

2.4 NON-STANDARDIZED TECHNIQUES

Non-standardized techniques are commonly employed for individual analysis by counsellors in various settings. These techniques provide a broader, varying and more subjective approach to data gathering and interpretation for human assessment. We shall now discuss various non-standardized techniques of guidance.

2.4.1 The Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a list of questions to be answered by an individual or a group of individuals, especially to get facts or information. It should be elaborated to match with other techniques. Questions are designed to get information about conditions and practices about which the respondents are presumed to have the knowledge. The questions in a questionnaire are basically of two types – the closed and the open type. In the open type, questions require the individual to think and write. For example, what is your favourite sport? The closed type question requires the answer in the form ‘yes’ or ‘no’ or in a limited number of given categories. The open type questionnaire is time consuming and requires special skill in interpreting the responses. The closed type questionnaire can be easily scored, interpreted and is more objective.

i) Closed-ended Questions

- Gender ----- Male/Female
- How often do you watch Discovery Channel on TV?

Every day/once in a week/Occasionally/Never

ii) Open-ended Questions

- Which types of programmes do you like to watch on TV?
- What steps would you like to take to improve science teaching in your school?

Questions should be few in number and simple to be understood and answered. They should directly cover the point of information.

This technique has its limitations. However, it is very often used to obtain factual data.

2.4.2 Observation

In this technique behaviour is studied through observation by a trained observer.

The effectiveness of the technique depends upon the skillfulness of the observer. The observer is expected to observe well defined behaviours free from biases and prejudices.

Observational techniques are useful in the study of students and individuals but their usefulness depends upon the manner and purpose with which they are conducted.

2.4.3 Sociometry

The purpose of this technique is to study the nature of social relationship of individual within a group. It offers an opportunity to identify personality problems, especially in isolates and the rejected. Isolates are students who remain alone with no relationships in the class. Rejected students are disliked by other students. The technique is a useful source of information for appraisal of social behavior of students.

There are usually three types of sociometric techniques: (i) the nomination (ii) the social acceptance and (iii) the 'who's who' or 'guess who'. In the nomination techniques the student is asked to select and name his/her peers in terms of some criterion suggested by the teacher. For example, the teacher may ask students to name three best friends in the class. In the social acceptance technique, levels of social relationship are stated and the student is asked to express his/her sociometric choice. In the 'Guess who' technique, brief descriptions of various types of students are provided and they are asked to guess who in the class matches with the description. For example, one of the statements may be 'The boy is always in trouble with his parents', who?

The sociometric data are presented in the form of a sociogram which shows attractions and repulsions within a group and helps the teacher and the counsellor in discovering the problems of students in relation to the group.

2.4.4 Autobiography

You might have read autobiographies of great personalities. An autobiography is a description of an individual in his/her own words. As a guidance technique for studying the individual, it gives valuable information about the individual's interests, abilities, personal history, hopes, ambitions, likes, dislikes, etc. In guidance, structured autobiographic items are given to the individual and he/she is asked to write them out. The autobiographical material thus obtained is verified by various other means. Since feelings, values and attitudes cannot be measured by any other technique, autobiography appears to be the one technique for appraising these characteristics.