories. Look into different sources of tests, technical manuals, norms to be used for different age groups, gender, ethnic and cultural differences of the clients, as all of these have a bearing on interpretation. If a test is available only in English, you must ascertain the English language proficiency of the client. You should read the manual carefully highlighting its main points (time, response type, coding, scoring, conversion of raw scores into standard scores etc.). You know that ecology shapes the culture, which in turn shapes the socialisation patterns leading to variance in the development of personality. Persons from different cultures,



even when they all speak English, attribute different meanings to the words in the way they use them. It is also true that some personality traits are universal, while some are culture specific, and it is next to impossible to have a completely culture-fair or culture-free personality test.

The choice of a specific personality test is difficult but extremely relevant as different tests yield somewhat different, yet overlapping types of information. Some provide limited information (like Eysenck Personality Inventory 991), while some like the Sixteen Personality Factor (16 PF) (Cattell, 1993) provide a lot of information, some of which is very technical to understand. Of course the more the information available, you may be able to offer help in more domains. You should choose a test that is relevant to the client's age, gender and is not culture offensive. The test should be in a language comprehensible to the person and must have norms available. Reliability and validity of the test should be adequately high, and it should be well-standardised. You should also be aware of the limitations of the test, particularly the conditions in which it may mislead the respondents or you.



Self-check Exercise 2

Tick (ü) mark whether the following statement is true or false:

1. Interpretation of personality test scores requires an understanding of the individual's culture. True/False
2. Personality assessments themselves are not preventive. True/False
3. Qualitative data does not provide any information for assessment of personality. True/False
4. Personality profiles include diagnosis as well as remedial steps for changing behaviour of the clients/students. True/False

2.6 UNDERSTANDING AND USING PERSONALITY PROFILES

Preparation of a personality profile is quite a demanding task. It requires you to have some orientation in test theory, knowledge of different types of assessments, practical experience, and an open mind to make sense of available data.

In general, the preparation of a good personality profile requires the integration of different types of information covering numerous personality dimensions (you will learn more about this in practicum). The personality profile of a student should be seen as the complete diagnostic report listing her/his strengths and weaknesses, and suggested possible remedial steps to induce changes in behaviour. It should be comprehensive and purposeful. It should bring out a student's uniqueness and communicate to those using it where s/he can utilise her/his talents optimally and can function most effectively. It should include one's background information, talents/educational achievements, hobbies and interests, special mention of outstanding awards or misconduct in school records, test scores (if any psychological tests were given), performance expectations

(family, personal), strategies planned to achieve these, and a brief observation/comment of the person preparing it.

It is important for you to remember that all data needs confidentiality. You should communicate the report to the student in simple, understandable language, free of any personal and social bias. Be careful of your mannerisms and body language. These are very important in personal counselling. The same ethical guidelines as mentioned previously when dealing with confidential and potentially harmful information should always be followed. Use only positive terms, so that no damage is done to the self-esteem of the student. Remember to suggest helpful positive steps only.

You are likely to do practice in preparing some profiles and reports under a supervisor or in a team during practicum training where you can share your observations. In this process, you would also discover the centrality of your role.

2.7 Summary

- Personality includes the emotional, motivational, inter-personal, Personality includes the emotional, motivational, inter-personal, attitudinal, and even moral aspects of the individual. Some researchers have included intelligence also as part of personality. Personality refers to the unique combination of characteristics of an individual, which pre-disposes the person to behave in a particular way. Personality assessment is important for educational, career, personal and social counselling.
- There are many personality assessment approaches. These have evolved from different theories of personality. Assessments can be classified in terms of the method of obtaining data from an individual. Self-report measures, projective techniques and behavioural assessments are some of the approaches to assessment of personality. Self-report measures are personality scales that ask individuals to answer a series of questions/statements about their characteristic behaviour. Projective techniques are considered to be effective in revealing unconscious aspects of personality. The most popularly known is the Rorschach Inkblot test and Thematic Apperception Test. Observation of behaviour, teacher reports, interviews and situational tests serve as the basis of behavioural analysis.
- The merits and demerits of various assessment approaches emphasise on the choice of an appropriate assessment technique and particularly not making a hasty decision in favour of using a personality test. Even when a test is used the counsellor may interpret and use the test scores along with non-test information, keeping in mind the age, gender, social group, culture, language of the client.





- Precautions should be taken for maintaining the confidentiality of the data. The reporting and communication of results of testing is a delicate task and must be done carefully, so as not to damage the self-esteem of the client in any manner.

1. Write about the need and significance of personality assessments for counselling in a school situation.
2. List three major approaches of assessing personality.
3. List the advantages and disadvantages of self-report and projective techniques of assessing personality.
4. Specify three considerations in the choice of an appropriate personality test.
5. Discuss the cautions in using and communicating personality assessment data.

Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises

1. The contents of your answer should cover the following points–
 - Personality assessment and its importance for educational, career, and personal-social counselling.
 - Getting insight into student's difficulties/adjustments/coping-style, etc.
 - Proactive and developmental approach to prevent problems.
2. The major approaches to assess personality are–
 - Self-report measures
 - Projective techniques
 - Behavioural assessment
3. Explain the following–
 - Self-report measures are more precise than casual observations. Deliberate faking (good and bad faking) and acquiescence are major problems related to self-report measures.
 - Projective techniques focus on a holistic picture of the personality. However, they suffer from limitation of control, standardisation, reliability and validity.
4. Explain the following considerations–
 - Relevance of test to client's age, gender and cultural appropriateness
 - Language comprehension of the client
 - Reliability and validity of the test to be adequate
5. Some cautions are–
 - To keep the data confidential
 - Build-up proper rapport before communicating
 - Communicate without any bias (personal or social), using positive terms
 - Be careful of your own body language and mannerisms
 - Be sensitive to the feelings and emotions of the concerned student so as to maintain his/her dignity and self-esteem

Answer Key to Self-check Exercises

Self-check Exercise 1

1. b
2. d
3. a
4. e
5. c

Self-check Exercise 2

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. T

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3

Nature and Assessment of Creativity

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Nature and Assessment of Creativity

3

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Let us think about the persons who, for the first time, thought of planting a seed or devising a wheel. They were the persons who, not satisfied with the usual ways of carrying out day-to-day activities, thought of something new. They were indeed creative persons. Like them, many persons have made major breakthroughs leading to progress in different areas of human life be it in the area of science, technology, painting, poetry or all forms of art that we enjoy today.

Development of creativity in children has long been an essential goal of education. What is new, however, is the realisation that creativity is not expressed by a chosen few but rather is inherent in all children and its expressions are varied. Creative potential should be identified and encouraged at the school stage and at opportune times so that it does not remain dormant.

In this unit, you will learn about the nature of creativity and the importance creativity plays in our world. People attach different meanings to the term creativity. There are misconceptions associated with creativity. Any effort towards identification of creativity therefore first requires understanding the concept of creativity in the educational context. Creative potentials are manifested in classroom and school situation in a variety of ways. You will learn about the basic assumptions and techniques which are often used to identify and assess the potential for creativity in school students and further, how assessment data could provide useful insights for nurturing creativity. The purpose of assessment therefore must be understood in the context of the overall role of nurturing in guiding creative potential among all children.



3.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- *understand* the nature, meaning, and importance of creativity.
- *appreciate* the assumptions underlying the assessment of creativity.
- *recognise* the varied expressions of creativity in a classroom situation.
- *understand* testing and non-testing ways to assess the potential for creativity.
- *develop* insight into the uses of assessment data for nurturing creativity.

3.2 NATURE OF CREATIVITY

Researchers over the past 40 years or more have debated at length about the nature of creativity and its source - whether it is in the process, product, person or environment. Some investigators have described creativity as a mental process, others, as a cluster of personality characteristics that result in creative behaviour or a unique, novel product. Still others have attributed creativity to a particular environment, important to the creative expression.

Despite these differences in understanding creativity, the one common element among them is the development of something new and unique. Something new or unique is usually a *product*, resulting from a *process* of thinking initiated by a *person*. There is no hard and fast line dividing product from process or person. It is only for the sake of study that they are discussed separately. Let us first try to understand creativity from the perspectives of product, process and person.

3.2.1 The Product

We often think of creativity in terms of the actual product, it may be a painting, a poem, a theory, a story, a piece of craft etc. Product is called creative if it is new and useful. Every year new models of useful appliances, cars and scooters are produced with slight modifications but, can we call these creative? Usefulness has to be considered before it could be judged as creative. For example, a person who, for the first time, produced 'Two in one' combining a tape-recorder with a transistor performed a creative act. Fax machine is another example, which is a combination of a photocopier and a telephone, where photo signals are conveyed through telephone lines. Thus, novelty

and usefulness or radical change of materials or ideas that are beyond ordinary thinking are important criteria in judging the end product.

At a young age, a child is generally not expected to produce anything tangible. We can therefore, also consider the creative product in terms of the ideas or solutions produced. In this sense, anything a child does or says can be considered creative if it meets two



criteria. First, it must be substantially different from other children of the same age group or from anything the child has done before and anything the child has seen or heard before. However, it cannot be merely different. It should be useful toward achieving a goal, which is meaningful in some way or appealing. The word “creative” has a positive connotation. Illegal, immoral behaviours can be unusual but most psychologists, who study creativity, think of appropriateness and social worth as significant criteria. The criteria of appropriateness are used in order to rule out behaviours and acts that are merely bizarre and odd. In school situations, if we are referring to novel ideas or solutions in maths, science, grammar, then we can talk about appropriateness. But what about art, music, story telling and fantasy play? In certain areas, like music, or fantasy play, it is not possible to speak of appropriateness in the same manner. If a child displays a novel behaviour and the act is somehow aesthetically pleasing or communicative and meaningful, then we can say that it is appropriate.

Experience and context have also to be considered in judging the creative act. If “A” gives a response which is really the first one out of many others of her age, then it could be considered creative. But if she has already seen this kind of product before, her response or idea should be considered the result of imitation, no matter how novel it may appear.

Another criterion of judging whether the product is unusual is the response of instant surprise on looking at it. No judgement occurs in this reaction, it is simply a matter of being startled, of having one’s breath taken away by the originality of the product. This instant surprise is often expressed in term of Aha! Hence, there is no one way of judging whether the product or idea is creative.

3.2.2 The Process

Another approach to understanding creativity emphasises what actually happens in producing something creative or what thinking processes are involved in producing a creative idea.

The starting point in the creative process is the need to create something new, whether it is an idea, theory or a product. Not everyone experiences the need to create.

Sensing gaps sets into motion the process of creativity, wherein the individual strives to fill the gap and supplies the missing elements. Ability to notice, and sensitivity to anomalies and deficiencies is important for creative production. Once the person initiates a new movement or activity, tries to understand the different aspects of the problem or situation, he becomes curious of the hidden aspects and opens it up. The process involves excitement and tension that comes with identifying a problem or mystery, or wanting to know more. The person tries to look at it from different angles and viewpoints, comes out with alternative views, solutions or explanations. Looking for alternatives requires some efforts. Flexibility in thinking, interest in novelty and exploration aid such an effort.

Divergent thinking is of critical importance in creative thinking process because it helps the thinking go off in different directions. Guilford (1950), through his Structure of Intellect Model, gave the concept of divergent thinking. According to him, there are





two types of thinking– divergent and convergent. Convergent thinking refers to thinking that is carried out to solve problems that have only one correct solution. The mind converges to the correct solution. Most test items in an intelligence test are of the convergent thinking type. For example,

Night has the same relation to Day as Evening has to _____.

The answer to the above question is *morning*.

