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Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire

This test was developed by Cattell (1956). The construction and standardization was done by him. It is used on people from 17 years and above. The test can be used with high school level students as well as with adults. It has been found extremely useful in career guidance, vocational exploration, and occupational testing.

Apart from the few popular tests which use self-report technique which have been described above, there are several others that try to assess specific dimensions of personality (e.g. authoritarianism, locus of control, optimism, etc)

The self-report measures suffer from a number of problems. Social Desirability is one of them. It is a tendency on the part of the respondent to endorse items in a socially desirable manner. Acquiescence is another one. It is a tendency of the subject to agree with items/questions irrespective of their contents. It often appears in the form of saying 'yes' to items. These tendencies render the assessment of personality less reliable.

Cattell selected these 17 traits by the help of factor analysis method. All these traits are relatively free to each other. The scores obtained by this method can be easily converted into Stens Norms by the help of tables available. The reliability co-efficient of the test is from .34 to .96 and validity from .42 to .90.

Psychological testing and understanding personality requires

great skill and training. Unless we have acquired these to an optimum level under careful supervision of an expert, we should not venture into testing and interpreting the personality of our friends who do not study psychology.