

Course Material (E-Content) of Psychology

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Assessment of Aptitude

Aptitude is defined as the natural, learned or acquired ability to do something. It is the readiness of an individual based on his willingness and ability to acquire some skill or knowledge particular to certain activities. Knowledge of aptitude can help us to predict an individual's future performance.

Hence, an aptitude assessment looks at one or more clearly defined and relatively homogenous segments of ability. They assess a test taker's potential for learning or ability to perform in a new situation based upon their cumulative life experiences. An aptitude test is designed to assess what a person is capable of doing or to predict what a person is able to learn or do given the right education and instruction. It represents a person's level of competency to perform a certain type of task. Such aptitude tests are often used to assess academic potential or career suitability and may be used to assess either mental or physical talent in a variety of domains.

Examples of Aptitude Tests

Some examples of aptitude tests include:

- A test assessing an individual's aptitude to become a fighter pilot
- A career test evaluating a person's capability to work as an air traffic controller
- An aptitude test is given to high school students to determine which type of careers they might be good at
- A computer programming test to determine how a job candidate might solve different hypothetical problems
- A test designed to test a person's physical abilities needed for a particular job such as a police officer or firefighter

Students often encounter a variety of aptitude tests throughout school as they think about what they might like to study in college or do for as a career someday. High school students often take a variety of aptitude tests designed to help them determine what they should study in college or pursue as a career. These tests can sometimes give a general idea of what might interest students as a future career.

For example, a student might take an aptitude test suggesting that they are good with numbers and data. Such results might imply that a career as an accountant, banker, or stockbroker would be a good choice for that particular student. Another student might find that they have strong language and verbal skills, which might suggest that a career as an English teacher, writer, or journalist might be a good choice.

Aptitude tests may be single or specialized as per the skill or ability such as artistic ability, manual dexterity, clerical skills and motor abilities or maybe general.

Types of Aptitude Test

1. Special Aptitude Tests

Special aptitude tests are those designed to look at an individual's capacity in a particular area. For example, imagine that a business wants to hire a computer programmer to work for their company. They will likely look at a range of things including work history and interview performance, but they might also want to administer an aptitude test to determine if job candidates possess the necessary skill to perform the job. This special aptitude test is designed to look at a very narrow range of ability: how skilled and knowledgeable the candidate is at computer programming.

2. Multiple Aptitude Tests

Multiple aptitude tests are designed to measure two or more different abilities. In some cases, such tests may even resemble intelligence tests in terms of their focus and scope. The Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) that high school students take during their senior year is a good example of a multiple aptitude test. The SAT measures aptitudes in areas including math, reasoning, and language and is often used by colleges and universities to determine if an applicant is prepared and has the ability to do well in college.

Uses of Aptitude Test

1. Aptitude tests such as the reasoning test are often used to predict success in an occupation, training course, or educational endeavour. Organizations such as schools, businesses and government agencies often use aptitude tests to predict how well someone will perform if placed in them.

2. The most common use of aptitude tests is for college admissions and corporate hiring. Within an organization, aptitude tests are used at various stages to estimate the extent to which an individual will profit from a specific course or training.

3. Assessment of success in a field is usually done by comparison of scores with others already working in the given occupation. These tests could support selection decisions – for hiring, promotion and role change within an organization.

But only assessment of aptitude does not depict completely the entire personality as one's performance and potential are also affected by the interest and perception. In fact, most organizations today emphasize upon the attitude of the individual along with the aptitude during selection and development processes.