In divergent thinking, there can be a number of answers. Thinking goes off in different directions. A few questions that

will require divergent thinking are given below–

1. What are the various uses of cloth?
2. What will happen if examinations are abolished in schools?

Since divergent thinking is open-ended thinking, it helps the person to use a number of alternative ways to produce ideas or solutions that may be uncommon, unusual and novel. The process helps a person to see new combinations and relationships between ideas, objects and events. A new insight may arise when a particular idea is extended in a new direction. To give an example, take the discovery of Penicillin. Fleming was trying to prepare a culture of some bacteria. One day he found that all bacteria had been killed. He also noticed a mould in the dish. Anyone else in his position might have started the experiment afresh, treating the mould as something to be avoided in future. But Fleming saw the mould as something which could be used for killing the germs of a disease. In terms of remote association, he thought of using the killing property of the mould for killing the germs of a disease.

It does not mean that only divergent thinking is important, convergent thinking also plays a role. It is necessary to be well supplied with facts and knowledge, which require convergent thinking. In this sense, creativity involves finding of the new from the already known, as much as breakthrough into previously unknown.

Some Divergent Thinking Abilities–

Some important abilities play a role in the creative thinking process.

Fluency is the ability to come up with a number of ideas. The more ideas a person produces, the higher the fluency ability. However, the ideas should be appropriate.

Flexibility is the ability to produce ideas that show a person's movement from one level of thinking to another or shift in thinking relative to a given task. Flexibility in thinking helps to look at things from different perspectives. For instance, two of the

uses of a brick: use it as a paperweight, to hold down a pile of clothes. In both cases, the brick acts as a weight and there is no shift in thinking. Using bricks as a pillow indicates shift in thinking.

Originality is the ability to produce ideas that are unusual and remote. It is the most important ability for creative thinking. For example, for unusual uses of brick, if one child responds “Warm it on a fire to iron the shirt”. This response can be considered original compared to other responses given above.

Elaboration is the ability to add details to the basic idea produced. Suppose a person is given a number of squares to think of ideas that no one else would think of. One person draws a door and adds such details like hinges, decoration, a name plate, a peephole. He is elaborating on the basic idea of the door.

Sensitivity to Problems is the ability to spot the uncommon, to be sensitive to feelings, textures, sights, smells, sounds – in short, the ability to notice problems, anomalies etc. is important in creativity. Problem sensitivity is considered to be very important in the creative process. Asking questions about ambiguous situations, about things around e.g. clouds, the moon, a piece of chalk and so on reflects problem sensitivity.

Guessing ability It is not enough to sense problems but it is also equally important to make good guesses about their causes and consequences.

Visualisation and imagination in creative thinking involves the ability to fantasise and imagine, and mentally manipulate images and ideas.

Analysis and synthesis also involves the ability to analyse details, analyse a whole into its parts, the ability to see relationships, to combine parts into workable whole.

Transformation is the ability to adopt something to a new use, to see new meanings, implications and applications, and to change one object or idea into another.

Extending boundaries in creative thinking involves the process of going beyond what is unusual and expected, for example, using objects in new ways.

From the above, it is obvious that certain divergent thinking abilities, skills and processes are essential to creative thinking. Most of the creativity tests assess divergent thinking abilities. You will learn about these in the next section.

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Self-check Exercise 1

Fill in the blanks from the following alternatives–

- (a) fluent (b) elaborator
(c) original (d) flexible
1. A person who gives three alternative-endings to a story one sad, one humorous, and one moralistic–is more _____.
 2. A student who gives a number of ways to improve an object, say a toy, will be called _____.
 3. A student who goes on adding details in drawing an object or telling a story is _____.
 4. In listing the various uses of cloth, a student who produces an amazing and unique idea is _____.

3.2.3 The Person

Who are creative people? What are the characteristics of creative people? Research has shown that highly creative people are usually differentiated from less creative people in terms of certain abilities and qualities. People who are creative in different domains may share common qualities.

There is no single personality or motivational characteristic to label a particular person as creative. Rather, creative persons have been shown to have a number of characteristics, some of which may be present in one creative individual but not in another. The most commonly mentioned characteristics include independence in thinking and judgement, self-confidence, curiosity, inquisitiveness, being open to new experiences, spontaneity, commitment to one's work, persistence and unwillingness to give up, high intrinsic motivation, risk-taking tendency, adventurousness, reflective thinking, high in energy, attraction to complex and mysterious things and ideas etc. Creative persons feel the need for a certain freedom that rejects limits imposed by others, and do not like to follow the rules set blindly, get irritated by the routine. They usually have a wide range of interests, are playful and humorous and show unconventionality in their behaviour.

Creative people are also characterised by the way in which they approach problems (i.e. style), like being alert to novelty and gaps in knowledge, using their existing knowledge as a base for new ideas, questioning norms and assumptions (asking, why?), building new ideas rather than accepting existing ideas as such etc.

The abilities and personality traits discussed above can help teachers identify children who have a high potential for creativity in the usual classroom situations.



The important point to be kept in mind is that creativity extends beyond some cognitive abilities. Personality, temperament, motivational factors and the individual's style of doing are also vital aspects. Besides a few divergent thinking abilities like fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, imagination, ability to see new relationships etc., there are personality qualities like curiosity, skepticism, independence in thinking and judgement, resourcefulness, courage, boldness, self-confidence, perseverance, tolerance of complexity and ambiguity which are found associated with creativity. Each individual has a unique combination of these abilities and qualities. People are creative by virtue of the combination of cognitive personality and motivational attributes whose outcome depends on the environment.

A person may be highly creative but low in motivation. Unless such a person is guided by someone, he/she may not make use of his/her unique capabilities. Another person may be high in motivation but low in creativity. Such a person may have very good understanding but can hardly make a unique contribution. It is important to recognise a person who has the creative potential but is normally ignored. Creativity of a student may fully emerge later but the signs can be seen at the school stage. The returns can be greater if creativity is recognised and nurtured right from the early stages of schooling.


3.3 MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CREATIVITY

There was a time when creativity was treated as a mysterious gift that a few fortunate individuals possessed. In recent years, our understanding of creativity has broadened.

Myth 1: Creativity is for a few selected individuals.

Researches indicate that creativity is not just limited to a select few – the artist, the researcher, the scientist, the poet or the inventor. An ordinary individual who is engaged in simple occupations like pottery making, carpentry etc. can also be creative. Still it has to be accepted that the potter, the goldsmith the cook is not working at the same level of creativity as an eminent scientist or philosopher. Einstein's Theory of Relativity is an example of the highest level of creativity. Working on what has already been established, by modifications, by putting in new perspective or to new use, combining ideas to create new things is yet another level of creativity. Hence the assumption is that creativity is present in all but in varying degrees. Children will not be working at the higher level but at the expressive and experiential level. They all can be creative, but will not be at the same level of creativity. Similarly, there are different types of creativity. It is not appropriate here to go into different classifications given in the literature but mention is made to make the concept clear. Maslow's distinction of two types of creativity can solve make the dilemma of types. According to him, the self-actualised creative people are the ones who tend to approach all aspects of their lives in a flexible and creative manner. For them, creativity is a lifestyle, a way of perceiving, living and growing in the world, exploring new ideas, developing sensitivity to problems. They need not have great artistic, literary or scientific talent to be creative. One may or may not be extra-ordinarily or creative in a specialised area. On the other





hand, creative people with special talents have an obviously outstanding talent in art, literature, music, science, business or any other area.

Myth 2: Creativity is only demonstrated by the gifted individual.

Often people mistakenly use the word “creative” for gifted, unusually talented or highly intelligent. A child who masters a musical instrument at a young age is indeed gifted and so is a child who scores unusually high in an IQ test. But creativity is not the same as talent or intelligence. Researches have shown that among those identified as gifted and followed up throughout their adult lives, not even one had become well known for creativity in some field. Moreover, creativity researchers have discovered that both high and low levels of creativity can be found in highly intelligent children and in children of average intelligence. This means that a student who has, for example, memorised the multiplication table and has practised them well enough to be able to recite them almost automatically has the ability to memorise but unless he devises some new mathematical puzzle or system, he is not showing a high level of creativity.

Myth 3: Creativity is purely inborn.

Most often people tend to think that creativity is purely inborn. It occurs only in special individuals like Einstein, Picasso, Edison. There is no disagreement that creativity which is the outcome of abilities, motivation and personal qualities is the product of both genetics and environment. As in case of other mental and physical characteristics, limits of the creative potential is set by heredity. Environmental factors stimulate the development of creativity. Realistically, therefore, no amount of training can transform an average person into Tagore, Shakespeare etc. However, it is also true that every individual can raise his/her level of creative potential beyond the current level.

Myth 4: Eccentricity and abnormality are parts of being creative.

Eccentricity or abnormality is often mistaken as a sign of creativity. People who behave strangely and who refuse to conform to society may be called creative. But does it imply creativity? The answer seems complicated because we can all easily point to examples of famous creative people who were mentally imbalanced or even insane. Vincent Van Gogh, cut off his own ear and later, committed suicide. The evidence by no means suggests that strange eccentric or unbalanced behaviour is necessary or helpful to creativity. Many psychologists believe just the opposite—that people can best display their creativity when they are free of anxieties and mental disorder. Extremely creative people tend to be uncomfoting but they also tend to be strong mentally and emotionally. Being different for its own sake, as a goal in itself, is not sufficient for creativity.

3.4 ASSESSMENT OF CREATIVITY

In the previous section, you learned about the nature of creativity. In this section, you will learn how teachers and counsellors can recognise and assess creativity in children.

If someone asks you to give an assessment of how bright a child is, as a teacher, you might think of mentioning the achievement test score. If someone however, asked you to give an assessment of how creative a child is, you might look for some work of

art, craft, writing or poetry and so on. In the previous section, you have already learned that when you hear the phrase ‘creative person’ or a ‘creative child’ you tend to look for some unconventional or unique accomplishment. In this sense, you are looking for an extraordinary product. Here you are concerned with finding out the potential for creativity among children and range of differences in imaginations, original ideas, independent thinking, with a view to nurturing the child’s potential to the optimum.

In educational settings, the purpose of assessing creativity is to identify students with varying potentials for creativity. Once discovered, you will want to nurture and guide that potential. You must keep in mind that recognition of creative potential is not to discover the high creatives but to facilitate the development of creativity among all. Special efforts at identification may not be needed for those who demonstrate outstanding creativity. More important is the identification of hidden and blocked creative potential. Potentially creative children may fail to express their creativity with the result that their creativity may lie dormant forever and it may lead to frustration and problems of adjustment.

As a counsellor, it is important to identify as well as nurture creativity among children. Goal of identification and assessment therefore has to be seen in the context of nurturing and guiding creativity so as to enable students actualise their potential.

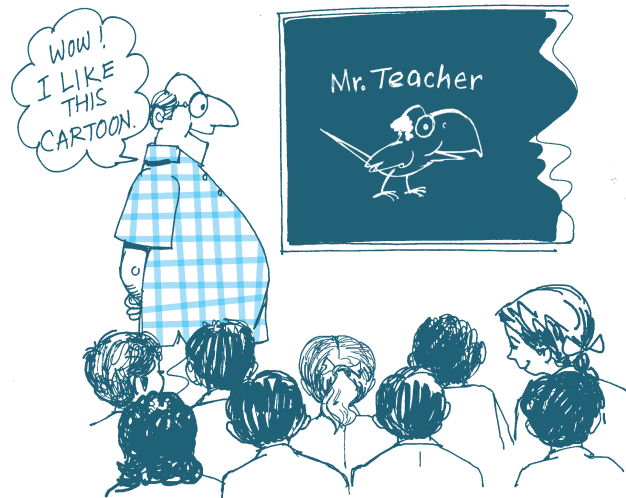
There are two aspects to assessment of creativity. One is the general creative thinking abilities, skills and qualities, which are important in any kind of creative endeavour. These have been covered under divergent thinking abilities and the following section on ‘The Person’. Another is assessment of different forms of creativity which are to be seen in children, for instance in art, writing, science and so on. At younger stages, the type of creativity that is artistic or literary is not so important but the expression of original and imaginative ideas expressed through any media is important.

