

(5) PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES

Interview and other self-reporting techniques have some inherent limitations to assess the unconscious structure of personality. Psychologists to study the unconscious motivation of personality attempted to devise a new kind of instrument generally called projective techniques. (Projection, according to Freud, means externalizing of conflicts or other internal conditions that had given rise to conscious pain and anxiety. Projective tests of personality assessment are those which evoke responses from the unconscious and provide an opportunity to delve into the depth of unconscious built of an individual's personality. The meaning of projection here is to encourage the subject to use his imagination freely.)

Projective techniques have a long history in psychology. Binet (1895) was the first psychologist who had suggested the use of ink-blot as measures of visual perception in his tests. Dear Born of Harvard University reported the use of ink-blot as early as 1897. Since then a number of projective tests have been developed and used successfully in assessing personality. Projective tests are standardized sample of behaviour which is not stimulus bound. The essence of projective technique can be briefly described as: "It is to examine the personal production of a subject and to interpret it for the light it may throw on his personality." Lindzey (1961) defines: "A projective technique is an instrument that is considered especially sensitive covert or unconscious aspect of behaviour, it permits or encourages a wide variety of subject responses, it is

highly multidimensional and it evokes usually rich response data with a minimum of subject awareness concerning the purpose of the test."

A very comprehensive definition of projective technique has been given by Frank (1939) as a kind of 'X-ray' into those aspects of personality which subjects either cannot or will not openly reveal. Presumably the test format allows the subject to expose core ways of organizing experience and structuring life inadvertently as meanings are imposed on and reactions made to a stimulus having relatively less structure and cultural patterning.

Characteristics of Projective Techniques

(Projective technique of assessing personality was developed as a protest by psychoanalysts and Gestalt-oriented psychologists against the behaviouristic and statistical emphasis in testing of personality in 1920s) The basic assumption of all projective tests is that the subject structures or reacts to the materials of the test by expressing his unconscious strivings and mechanisms. It gives a global picture of the personality of the subject. It is more up-to-date or fully evolved psychological approach, which attempts to explore central and more enduring make-up of personality. The following are the main common characteristics of projective techniques in general:

1. *Ambiguous material.* Projective tests often use ambiguous material to which the subject must respond freely, often, in descriptive form. Ambiguous material means that every subject can interpret the test stimuli in his own way. It is assumed that because the stimuli are ambiguous, subjects will project their own needs, feelings and conflicts into the test situation.

2. *Evoke responses from the unconscious.* Projective tests are based on the implicit assumption that the test stimuli evoke responses from the unconscious of the subject. The subject projects his inner feelings in the test situations.

3. *Multidimensionality of responses.* The dimensions in which the subject can respond are various as physical, intellectual, social and emotional. There is more freedom to respond against the unstructured stimuli of the tests. It is possible for the subject to make a great variety of responses to the test task.

4. *Freedom to respond.* The projective tests provide full freedom to the subject to respond to the test stimuli. He is not restricted as regards the nature of responses. Perhaps the essence of projective tests is that the end-product consists something produced by the subject.

5. *Holistic approach.* It means that projective tests attempt to study the totality of behaviour. They do not explore the molecular behaviour of the individual. They emphasize the molar approach to understand personality.

6. *Answers are not right or wrong.* In projective tests, the responses of the

subject are not scored or evaluated as right or wrong. They are evaluated qualitatively.

7. *Purpose of the test is disguised.* The purpose of projective test is not disclosed to the subject otherwise he becomes test conscious and may hide his real feelings.

L. Frank, 1948 classified all projective tests into the following categories:

1. *Constitutive tests.* Under this method comes all those projective tests which require imposition of structure upon relatively unstructured material as Rorschach Ink Blot Test.
2. *Constructive tests.* This type of tests require arrangement of material into pattern as in mosaic's test.
3. *Interpretive tests.* In these tests the testee has to interpret the test situations presented to him as in TAT and CAT.
4. *Cathartic tests.* Cathartic tests are those tests which help to release pent-up emotional feelings as doll play.
5. *Refractive tests.* Those tests in which conventional modes of communications are altered as handwriting or speech and draw-a-man test, etc. These tests are intended to apply particularly detailed analysis of peculiarities of style in habitual activities.

Important Projective Tests

1. Rorschach Ink Blot Test.
2. Thematic Apperception Test (TAT).
3. Children's Apperception Test (CAT).
4. BG Test.
5. Szondi Test.
6. Mosaic Test.
7. Blacky Pictures Test.
8. Cloud Picture Test.
9. The Word Association Test (free and controlled).
10. Sentence Completion Test.
11. Psychodrama.
12. Sociodrama.
13. Draw-a-Man Test.
14. Toy and Doll-Playing Test (World Game).
15. Clay Modelling.
16. Graphology.

It is not possible to describe all the projective tests here. We will select only two most important projective tests for detailed discussion: Rorschach ink blot test and TAT.