At the primary level, dance, drama, movement, drawing, painting, clay modelling are all media for creative expression. However, as children grow from primary to upper primary grades, they begin to show their specific talents. Multiple outlets of creative expression should be given at this time in the areas of art, music, movement, writing etc. which can help them to express their creative talents in whatever area they are good at. Assessment therefore has to be multidimensional.

There is no single creativity assessment tool which can be termed best, as creativity manifests in different ways at different stages of development. However, teacher counsellors should be clear as to what dimensions of creativity are to be assessed. During the early stages, it is difficult for children to produce something tangible. Assessment therefore, might centre on what the child does to produce creative ideas or the thinking processes expressed by them. It may be emphasised again that simply being different, non conformist, disregarding rules and regulations, doing things differently are not the real expressions of creativity. Originality, uniqueness and imagination are the genuine expressions of creativity.



Another point that needs to be kept in mind for the assessment of creativity is that unless children are properly motivated to think creatively, it may not be possible for them to express creatively. Opportunity is the keyword for assessment of creativity. There has to be opportunity for creative expression. Classroom situations provide abundant opportunities for teachers to identify potential for creative thinking. It is therefore important to provide opportunities for identification of creative abilities.



Unless children are given freedom to think creatively or express creatively, efforts may not bring results. As Torrance (1966) says, “No one would think of trying to discover jumping ability by Torrance observing how people just happen to jump. Neither would anyone try to identify jumping ability without giving the jumpers a chance to warm up. The same principles apply to the identification of creative thinking abilities as well as intellectual ability”.

3.4.1 Facilitative Environment as a Pre-requisite for Assessment

Research from the past 50 years depict a clear picture of the characteristics of a conducive environment for enhancing creativity in the classroom. No single environment best suits all creative people. For example, some people may thrive in competitive situations whereas others may function more creatively in collaborative and cooperative environments. Creativity sometimes emerges under hostile conditions. At times creativity may not emerge even in a highly supportive environment. However, research points out that a good environment is generally helpful and increases the likelihood of creative expression.

Various cross-cultural studies suggest that creative expression depends on what is rewarded and encouraged. Different cultures perceive and evaluate various kinds of behaviour and personal qualities differently. Some culture, for example, US, Germany, India, Greece, and Phillipines have been found to unduly punish behaviour often associated with creativity such as skepticism, sensitivity, intuition, courage and conviction, and unduly reward obedience, submissiveness, acceptance of the judgement of others without questioning, which are associated with conforming and not creative expression.

Surveys have also shown that teachers, in general, do not value creative students. Even those teachers who think that they value creativity as something that should be fostered in the classroom, often frown upon traits associated with creativity. Many teachers tolerate poorly or dislike characteristics associated with creativity such as

boldness, desire for novelty and originality. Teachers prefer traits like courteousness, punctuality, obedience and receptiveness to the teacher's own ideas. Skill in memorisation and accuracy in recall are preferred to critical thinking and independent decision-making. It is true that all these traits cannot be ignored or rejected in the name of creativity. These are essential for school. However, over emphasis leads to a decline in creativity. Students fall into the habit of conforming to set ways of doing things. They tend to accept this as a value judgement and reject creativity themselves. So the vital question is societal valuing of creativity which will provide "creativogenic" environment. A teacher's attitude, behaviour, way of interacting with children in the classroom situation etc. contribute to the expression of creativity. Teachers and counsellors must know some basic principles to provide a responsive climate for the emergence of creativity.

There are two ways to build a conducive environment for creativity in classrooms: one is by removing or minimising barriers to creativity and the other is, fostering the growth of attitudes for creativity.

Barriers are the blocks internal or external that hinder creative thinking and prevent creative ideas from being accepted and implemented. Most of the barriers result from learning.

The most obvious barrier to creative thinking is well-learned or rote ways of thinking and responding. It becomes difficult to think and create new possibilities when a person thinks that he/she has to follow the way that things have always been done. Another barrier is the over emphasis on rules and traditions, which inhibits creativity. Being accustomed to perceiving things in familiar ways makes it difficult to see new meanings, relationships, and ideas. Perceptual sets are tied to the tendency to make quick decisions and jump to conclusions rather than to see different alternatives. Perceptions of new meaning, continuation and relationships depend upon overcoming perceptual barriers. Cultural barriers like conformity, pressures, uniformity and standardisation pose barriers in the development of creative expression. Emotional barriers also interfere with creative thinking which may include insecurity, anxiety such as fear of failure, fear of being different, fear of criticism, rejection or fear of taking risk. Also, differences in needs and values may produce conflicts and blocks in the acceptance of creative ideas.

The basic principle to nurture creativity is to provide a psychologically safe environment where students feel free to discuss ideas and feelings openly with teachers and are not threatened by ridicule, sarcasm, or too much pressure of authority.

Offering constructive criticism, giving positive feedback, accepting mistakes, and avoiding impulsive judgements or evaluative remarks are some of the ways to create a conducive environment. Teachers can create "creativogenic" environment in the classroom and provide opportunities for expression of their creative potential. Remarks such as "you are absolutely wrong, you are running off topic, we are running out of time, you always say foolish things", etc. are bound to suppress natural curiosity, motivation, self-esteem, and stifle creativity. Teachers and counsellors interested in assessing the potential for creativity must create favourable conditions for its emergence.





Self-check Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks from the following alternatives–

- (a) nurturing creativity (b) highly creative programance
(c) convergent thinker (d) multi-dimensional

1. A student who always thinks of correct solution is _____.
2. There are individual differences in the level and expression of creativity. Therefore, assessment of creativity must be _____.
3. Identification of hidden creative potential is as important as recognition of _____.
4. The goal of identification and assessment of creativity is _____.

3.5 SOME INDICATORS OF CREATIVE POTENTIAL – A CREATIVE CHILD CHECK-LIST

Look at the box indicating some of the ways children express creativity in the classroom. Bear in mind that the mere presence of these behaviours does not guarantee that the child is necessarily creative. There may be reasons other than creative abilities and qualities responsible for some of the behaviours given below.

- Produces more ideas on a subject than other students of the class of his/her age
- Notices things that the other students of his/her class do not.
- Views the ideas of classmates as incomplete or imperfect.
- Shows eagerness to amend or improve upon the answers or ideas of others.
- Asks questions which are generally unusual and differ from those of the rest of the students.
- Presents unusual ideas when asked to improve upon something.
- Presents strong and novel arguments in debates, discussions, classroom questions, etc.
- Shows eagerness in filling the gap in the answers of classmates.
- Has a tendency to give new meanings to the conventional ideas and practices regarding own subjects of study.
- Has a tendency to be fully absorbed in his/her work.
- Loves to take things to work on and does not rest till the work in hand gets completed.
- When faced with a problem, tries a variety of approaches to solve it.
- Likes thought-provoking questions (those involving why and how) rather than fact-seeking or memory type (what, where, when).
- Takes interest in analysing and going beyond, rather than narrating things as they are.
- Is in the habit of attaching more than one meaning to ideas or situations.
- Shows interest in solving difficult tasks and problems.
- Works hard and long on the work assigned of his/her own interest.

- Shows independence of thinking and judgement, and likes to work independently
- Accepts challenges
- Is bold enough to express disagreement with the views of peers
- Shows persistence in a work despite difficulties
- Has the reputation for having silly, wild or naughty ideas
- Tries out new combinations of colours, sounds, building new structures and designs
- Improvises the use of objects e.g. brushes for painting
- Uses different ways of expressing through movements and dance
- Acts out plays and extempore songs, dialogues, role play
- Solves problems in unusual ways and finds solutions for inter personal conflicts
- Invents new games, roles and role plays with other members to describe things

These are only some of the possible ways of creative expression which can serve as reference points for assessment. The following section will familiarise you with the use of some techniques for assessment of creative potential.

3.6 ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

There are a number of systematic procedures and techniques to identify and assess the potential for creativity among students. These have been broadly classified in two ways: non-testing and testing techniques. You have already learnt about psychological testing and non-testing ways of assessment in Units 2 and 3 of Module VI. In this section, you will learn about the nature as well as pros and cons of using these techniques for assessment of creativity. First, you will learn about the non-testing techniques of creativity assessment.


3.6.1 Non-testing Techniques of Assessments

In this section on non-testing techniques you will look at six non-test ways to assess creativity. They are– observation, use of ratings and nominations, checklists, anecdotal and biographical records, general school activities, and specific strategies. You have already read about some of them in the Unit on *Qualitative Assessment in Guidance and Counselling*.

(i) Observation

Observation can be considered an important means to identify children with high or low potential for creativity in different settings, may it be classroom or playfield. However, just a few casual observations of a child may not be sufficient to arrive at generalisations and hence may not give the real picture about the child. The observations may be made in natural situations, in the classroom or outside. Sometime it may also be necessary that situations are deliberately created in the classroom where children are given the opportunities and are motivated to exhibit the abilities or qualities associated with creativity. The opportunities for example, may be in the form of encouraging students to complete the incomplete information, to dig the ideas deeper and explore something new, asking them to rearrange, reorganise the ideas or things in a new perspective, asking them for suggestions for improvement in objects etc.





An estimate about the child's creative potential can also be obtained by observing the products – be it an idea, a piece of art or craft, a poem, a story, a cartoon, creative play with a toy, or solution to a problem. Besides this, child's participation in day-to-day and regular school activities, the level of enthusiasm, initiative, originality and imagination can also reveal the creative potential. An important point to remember is that uniqueness is the hallmark of creativity.

(ii) Ratings and Nominations

Rating scales have also been very popular for assessing creativity. Nominations and ratings by peers, teachers, parents and self have been used. The raters are asked to rate children or pupils on the specified qualities, abilities or characteristics of creativity on a scale ranging from minimum to maximum. It may be a three point or five point scale. An example of teacher's nomination could be writing down the names of students who always seem to have a lot of ideas that no one else thinks of. An example of parent's rating can be asking them to rate their wards on characteristics associated with creativity. Similarly, ratings are obtained on a scale about the uniqueness of products and the performance of students.

Assessment of creativity in terms of products of individuals, for example, a piece of writing, a musical composition, a poem, pieces of art and craft, is limited to some type of consensus by judges who are experts in the specific field of creativity. Most often Rating Scales are developed for judging the products or portfolios of accomplishments in a variety of fields. The underlying assumption is that experts in the field of the particular product or performance will do the rating and that consensus approach with multiple judges will be used. Some standardised rating scales have been developed in the area of visual arts, drawing, etc.

(iii) Check-lists

Another very popular non-test way of identifying creative potential is the use of various kinds of checklists. One such tool has been given by Torrance in his famous book *Guiding Creative Talent*. It is a list of 100 activities which children 'do on their own' in different fields. Activities pertain to language, arts, science, social studies and other fields. Some of the items in this check-list are: wrote a poem, produced a puppet show, acted in a play, wrote and composed a song, made up a new game, constructed a model of a new apparatus, solved a problem about getting along with parents and others. Such activities can point out the hidden potential among children.

(iv) Anecdotal and Biographical Records

An important source of identifying creativity is the use of anecdotal and biographical records. Keeping record of the episodes, instances, incident and happenings that may throw light on a student's imagination, curiosity, sense of humour, independent thinking, judgement, and original style of doing things can be an important source. You can see examples of creativity from the past life of a particular child in terms of long sustained, concentrated work, faith in one's ability to succeed in difficult tasks etc. The basic idea is that children who have already shown certain characteristics related to creativity are likely to continue to do so.

(v) General School Activities

Creative art, drama and writing are media of self and creative expression. Such activities in schools are usually highly structured with little or no scope for the child to express his/her imagination. Often any activity which creates fun is interesting and different from the routine, is called creative. However, activities can be called creative only when they are open-ended and stimulate a child's imagination and original thinking. Most art activities like drawing, and painting require the child to imitate a good drawing or painting. To give full freedom to the child's imagination, to begin with, there should be less emphasis on the technical aspects and more on encouraging the child to be free in his/her individual expression of own ideas and images and not the imitated and borrowed ones. Creative writing also provides opportunities to bring out the creative expression of children. Creative writing is concerned with full expressions of one's ideas, impressions, feelings, fears, hopes, getting students to write imaginatively – prose poetry, drama, fiction, essay, biography and the like can bring forth creative potential in writing. Creative movement, dance, drama and the like provide full freedom to the child to think, to do and to innovate. Students are merely given the framework of a story and left to enact it with whatever dialogue they care to improvise and enact.

(vi) Specific Strategies

These strategies can be applied while teaching specific subject areas to stimulate and identify creative expression. Teachers can find appropriate places in their teaching subjects to stimulate creative expression. Some of these involve finding similarities between things or situations, or organising ideas in new ways. Below are a few specific strategies that could be incorporated into your subject specific teaching–

- Spotting contradictions or gaps in knowledge (framing paradoxes where two elements opposed to each other are brought together, for example, healthy poison).
- Questioning can also be used as a tool to identify and assess creative potential in day-to-day interactions and in teaching students. For example, students can be asked to frame as many different types of questions as they can on a given topic. You should look for those students who are asking difficult, puzzling and unusual questions. Another example is where students are asked provocative questions to examine information in different or new ways. Asking questions – framing as many different types of questions on a given topic or ideas (for example, preparing a list of questions whose answers are not given in the textbook but they would like to know).
- Making modifications or alterations (ideas for redesigning old gadgets or materials like duster, umbrella, pen, etc.)
- Giving new meaning to objects or ideas (describing certain words from different angles or how old familiar objects like chair, chalk, duster or pen can be improved so that they are better, different and more useful. For example, using chair other than for sitting, and pen other than for writing.
- Completing the incomplete in different ways (i.e., completing incomplete stories or poems, etc.).



- Asking students to observe things minutely or being sensitive to details (i.e., students relating diverse, objects in their environment with the basic geometrical shapes, or hearing different sounds in the environment).
 - Highlighting the essence (finding suitable titles, summarising articles or identifying the basic theme of a story or drama).
 - Visualisation (illustrating thoughts and feelings in visual forms, for example, let the students imagine that they are small bugs sitting on a kite and ask them to describe how things appear to them).
 - Improvising without having much resources (e.g., measurement with no tool or system).
- It is important to remember that you may have to use more than one method to identify creative potential. No single method is full proof and sufficient in itself. Teacher counsellors may have to use their imagination and ingenuity to think of many more such ways to identify and assess potential for creativity among children. This will not only provide opportunity for identification but also for nurturance of creativity.



Activity 1

Identify creative students in your class or neighbourhood with different ways you have learnt. Describe how they were identified? Make a list of the set of characteristics/qualities/abilities observed in such students.

3.6.2 Standardised Tests for Assessment of Creativity

A number of standardised tests have been developed to assess the potential for creative thinking. These tests, like other psychological tests, are based on the concept of individual differences. The tests are used to identify more and less creative individuals with a view to nurturing their potential to the optimum.

A general feature of most creativity tests is that they are open-ended. They permit a person to think of different answers to the questions or problems. There are no specified answers and hence there is the freedom to use one's imagination and express in original ways. Creativity tests involve divergent thinking, that is the ability to seek new relationships, guess causes and consequences, or the ability to put things in a new context. This is contrary to the tests of intelligence, which involve convergent thinking. In tests of intelligence, the person has to think of the right solution to the problem. There is no scope for the expression of spontaneity, originality and imagination. Intelligence tests assess such abilities as memory, logical reasoning, accuracy and clear thinking. Creativity tests measure the general creative thinking abilities and skills like fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration, which are considered important for any kind of creative endeavour regardless of area or discipline. These abilities are based on the creative thinking process rather than product.

Since children can express creativity through different ways, tests have been developed involving different types of content such as words, figures (non-verbal), actions and sounds, etc. Some highly creative children may lag in their verbal development and hence non-verbal tests are used as a supplement to verbal measures.

All the tests can be administered in groups or individually. Some tests are more useful for middle and high school students; others can be used from primary to graduate level. Each test has a standardised procedure, a complete set of manuals, and scoring and interpretation guides. Some of the tests are commercially available.

An attempt has been made here to give examples of the variety of test activities and the abilities they purport to measure. The objective is to make you aware of the creative thinking processes and abilities tapped by such tests so that you can design similar activities in your day-to-day classroom context. Torrance tests of creative thinking are the most widely used to assess the general potential for creativity.

Description of Exemplar Test Activities

Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking : Torrance developed his tests after 15 years of research and development. The test tasks, according to Torrance, are based on the creative thinking process involved in recognised creative achievements. These are based on the author's analysis of thinking and behaviour manifested by scientists, artists, writers and other eminent creative people.

The verbal test consists of seven tasks requiring about 45 minutes to administer. The figural test consists of three tasks and requires 30 minutes to administer. Both tests can be used from kindergarten through graduate level. Figural measures have been used with children from pre-school to Class XII as well as with adults. The verbal test has been used with children from Class XII onwards and with adults.

Both verbal and figural test batteries have alternate forms for individuals and groups. For the verbal tasks, young children can tell the response to adults and older children can write their responses. Descriptions of these tasks are given below.

Thinking Creatively with Words-Verbal Tasks


(i) **Ask-and-Guess** tasks are the first three of seven tasks which allow for the expression of curiosity and to assess the ability to make hypotheses and think of many possibilities. A picture is given to a person who is encouraged to ask questions about what is happening in the picture, to guess causes or give reasons for what is taking place, and to guess consequences or the results of the action, all of which can not be answered by merely looking at the picture.

(ii) **Product Improvement** is a task that allows a person to play with ideas that he would not express in a more serious situation. The task encourages the person to think of the most interesting, unusual and imaginative ideas to improve a stuffed toy animal to make it more fun to play with.

(iii) **Unusual Uses** task consists of asking the person to think of unusual, interesting and seldom thought of uses of a common object such as cardboard boxes. The task requires a person to break away from the set of common uses of the object.

(iv) **Unusual Questions** task is based on a method used to measure 'divergent power', which is considered essential for creative achievement and is critical for creativity in the classroom. The task encourages a person to ask questions that are novel and unusual.





(v) *Just Suppose* task is a variation of the second task of this test, namely, Guess Consequences. The task is designed to elicit a higher degree of fantasy and is expected to work very well with children. A person is asked to think of all the possible things that could take place if something not likely to happen did happen. For instance, just suppose that clouds had strings which were hanging down to the earth, what will happen? ‘Just suppose’ task is accompanied by an interesting drawing depicting the improbable situation.

Figural Tasks:

(i) *Picture Construction*: A shape such as a tear drop made of coloured paper with a sticky back is given to the child. He/she is told to use it as an important part of a picture he/she is about to make, and to which he/she is encouraged to add details to give more meaning. This task is expected to set in motion the tendency towards finding a purpose for something that has definite purpose and to elaborate on it in such a way that the purpose is achieved.

(ii) *Picture Completion*: This task is based on the theory that incompleteness of a figure arouses tensions in a person to complete it in the simplest and the easiest way possible. Thus if an original picture is to be produced, a person usually has to control his/her tensions and delay the joy of completing the picture. The task consists of 10 incomplete figures which are given in the test battery. The instructions are: “By adding lines to figures you can sketch some interesting objects or pictures. Again, try to think of some picture or object that no one else will think of. Try to make it tell as complete and as interesting a story as you can by adding to and building up your first idea. Make up a title for each of your drawings and write it at the bottom of each block next to the number of the figure”.

(iii) *Repeated Figures*: Just like the Incomplete Figures task, the Repeated Figures task gives a person two or three pages of closed figures, such as triangles and lines, with the encouragement to use his/her imagination to create pictures using the triangles or lines as important parts of them. In theory, the lines are supposed to arouse the creative tendency to bring structure and completeness to what is incomplete, while the triangles require the ability to disrupt or destroy an already complete form.

Each sub-test has specific time limit. These provide measures on fluency, flexibility and originality. The figural test also gives a measure on elaboration. The norms are based on an American sample. Since originality is always measured with reference to a particular group, separate weights should be developed for originality even if the tests are used, for example, in an Indian situation.

Some imaginative and resourceful teachers can develop situational measures in the form of activities, exercises and questions based on the test activities such as: guess causes, see new relationships, what will happen if..., just suppose, think of possibilities, suggest improvement, ask unusual questions, and so on. The activities may be developed involving real life situations or curriculum areas to facilitate the emergence of creative potentialities of children.

Effect of Testing Conditions

Like other psychological tests, creativity tests also require insight and skills in administration and interpretation. Various research studies have shown that variations in administration of creativity tests and the conditions under which these are administered can influence test performance. The variations may be in the wording of tests, classroom conditions, rapport, game-like vs. test-like, and timed vs. untimed conditions. In one of the experiments, Torrance found that addition of words 'try to think of something no one else will think of' decreased the amount of copying and increased the originality of responses. Thus, it is important to give students some reason for testing. Some creativity tests do not do this. Subjects are not told what they are being tested for.


Wallach and Kogan have done extensive work in the use of creativity tests under different conditions of administration. They advocate untimed conditions and game-like atmosphere. There is a general feeling among researchers that creativity tests might be used without time limit especially for young children. The stage of incubation, which is often referred to as the stage of purposive relaxation, is also an important component of the creative process. This stage may involve a few minutes or a few hours, depending upon the task in question. Therefore, sufficient time may be given for the production of original ideas. Moreover, the atmosphere of testing should be relaxed. Children should be encouraged to enjoy the activities. The psychological climate, both before and during the test, should be stimulating and non-threatening. Some arousal is necessary for creativity but too much stress is detrimental. Arousing interest, curiosity and imagination is an essential part of the testing procedure.

Scoring Creativity Tests

In general, responses to creativity tests are assessed in two ways: either the total number of responses to some open-ended item is counted, or an assessment of the quality of these responses is made. Simply tallying the number of responses like 'write down as many interesting and unusual uses as you can think of for a tin can', gives a measure of **FLUENCY**. According to this, the responses 'Use it as a kettle' and 'Boil water in it' would receive two points, since they are two separate answers. However, scoring for quality of responses involves finding out how many shifts of category are there in a list of answers. This is referred to as scoring for **FLEXIBILITY**. According to this criterion, the two answers given above would receive only a single point for **FLEXIBILITY** since they involve only a single main idea. Responses like 'Use it as a kettle' and 'Throw it on an enemy' would receive two points for flexibility since two distinct categories are contained in the answer. Another criterion of quality scoring is to give weights to answers, according to how uncommon they are in the group of children to which a particular child belongs. Responses that are given by only a few children in a group are rated as original and receive a weight for **ORIGINALITY**. The criteria for giving weights are usually given in the manual.

The scoring of originality is time consuming. It is first necessary to record the frequency of a particular response in the group as a whole. This frequency is then





converted to a percentage of subjects who gave the particular response and weight is assigned on the basis of that percentage. Less common responses are given greater weight, as these are considered original. Although scoring procedure for each test is standardised and the criterion for working out originality weights is also described in the respective manuals, it is difficult to have a fully standardised and objective scoring key. Since a major idea underlying creativity tests is that there are no specified answers, it is impossible to develop a list of highly original responses that have never before been made.

A technical problem sometimes also arises in deciding whether a response is highly original or it is totally bizarre. Thus a trained scorer should undertake the task of scoring creativity tests.

3.6.2.1 Criticisms of Creativity Tests

Creativity tests have been criticised on a number of grounds. Some criticisms are due to practical problems which arise in using the tests, like time-consuming scoring of tests, and others are due to the technical issues like the reliability and validity of creativity tests. The major criticisms of tests of creativity are given below—

- Creativity tests usually have time limits. There could be unfavourable reactions to time pressures that may prevent some highly creative children from revealing their potential. Creativity takes time. The creative process may not occur in a single flash of insight.
- Creativity tests are not concerned with affective aspects involved in being creative. These measure only the cognitive abilities like fluency, flexibility etc. That is why some investigators criticise these tests as tests of divergent thinking rather than creativity.
- Creativity tests do not measure anything different from what intelligence tests measure. A great deal of research has gone into answering this criticism. The results are varied but the findings do indicate that what creativity tests measure is not identical to what intelligence tests measure. The thinking processes involved in both the two types of tests are different.
- Creativity tests do not predict creativity in real life situations. That is, there is no link between performance on creativity tests and their future creative achievements as adults. As has been pointed out, the tests are extremely simple when compared with what people usually have in mind when they talk about creativity. Is the ability to draw diagrams incorporating circles and thinking of novel names for them really connected with the thought processes which made da Vinci or Einstein creative? It is difficult to prove this. However, some test developers have tried to answer the low predictability of creativity tests. They point out that generally instead of using a complete battery of tests, a single test is used and the testing time is also reduced. In such a situation how can one expect a high correlation between an abbreviated task and real life creative achievement?

Some longitudinal studies of high school students and elementary school pupils involving Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking indicate a moderate capability of these

tests to predict creative achievements after several years. In one of these studies, high school students were tested in 1959 and followed up as young adults 12 years later. The results showed that high school students identified as creative tend to become creative adults. Researchers in different countries have reported similar kind of linkages between creativity test performance and future creativity achievement.

3.6.2.2 Cautions in the Use of Creativity Tests

Counsellors and teachers have to be very cautious in using creativity tests and should only use them after professional training.

They must also avoid the tendency to search for one single test to tap the creative potential of children. Creativity is too complex to be represented by one single score on a single test. In addition to the assessment of such basic abilities as fluency, flexibility, and originality, there is a need to assess other qualities. Experts in the area have strongly recommended the use of a wide variety of procedures for identifying creativity. Ideally it would be worthwhile to keep a profile of a student's creative work, ratings by teachers, information from parents and peers about the student's activities and, if possible, the test scores about the child's creativity.

It must be pointed out that even though teachers may rely on tests to seek objective data to assure themselves that particular children have creative potential, these kinds of abilities can always be evident through the sensitive observation of children at work and play. The non-test indicators may be found in regular classroom activities. A student who consistently suggests an alternative ending for stories in reading is definitely expressing creative potential, which must be acknowledged. It may, however, be borne in mind that presence of these abilities do not guarantee creative achievements. Nevertheless, they do point out the potential for creativity and probability for creative performance. There can indeed be a number of opportunities to discover creative potentialities in day-to-day teaching. Sometimes situations can be intentionally created.

So far, we have discussed Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking. List of creativity tests/tools are available in the *Journal of Creative Behaviour*. (Davis & Scott, 1971, Kaltsounis, 1972; Kaltsounis & Honeywell, 1980). In addition, the Mental Measurements Yearbooks and Test Critiques (Oscar, 1938) present critical reviews of published tools/tests.

Activity 2



Design ten activities/situations which can be used to elicit creative expression of students based on the given exemplar test activities.

3.7 OTHER APPROACHES AND TOOLS

The foregoing pages describe assessment of some general creative thinking abilities but some inventories and scales have also been developed to identify the personality and motivational qualities which would predispose a person to think creatively. The Group Inventory for Finding Interests (GIFI) (Rimm and Davis, 1980) is a self report inventory which assesses independence, flexibility, curiosity, perseverance and breadth





of interests, and identifies past creative activities and hobbies. There are other tools such as Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory (Khatena, 1976) which comprises of two self-rating scales-Something about Myself (SAM) and What Kind of Person are You? (Wkopay). Individuals are asked whether statements such as “When I think I have an interesting idea I like adding to it to make it more interesting” are applicable to them or not applicable to them. Another inventory named as Group Inventory for Finding Creative Talent (Rimm and Davis, 1980) is designed to assess the creative potential of children. This self-report inventory is presented with a series of statements to which they answer yes or no, indicating their interests and attitudes on items related to creative thinking such as imagination, independence etc., for example, a ‘yes’ response to “I ask lot of questions” indicates curiosity. Creative Attitude Survey (Schaefer, 1971) is used to assess attitudes like confidence in one’s ideas, appreciation of fantasy, aesthetic orientation, openness, use of novelty etc. Another inventory for assessing attitudes, motivation, interests, values, beliefs is a rating scale by Renzulli (1983) which assesses such characteristics as curiosity, fluency, risk taking, humour and intellectual playfulness, emotional and aesthetic sensitivity, non-conformity and critical evaluation. The creativity assessment package comprises of two tests plus an observational rating scale to be completed by parents or teachers (Williams, 1980). One of the tests is that of divergent thinking and the second test contains the list of personality characteristics on which the students rate themselves using a three point scales rating from mostly true about oneself to mostly untrue about oneself.

It is clear that there are variety of tools available. Some may be useful for measuring creative thinking processes, others, creative product, still others, for assessing personality qualities associated with creativity. It is therefore, important to look for different indicators and sources both in and outside school for making creativity assessments.

3.8 USES OF ASSESSMENT DATA

All assessment devices should help teachers and counsellors to do their job better. For example, assessment of creativity should help teachers in planning their lessons and providing curricular experiences to promote their creative potential, otherwise assessment of creativity will be pointless.

Assessment data can also help teacher counsellors to be aware of the individual student’s strengths and weaknesses in creative performance. Although, within a class, students will show considerable variability, it is possible to identify common strengths and weaknesses within a class. The assessment data can help in providing objective information to design intervention strategies to facilitate the emergence and maximisation of creative potential among all. You have already read about this under general teaching strategies.

The assessment data should also help those whose creativity has been inhibited or not recognised. For example, if a child’s artistic creativity obviously displayed in his/her paintings finds no appreciation from others and he/she is constantly run down in front of friends and labeled undisciplined, he/she will loose interest in expressing himself/

through his/her painting. In another example, the surging creative expression in movement and dance keeps a child continuously restless as he/she is forced to remain bound to the routine activities of class. The tension of maintaining his/her standard position in the class appears to pull him apart. No one seems to understand the causes of his/her restlessness and inattentive sporadic rebelliousness. These are the two examples of an individual's creative potential that goes unattended and unutilised.

Problems may arise when creativity is repressed. The children sometimes become very conforming or too obedient, and then develop an unrealistic self-concept. Since they are not given challenging tasks, they may show little achievement. They may sometimes be labeled as slow learners. Children, when prevented from learning creatively, will manifest a loss of interest in learning. Highly creative students can also have behavioural problems. Much of this may be seen as reaction to the unchallenging tasks given to them in schools. Proper and timely identification and assessment can contribute towards helping such students meet their special needs and problems and actualise their potential.

Alert teachers and counsellors will find a variety of evidence of creativity in classrooms. Torrance in one of his writings, (1969) quoted an example of a creative student whose creativity was identified in arts class. The teacher recognised the way the student used his ingenuity in cheating. To punish the student would not have solved the student's problem, which motivated him to cheat. Emphasising the positive characteristics of the observed behaviour (ingenuity and originality), the teacher provided challenging tasks to him which required creative problem solving. The result was that the student who was considered unproductive and a problematic student excelled everyone else in the class achieving 'A' grade. It also helped in restoring his self-esteem.

With proper guidance, creative children can learn to cope with the problems and still maintain their creativity. For that, it is important to acknowledge their creative potential as evidenced through different assessment procedures.

3.9 Summary

- Creativity is not a single ability or quality. It is multifaceted, composed of a number of abilities, qualities, and skills. The essence of creativity is originality, novelty and imagination. Nature of creativity needs to be understood from the viewpoint of creative thinking process (how it is done), the creative person (someone who can do this), the creative product (the results or the outcome) and the environment (which helps to bring about the creation).
- All are capable of developing the abilities attitudes and motivation required to be creative. However, individual differences exist not only in the extent of creative potential but also in the way it is expressed. Creativity can be expressed in every field of human endeavour, be it science, music, literature, story telling or problem solving etc. Although genetic factors are important, environmental





factors can stimulate the development of creative potential. Creativity will express itself in different forms depending upon the right combination of abilities, skills, qualities and environment.

- There are many misconceptions about creativity. Generally only the artist, scientist, poet, writer are considered creative. But creativity is not confined to the extraordinary product. In educational settings, it is important to remember that an important goal of education is to provide opportunities for all children to develop their creative potential to the fullest. For that, it is important to identify and assess the level of creativity.
- Different ways of assessment help in identification of creativity. Environment conducive to the expression of creativity facilitates the identification and assessment of creativity. Multiple opportunities for creative expression need to be given to students. There are abundant opportunities in schools and classrooms to stimulate creative expression. There are non-test ways and test ways of assessment. Assessment of creativity however, has to be multi-dimensional as no single way of assessment is considered the best. The purpose of identification or assessment has also to be seen in the context of nurturing and guiding creativity to enable students to actualise their potential. Teacher counsellors should be well aware of the consequences if creative potential of children are not properly channelised or utilised. It may otherwise lead to behavioural and adjustment problems. In order to give students proper guidance to actualise as well as maintain their creativity, the counsellor needs to make use of assessment data appropriately.

Self-evaluation Exercises



1. Explain the meaning of creativity.
2. What would be the consequences if creativity is not encouraged in schools?
3. What is the goal of assessing creativity? Why does the assessment of creativity have to be multi-dimensional?
4. Explain, with examples, how you would use non-testing ways to identify creativity.
5. How is assessment of creativity useful to a teacher counsellor?
6. Reflect on the barriers, personal and environmental, that might block efforts to provide a conducive environment to identify and encourage creativity in children.

Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises

1. Creativity can be described in terms of a unique, novel, or original product or idea or solution to a problem resulting from the process of thinking initiated by a person. It is not a single ability or quality but multifaceted in nature.
2. Creativity should be promoted in schools as it promotes happiness and contentment which further leads to good mental health. If creativity is repressed, children may become too conformist or too obedient and develop unrealistic self-concepts. The creative potential may lie dormant and this may also lead to frustration, aggression, and problems in adjustment with self and others.
3. Elaborate on the following points:
 - The goal of assessment of creativity is to nurture and guide creativity of all students.
 - Assessment of creativity has to be multi-dimensional as the creative potential manifests differently in different ways and at different stages e.g., at primary level; dance, drama, painting, and drawing, etc. may be the form of creative expression. However, as children grow, specific talents begin to emerge. It is necessary to provide them with multiple outlets for their creative expression so that they can express their talents in the area they are good at.
4. Elaborate on the following non-testing techniques:
 - Observation: It can be done in classroom or playfields or other natural situations to identify students with high or low potential for creativity e.g., asking children to dig deeper on the issues being discussed in the classroom or checking for child's level of initiative, enthusiasm, originality in day-to-day activities or in other natural situations.
 - Ratings: Ratings can be made by peers, teachers, parents and self. The raters are asked to rate children as high or low on characteristics of creativity e.g., parents rating on child's work habits, leisure time habits, thinking styles and skills etc. on a particular scale.
 - Checklists usually contain a set of activities that children can do on their own in different fields e.g., Guiding Creative Talent tool by Torrance has variety of activities.
 - Biographical and anecdotal records help to keep record of episodes, instances, incidences and happenings that throw light on a student's imagination, curiosity, original style of doing things, etc. For example, taking note of how much a child is involved in classroom interactions, studying his/her tolerance level in solving problems, or ingenuity in looking for solutions.
 - Questioning: Asking children proactive questions or framing as many variety of questions as possible on a given topic to examine information in different new ways.
5. Assessment of creativity in children would help teacher counsellors to identify individual's strengths as well as deficits in creative performance and further develop techniques to promote creativity in children where creativity is found repressed





and inhibited. Assessment data would also help them guide and maintain their creativity.

6. Assessment of creativity in children would help teacher counsellors to identify individual's strengths as well as deficits in creative performance and further develop techniques to promote creativity in children where creativity is found repressed and inhibited. Assessment data would also help them guide and maintain their creativity.
7. Barriers to creative thinking are as follows–
 - Well-learned ways of thinking and responding i.e., when a person thinks that he/she has to follow and do the way things have always been done, it becomes difficult to create new possibilities.
 - Over emphasis on rules and traditions inhibit creativity.
 - Perceptual barriers such as, always perceiving things in familiar ways and not being able to see new meaning, relationships and ideas.
 - Cultural barriers such as conformity, pressures, uniformity and standardisation, etc.
 - Emotional barriers such as insecurity, anxiety, fear of criticism, rejection and failure, etc.

To overcome barriers to creative thinking children should be provided with psychological safe environment where they can freely discuss their ideas and feelings openly with teachers without the fear of being ridiculed. Teachers can create “creativogenic” environment in the classroom by giving positive feedback, accepting mistakes and by avoiding impulsive judgements and evaluative remarks.

Now you reflect on the above and record the barriers that would block your efforts to identify and nurture creativity of students. You may also think of alternative ways to overcome them. As situations and contexts are different, your efforts and strategies are expected to be different.

Answer Key to Self-check Exercises

Self-check Exercise 1

1. d 2. a 3. b 4. c

Self-check Exercise 2

1. c 2. d 3. b 4. a

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4

Data Appraisal in Counselling

- 4.0 Introduction
 - 4.1 Objectives
 - 4.2 Dimensions of Appraisal Data
 - 4.3 Integrating Assessment Data
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 - 4.7 Summary
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4.0 INTRODUCTION

You may recall that psychological assessment and appraisal serve as a means to fulfill the goals of counselling. You have learned from other units in this module about various types of assessment techniques, qualitative as well as testing techniques. You also learned about the selection of appropriate assessment tools, collection of data, scoring and analysis of the data. To derive meaning out of the data, you need to organize and integrate it and then apply the findings to help the concerned student/client.

Let us take the example of a student in class VIII, called Puja who has been referred to you for help. She has been a good student so far but since joining her new class, she is frequently absent from school, does not complete homework, and has stopped talking to her friends/classmates. Her school performance has also gone down. To know more about her, you may need to collect information about her from various sources. But simply collecting data is not enough. You will need to make sense of the data you collect by organizing, summarizing and integrating it and then applying insights you arrive at for helping the student. This is a gradual and complex process.

This unit will help you to understand the dimensions of assessment data, different steps involved in using appraisal data as well as the process of organizing, integrating, summarizing and communicating an appraisal effectively. You will also learn about certain cautions in using appraisal data.

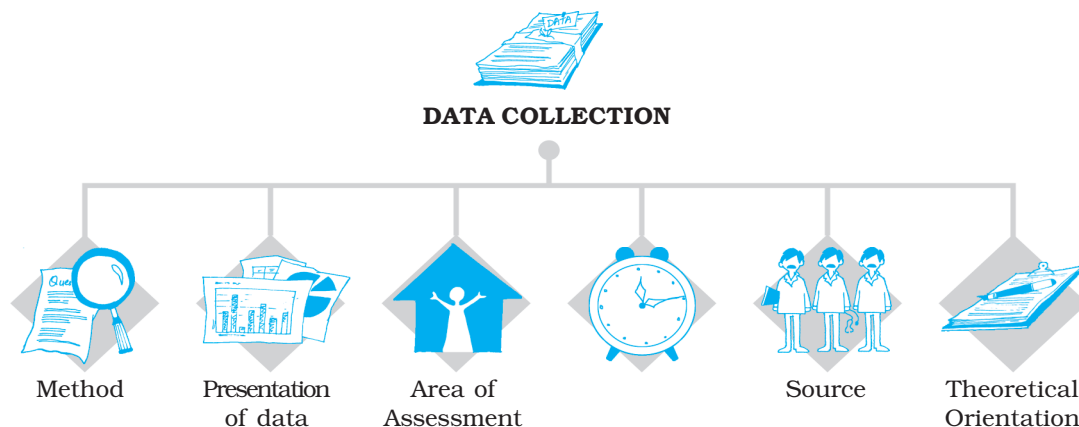
4.1 OBJECTIVES

After completion of this unit, you will be able to

- *list* the dimensions of appraisal data.
- *describe* the steps involved in integrating assessment data.
- *discuss* the process of organizing, summarizing and integrating appraisal data.
- *identify* possible sources of error in using assessment and appraisal data.
- *apply* the skills involved in communicating and reporting assessment findings.

4.2 DIMENSIONS OF APPRAISAL DATA

As pointed out in the introduction, you will need to integrate assessment data collected through a variety of techniques, and pertaining to different aspects of the person and his environment before deciding how to help the student. First the process of integrating the data will be described in detail in the following sections. Then you will proceed to a description of skills required for organising and integrating that data. In order to start, look at the various dimensions on which assessment data can be classified.



The assessment data collected by you will differ on several dimensions such as: (a) method, (b) presentation of data, (c) area of assessment, (d) timing of assessment, (e) source, and (f) the theoretical orientation of the counsellor or individual making the appraisal. Study each of the dimensions in turn.

(a) Method

According to method used, you might have collected data through one or many of the assessment techniques, which you have already learned about in other units. The major ones are:

- Observation reports of the student in different settings, such as classroom or home.
- Interviews of the client, parents, teachers or classmates.
- Standardized psychological tests such as tests of intelligence, personality, aptitude or interest or any other.
- Rating scales/checklists that include responses about the person seeking help by the student himself/herself, parents, teachers or others.
- Socio-metric data regarding choice of the student by his or her classmates or friends.
- Cumulative Records Card (CRC) of the client including his achievement records, medical records and standardized test results. Some schools do maintain such records.
- Medical and physiological assessment records, such as birth history, developmental milestones, (e.g. age when child started walking, talking etc.) previous illnesses, etc. as well as present medical status, if required.

(b) Presentation of Data

The data may also vary in terms of nature of data presentation.

- Verbal or graphic presentations where the findings may be presented in words or scores or as graphs.
- Structured or unstructured presentation with the data being presented under structured organized headings or in an unstructured raw form.
- Focused/specific or wide-ranging/detailed presentation in which the assessment details can range from a simple intelligence score to a wide range of personality descriptions.
- Quantitative or qualitative presentation where the data may be quantitatively presented as a statistical score, e.g., percentile rank, or it could be qualitative in the form of a descriptive or narrative analysis.
- Normative or idiographic presentation in which the assessment data could be interpreted in comparison to a specific group using group norms (normative) or it could deal with a detailed description of the client's attributes (ideograph).

(c) Area of Assessment

This presentation may focus on a particular type of information about the student or the situation. It may relate to any of the three listed categories:

- Client's thinking, feelings, relationships, and actions.
- Clients' past or present status.
- Client or family or socio-environmental context.

(d) Timing of Assessment

According to your timing of the assessment, the data may differ according to whether it has been done at the initial intake level or during an intervention or at a post-intervention.

(e) Source

According to the source or person making the assessment data may have been collected by or from different people, such as medical doctor, teacher, social worker, psychiatrist, or psychologist; each source or person would have a different perspective. For example, a teacher's observation may be quite different from the information collected by a social worker. Ideally, crosschecking of data must be done before arriving at any conclusions.

(f) Theoretical Orientation of the Counsellor

According to the theoretical orientation/approach of the counsellor there can be a vast difference in the emphasis and importance given to a particular type of information and the methods used. A humanistic or client-centered psychologist may not believe in formal and quantitative assessments. On the contrary, a psycho-dynamically oriented person may give more importance to qualitative approaches. Despite these differences, most counsellors believe in some kind of holistic appraisal before deciding on an intervention.





Self-check Exercise 1

Match the contents given in Column A with those of Column B:

A	B
(i) Method of data collection	(a) related to family, includes environment, psychological aspects
(ii) Presentation of data can be	(b) like medical doctor, teacher, psychologist, psychiatrist
(iii) Area of assessment may be	(c) data collected at the initial stage or during intervention
(iv) Timing of assessment can be in terms of	(d) humanistic, psychodynamic
(v) Person/source of assessment refers to	(e) observation, interviews CRC, psychological tests
(vi) Different theoretical approaches refer to	(f) quantitative or qualitative verbal or graphic

It is clear from the above discussion that you have a wide variety of assessment data available. Once all data has been collected and scoring and analysis of each unit is carried out, it would be necessary to integrate and then summarize the vast amount of information and obtain a holistic picture of the client for further action.

4.3 INTEGRATING ASSESSMENT DATA

Assessment of the client may be carried out using one or many techniques. The steps involved in integrating this assessment data will now be outlined. In previous units you have learned about some of them. It is important to recollect those stages and steps in integration and application of assessment and appraisal data.

- **Judicious selection of assessment tools**
You have already learned about selecting the appropriate assessment tools, and have chosen tools carefully after evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of each tool. In our hypothetical case of Pujja described in the introduction, you may have decided upon using a test of mental ability and self-concept inventory as well as interviews with her mother and observations of teachers. You may have also decided to review her medical condition.
- **Data collection through one or many tools**
You have collected data using the selected tools including interviews, written records and possible medical records. You have also interviewed her mother and teacher and have collected medical examination records.
- **Scoring and interpretation of each type of data**
You will now do the scoring and interpretation of test data as per procedure given in respective manuals of standardised test you will analyse the responses and identify the patterns of information.

- **Organising different types of data under major categories**
Since there are different types of data, you will need to organise it under major categories or headings, such as mental ability, personality qualities, academic problems, peer interactions, medical status and family relationships etc.
- **Summarising and integrating data to be able to arrive at conclusions**
After organizing data under major headings, you would need to integrate and summarise it to get a holistic and overall picture of the client and his/her problems. You would need to use your experience, insight and wisdom in integrating the appraisal data. You will learn more about this in following sections.
- **Defining the problem and making tentative plans for helping the student**
On the basis of the summarised data and conclusions, you will now make a tentative diagnosis and intervention plans. Assessment may show that Puja has a problem of sibling rivalry at home. If you arrive at the conclusion that her problems have magnified as she is experiencing jealousy with her sister. This jealousy and insecurity is resulting in many psychosomatic problems such as repeated stomach aches, and she is not able to attend school regularly. She is not able to handle her homework without her mother's help, who according to her remarks is busy and pays more attention to her sister. As a counsellor, you can now think of making intervention plans like talking to the mother and having counselling session with Puja.
- **Communicating assessment findings**
The results and conclusions of assessment have to be communicated with much sensitivity to the client and family. The method, language, and timing of communication are important. The communication is to be done by highlighting the child's strengths and giving constructive suggestions.
- **Planning of counselling interventions and implementation**
Once conclusions are arrived at, an intervention plan can be suggested. It is the responsibility of the counsellor to ensure that the plans are properly implemented. It is important to remain in touch with the client. Constant evaluation and future planning is possible by follow-up and repeated assessment after short periods.

Since the first three steps, i.e., selection of tools, collection of data and scoring have already been dealt with in previous units in detail, you will look more closely at the other steps of an appraisal, i.e., integration, interpretation and communication of appraisal data.

4.4 STEPS IN USING APPRAISAL DATA

Assessment and Appraisal are the core components of any counselling process. The basic purpose of assessment and appraisal is to develop an understanding of the individual being counselled by the counsellor and also empowering the individual to gain an insight of himself/herself. Since the counsellors are continuously involved in understanding the individuals they have to make a judicious selection of the assessment techniques to be used, analyse the data gathered, summarise and integrate to get a comprehensive picture and finally report and communicate. The steps involved in using appraisal data may be categorised as below in figure 6.1



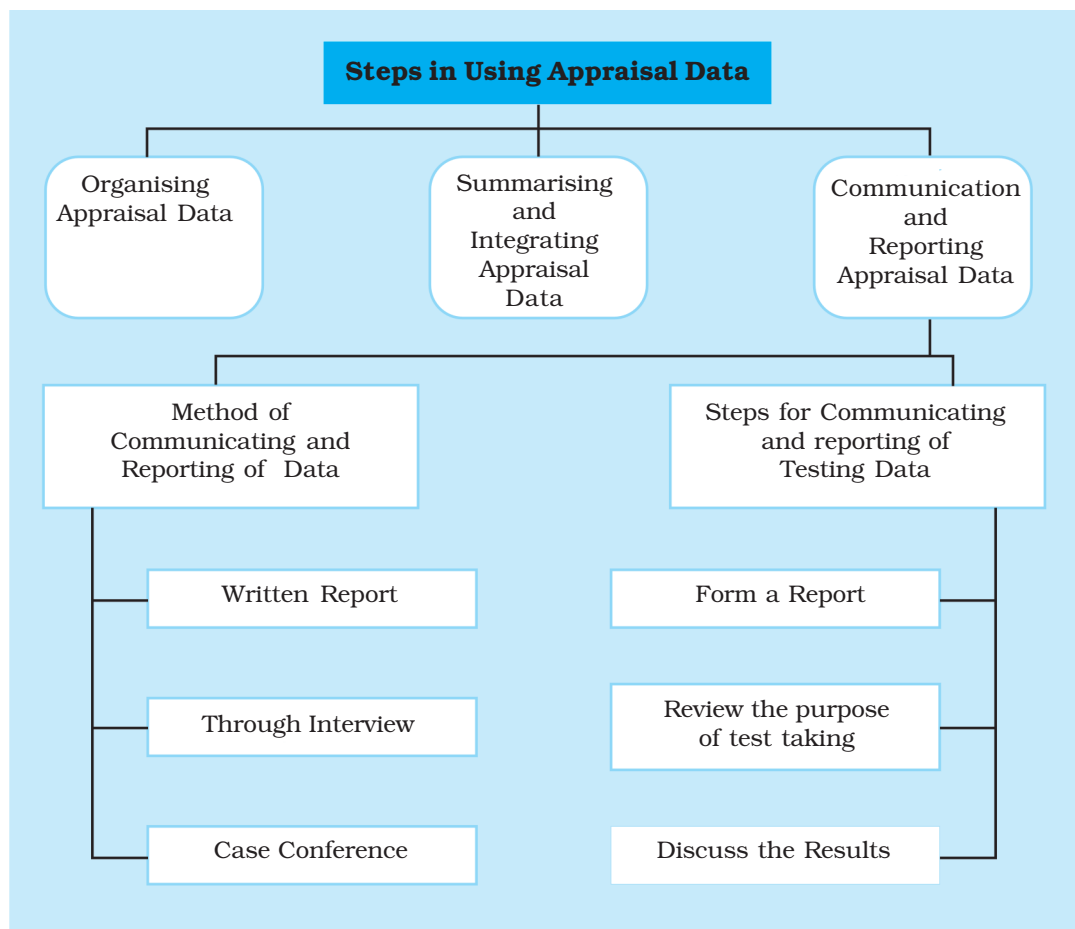


Fig. 4.1: Steps in using Appraisal Data

4.4.1 Organising Appraisal Data

Let us consider the following hypothetical case in order to understand the importance and process of organising appraisal data:

Case Study: Rahul

Rahul, a 15 year old schoolboy of class 10th was found smoking in the school corridor and he has been referred to you as a case for counselling. He is also deteriorating in academic performance since last one year, and has failed in many subjects during the first term examination. You have conducted interviews with the child, the other teachers and his parents. You have also carried out a socio-metric survey in the class. You may have used standardized tests of ability, achievements and personality inventory. You have also got ratings from his classmates and teachers. You have access to his school achievement records as well as his medical records. Teachers in the classroom have also taken samples of observation.

It is evident that you have a wealth of information about Rahul. But how do you make sense of it all? How do you arrive at any conclusion? Do you rely on some sources of information more than others?

You have used a variety of assessment techniques after a judicious selection. You have scored and analysed each of them separately. Now you need to summarize and arrive at a holistic picture. You may make certain assumptions you need to give feedback to Rahul, and to his teachers and parents. You may need to modify some conclusions based on their own interpretations of the results. You would finally arrive at mutually acceptable goals and plans of intervention.

After careful analysis of data, you may conclude that Rahul has high intellectual capacities, but is emotionally insecure and sensitive. He is small-built, and his height and weight are below normal for his age. He suffers from poor self-esteem and his classmates make fun of him. His mother favors his elder brother over him. He spends less time on studies and more on exercise to increase his height. He is desperate to make friends and has been introduced to smoking by two classmates. All these factors might have led to deterioration in school achievement.

Before you suggest interventions based on the assessment data, it would be useful to organise the vast amount of assessment data into a tabular form to summarise and understand it at a glance. One way of tabulating it would be to make headings of type of data, the tools used, the sources of information and major results. Taking Rahul's case, the headings could be tabulated as follows:


Table 4.1 : Tabulation of Assessment Data

Nature of Appraisal data	Tools used	Type of information	Source of information	Major Findings
Description of problem	Interviews, observation, medical and school records	Intelligence, personality, health status, peer relationships	Rahul, teacher, parents, classmates	Incidents of smoking, physically weak, academic failure, low self-esteem
History of problem	Interviews, school records	Past and present academic performance, previous complaints	Teachers, parents	Problem begun since 1 year
Client's resources available	Interviews, selfstatements, Standardised tests, sociometric data	Rahul's strengths and weaknesses	Rahul, classmates, parents, teachers	High intelligence, can benefit from a structured learning environment and remedial lessons
Family resources available	Interviews, tests and visits	Family income, extended family support	Family members, i.e., father, mother, brothers/sisters	Financially stable, more time and supervision needed from parents for Rahul

Compilation of such a table helps in understanding the major findings of various assessment data at a glance. The above table is only an example and more details may be incorporated.

You will be able to use such a format for organising and summarising assessment data in psychological assessment practicum for counselling cases.





Simply organising the assessment data is not enough. Integration of the various types of data requires much skill and practice. You need to use your own insight and skills in order to read between the lines. The appraisal process is likely to be very subjective. Try to explore within yourself whether you hold any bias towards or against the particular student or problem. In order to rule out errors due to subjectivity, the best option is to try to make the appraisal as objective as possible.

4.4.2 Summarising and Integrating Appraisal Data

For integrating assessment data collected from different sources and pertaining to different areas of the client and his/her problem, efforts should be made to summarize data under headings such as:

- **Reasons for referral:** Here one needs to list the reasons for the client being referred to counselling. Examples could be his/her deteriorating performance in class or any other problem behaviour.
- **History and nature of present problem:** Under this heading you are to list the time when the problem first occurred and the entire history of its development/progression. You need to list in detail the behavioural manifestations of the problem. The frequency of occurrence and the extent to which it interferes with the normal life of self and others.
- **Client's physical health and psychological status:** The client's physical health needs to be looked into in order to establish casual attribution for the problem. This can be done by investigating the medical history of the person i.e., whether he/she has had any history of the present problem or suffered any serious ailments. It is basically listing of the medical records of the subject. Psychological status means the psychological well being of the subject i.e., mental health.
- **Client's family structure:** The family structure involves information regarding the type of family i.e., joint/nuclear, Socio-Economic Status (SES), number of siblings, parental occupation, etc. This information is important as these facts have an influence on how the individual will behave e.g., a strong, well-knit, educated family background is expected to have a positive influence on the child.
- **Client's developmental stage and life experiences:** While appraising and summarising the data of the client you need to keep in mind the present developmental stage of the client (e.g., youth, adolescence, etc.). Life experiences are major life events such as the birth of a sibling or a death of near and dear one, etc. These experiences can to a great extent determine the psychological or mental frame of an individual.
- **Client view of self and of the world:** Based on the life experience and family structure one develops a sense of self, including self-respect, self-esteem, and self-concept. All are derived from the reinforcement and feedback that a client gets from significant others. This leads to the development of a unique way of looking at the world. A person who is self-confident and perceives himself as positive will most of the time notice good things around him/her. For example, when you are in a good mood you are more likely to compliment others.

- **Client's reaction to the present problem:** Here you need to record how the client is adapting his situation i.e., whether he is accepting that a problem with him exists and that it needs attention. The other way could be that the client does not perceive any problem and hence sees no need for consultation or intervention. While guidance and help can be provided relatively in a easy manner in the former case, intervention and help in the latter case becomes difficult because of the perception of the client.
- **Client's environmental, situational, and socio-cultural context:** The assessment data needs to be integrated under this heading as the environmental and socio-cultural context is not only instrumental in bringing about the psychological state of the client but also determines the intervention or help that is to be provided. It is after all the culture and environment in which the client has to live and adjust.

These headings may differ according to the purpose of assessment. Counsellors in clinical settings may use standard headings in a case study. Teachers may use headings such as those suggested above.

Arriving at a holistic picture of the client is an art and a science. The counsellor's expertise at interpreting each type of data as well as understanding salient cues is a matter of skill and experience. Sometimes a minor fact such as a thyroid problem may be responsible for several behavioral and emotional problems. Medical information should not be ignored. Moreover, common sense inputs should also be taken into consideration. A counsellor recalls how in a hasty assessment, a child suffering from ADHA (Attention-Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) was diagnosed, while in fact, he was actually struggling with a tight pair of underpants!


Appraisal is best seen as a continuing process because arriving at a conclusion involves integration of diverse and often conflicting bits of information into a consistent and meaningful picture. This leads to formation of a coherent working model for planning interventions. New assessment data collected during the course of therapy or intervention may require modifications of the holistic picture.

4.4.3 Communicating and Reporting Assessment Data

As a trained counsellor, you will have to present and discuss information collected during an assessment with the client or with family members or teachers so as to arrive at a meaningful conclusion for taking action to help the student. There is no such correct or "right" way of communicating assessment data. It is a complex process and requires the skills of empathy and sensitivity, which are essential in all aspects of counselling. Conveying certain sensitive information, such as a low ability to a parent, is hard, and needs to be done very carefully and gradually, not abruptly or casually.

Both verbal and non-verbal behaviors of the counsellors are important while conveying sensitive information. The exact words, the tone of speaking, silences, pauses, postures, and facial expressions all add to the communication process. Cultural factors can also affect the impact of communication. For example, the meaning of "hyperactive" could be very different in a rural versus an urban setting. Therefore, the counsellor





must be very sensitive to the socio-cultural background of the person to whom the information is being communicated. Personal factors, such as age and gender of the counsellor as well as of the person to whom the information is being given, can also influence the impact of the communication.

Methods of Communicating Data

There are 3 major methods of communicating assessment data:

(i) *A written report* is extremely valuable as it provides a comprehensive and accurate documentation of the information for the counsellor and others. It serves as a basis for future referrals and for research and evaluation purposes. It helps the counsellor organize and clarify tentative hypothesis and interpretations. It also serves as a professional and legal document. The format of the written report can vary. There is no perfect style of writing a report; it can vary according to the purpose and to the person to whom it is addressed. It should be written simply and concisely, carefully organised and integrated and should carry conclusions and recommendations.

(ii) *Communication of assessment information through an interview* with the client or family members is a highly sensitive technique that requires training and skill. The results of assessment can be conveyed through direct face-to-face interviews with the client, or with parents, teachers or employers. Interview skills have been outlined elsewhere in this course. It is extremely important to vary interview style and language according to the age and understanding of the person who receives the communication. The nature of information being conveyed is also an important determinant of the communication style. It is better to convey some types of assessment information through interview rather than through a written report, e.g., conclusions regarding low ability or failure should preferably be conveyed through face to face interviews as counsellors will get an opportunity to observe and manage sensitive reactions of the client, if any.

(iii) *A case conference* can be held to convey and discuss assessment data with parents, teachers, and other professionals. This would involve a group situation. Some members of this group would be professionals but some could be laypersons, for example the family members. It should be ensured that the language and concepts used are understandable to all. Descriptive and qualitative evaluation terms should be used to convey the assessment data. The counsellor would be the group leader or moderator of the conference as he can best convey and explain data to the target audience. The group would discuss the information and conclusions to arrive at mutually accepted goals for interventions. Each participant's views and reactions must be given due importance to ensure support.

Steps for Communicating Testing Data

A five-point plan can be used for communicating assessment data to clients, especially for findings of standardised tests.

1. First of all, try to form rapport with the person. Take into account the age, gender, intellectual level and socio-cultural background of the student concerned. Prepare the student to be comfortable and discuss openly. Make the student feel that confidentiality will be maintained.

2. Try to make the client remember his/her feelings on the test day.

3. Review with the client the purpose of test taking and how scores are presented, e.g., percentiles. Clarify that test results are not final and need to be crosschecked before coming to any conclusions. Explain that we are all different. Test scores are only clues and should be used in the light of other sources of information.

4. Next step is to examine the test results together and discuss the meaning of the scores. The client is asked open-ended questions to encourage feedback. This helps the client to integrate the new information with existing knowledge about himself/herself, seek clarifications if required and perhaps give explanations for unexpected scores.

5. The final stage is to incorporate all knowledge gained through integration of the test scores and interviews through mutual discussion into a plan for intervention.

Some guidelines for interpretation and communication of assessment data

Whatever the method of conveying assessment information, several guidelines must be kept in mind to ensure adequate handling of interpretation and communication of assessment data to clients:



- Encourage client to give feedback and ask questions or clarifications wherever required. Engage the client in interpreting assessment data, giving feedback and exploring alternatives.
- Use language that is appropriate to the listener. Interpret data in a form that is meaningful to the client.
- Choose content of information to be given as well as vocabulary and concepts in a way that is suitable to age, interest and need of the person. The way data has to be communicated to a client or family members would be completely different from the manner than it would convey to a teacher, another mental-health professional or a lawyer or judge.
- Begin with concrete information such as interest or achievement scores and then move on to abstract information such as personality descriptions.
- As far as possible, qualitative rather than quantitative descriptions should be used. For example, rather than talking about IQ scores, discuss how the child compares with his or her classmates. Use





- Percentile Ranks rather than raw scores that may not mean much to a layperson.
- Use graphical devices to present data in a simple, clear and interesting way.
- Convey information only if required, i.e. interpreting and communicating data only at that particular point in time by the client rather than overloading the client with information.
- Be prepared for emotional reactions and keep help at hand, e.g. when telling a client about a failure.
- Discussion of options and decisions about interventions must be done. Information about further referrals must be given. The report must include suggestions for intervention and recommendations for action.
- A copy of the assessment report along with suggestions and recommendations should be sent to the referral sources and other responsible parties, keeping confidentiality issues in mind.

To interpret, integrate and communicate assessment information, it is imperative that the counsellor should go through extensive training and supervision. Experience in using the instruments and sensitivity are extremely important. A thorough knowledge of ethical considerations is a must. The counsellor needs to be constantly on alert for modifications in the tools and techniques.



Activity 1

Reflect on the practices that you have been following while communicating achievement scores to the students. Keeping in view the given guidelines, list down the changes that you would like to bring to your way of communicating the scores to the students.



Self-check Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks from the alternatives given on the next page.

1. Assessment of the client is carried out using different techniques _____.
2. The vast amount of data collected needs to be _____ before planning on intervention.
3. While integrating and summarising data we should take care of clients _____.
4. The three important methods of communicating data are _____.
5. The counsellor should have extensive _____ in interpreting,

integrating and communicating assessment information.

- (a) Training and experience
- (b) Standardised psychological tests, interviews, observation, medical and school records
- (c) Organised and integrated
- (d) A written report, interview, and case conference
- (e) Clients environmental, situational, and socio-cultural context

4.5 CAUTIONS IN USING APPRAISAL DATA

As you have learned from the previous sections, the process of assessment and appraisal requires much skill and insight. Several sources of errors are possible at various stages of assessment and appraisal. Possible errors at each stage are as follows:

(a) *Data collection stage*

You need to be prepared to deal with vast amount of data, but you should also guard against collecting too much unnecessary data that may never be used. Other precautions would include the following:

- Choice of type of information to be collected.
- Choice of a particular procedure/tool.
- Bias due to counsellor's interpretation or wrong presentation by client.
- Errors due to language problems and cultural differences.

(b) *Integration-Interpretation stage*

At this stage you must be careful of

- Bias in favor of perceiving congruence in information collected across diverse areas.
- Overgeneralisation from a limited sample of behaviour and arriving at conclusions from one aspect to another aspect of client's behaviour.
- Inadequate conceptualisation or theoretical biases on part of the counsellor, e.g. language bias.

(c) *Selection of goals*


Errors at previous stages can result in wrong selection of goals for intervention.

To reduce possibility of errors at various stages of psychological appraisal, a multi-model assessment approach is desirable to arrive at appropriate goals for an intervention. Summarising and integrating data from a variety of sources to derive a holistic picture of the client would rule out possibility of wrong judgment during appraisal. Ethical guidelines should always be kept in mind at all stages of the application of appraisal data.

4.6 ETHICS IN APPRAISAL

You have already learned in previous module unit 2 about ethical codes and standards that counselling and guidance are professional activities. This means that






there are professional organizations that outline specific codes of ethics and monitor the activities of its members. The code of ethics provides guidelines about clients' rights, privacy and confidentiality, and moral and legal standards. There are clear guidelines about the use of assessment techniques and appraisal in counselling, about test selection, administration, interpretation, and reporting of assessment data.


All professional codes of ethics emphasize that interpretation of assessment data should be done very carefully; taking data from multiple sources; validating with empirical evidence; and avoiding jumping into hasty conclusions. It is also recommended that reporting and communicating the appraisal data to clients should be done with great sensitivity and caution. Confidentiality needs to be maintained and the client's dignity and privacy should always be respected.

4.7 Summary



This unit explains the process of data appraisal. The first step in data appraisal is utilising the various dimensions of collecting data, such as the dimensions of method, presentation, area of assessment, timing of assessment, sources and theoretical orientation of the counsellor so that you have sufficient and relevant information to undertake effective counselling. After the data has been collected the next step is using or applying of the data. The steps in application are scoring, interpretation, summarising, and integrating. For summarising the data, you can put the information provided under separate headings such as history and nature of the problem, family structure, medical and psychological records. For further simplification of data it could be put into tabulated as was shown in Table 1. This data is to be interpreted and the findings communicated to the client. What has to be kept in mind while assessing and appraising the data is to look out for errors such as lies, reliability and validity considerations, language interpretation problems and biases. Data appraisal requires much skill, caution and practice.

Self-evaluation Exercises

- 
1. Prepare an assessment plan for a student with a striking problem in your class and explain how you would use the data.
 2. Describe the steps in using appraisal data.
 3. List the cautions that a counsellor should take in using any appraisal data.

Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises

1. An assessment plan for a student with a striking problem in the class would cover the following:
 - Determine two to three dimensions on which you will collect data. Based on the dimensions of appraisal data select the tools for assessment, scoring, and interpreting the data.
 - Make a summary that can be used while counselling and for providing the basis for an intervention.
2. Describe the steps in using appraisal data. Keep in mind the following points:
 - Organise the appraisal data so that it is easy to understand.
 - Summarise and integrate appraisal data, which leads to planning an appropriate intervention.
 - Communicate and report the assessed data.
 - Elaborate on the three methods of communicating data:
 - (i) A written report
 - (ii) Communication of assessment information through interview
 - (iii) Case conference
 - Both verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the counsellor are important while conveying sensitive information.
3. Elaborate on the cautions to be exercised in using any appraisal data:
 - Data collection stage: one has to be careful in selection of appropriate method to collect data; to take into consideration the cultural background of the client, etc.
 - Integration-interpretation stage: to be cautious of perceiving congruence in information collected from various sources; avoiding overgeneralizations or biases.
 - Goal selection stage: cautions in selection of goals to plan appropriate interventions.

Answer Key to Self-check Exercises

Self-check Exercise 1

- (i) e
- (ii) f
- (iii) a
- (iv) c
- (v) b
- (vi) d



Self-check Exercise 2

1. b
2. c
3. e
4. d
5. a



References

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Weblinks

- <http://www.kspope.com/assess/feedabs1.php>
- <http://www.amhca.org/code>.
- <http://www.apa.org/science/ttrr.html>
- <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/files/ethical%20stndards.pdf>.

NOTES

NOTES

List of Course Material

1. Course Guide

Major inputs include objectives, scope, rules, syllabi as well as procedures for admission, transaction and evaluation for all the three phases of the course.

2. Course Modules*

- i. Module- I : Introduction to Guidance
- ii. Module-II : Counselling Process and Strategies
- iii. Module-III : Guidance for Human Development and Adjustment
- iv. Module-IV : Career Development-I
- v. Module V : Career Information in Guidance and Counselling-I
- vi. Module VI : Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling-I
- vii. Module VII : Basic Statistics in Guidance and Counselling-I
- viii. Module VIII : Guidance in Action
- ix. Module IX : Special Concern in Counselling
- x. Module X : Developing Mental Health and Coping Skills
- xi. Module-XI : Career Development-II
- xii. Module XII : Career Information in Guidance and Counselling-II
- xiii. Module XIII : Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling-II
- xiv. Module XIV : Basic Statistics in Guidance and Counselling-II

* Each module consists of number of self-learning units.

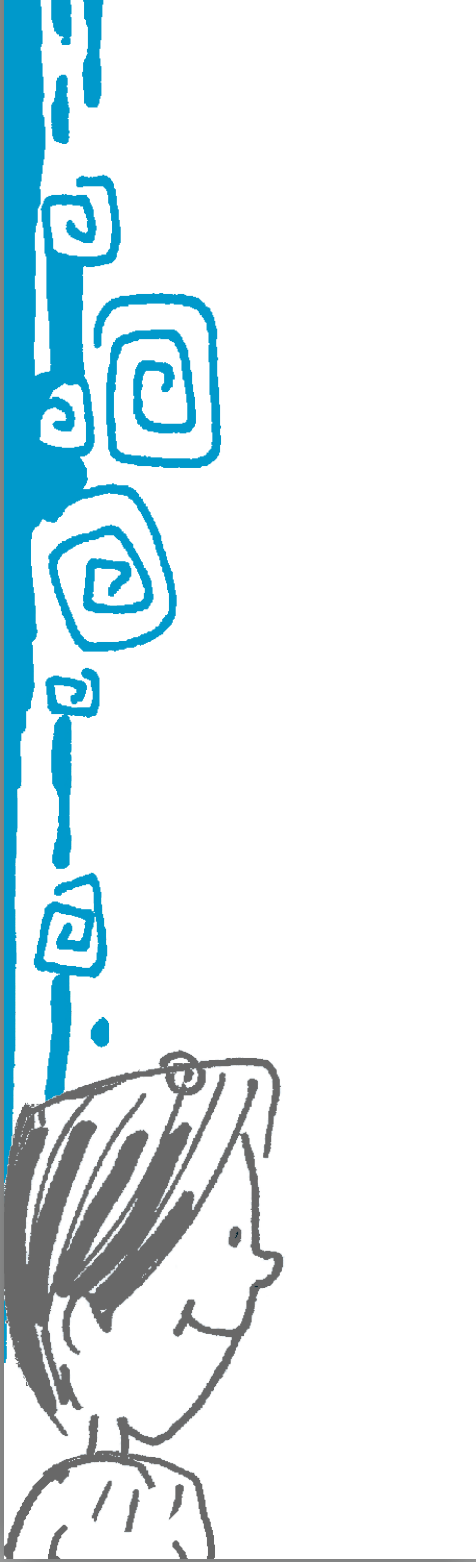
3. Practical Handbook

Provides areas and strategies for conducting and undergoing practicum, field experience and internship.

4. Tutor Guide

Lists guidelines for tutors, supervisors for course transaction and evaluation during all the three phases of the course.





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