

# Measures of emotional and behavioral functioning

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Personality is all about the person as a whole. It determines a number of major characteristics of a person. Major characteristics include, but may not be limited to, the person's behaviors, how he/she reacts with another person under a given set of conditions, what the person finds motivating or challenging and what he/she holds as valuable. It is a person's internal trait and is usually assumed to be stable across a person's life-span. There are mainly four theories regarding what controls personality. They are psychoanalytic, trait, social cognitive and humanistic (Burger 2010).

Naturally genetic influence, age, culture, education all are recognized to be significant contributors of personality development. There are a number of standard tests to measure personality. All tests must be reliable and valid. Reliability of a psychometric test means consistently same result must be obtained even if the test is administered at different times. Validity of test refers to whether the test actually measures what it sets out to measure.

These two are fundamental to any psychometric test (Michell 1997). Some of the standard tests measuring personality are Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-2) or Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). Since the former is an objective type of test, it is more valid and reliable than the other. But the drawback is that, it depends on the person's own honesty. The latter is unstructured and subjective, hence difficult to measure reliability and validity of this test. Then there are rating scales and clinical observations to test personality. Personality tests try to characterize a person as a whole. Sometimes it tries to identify problems in different functioning areas, thereby deciding whether any therapy is required. The tests also may compare with norm groups to quantify a personality type. Personality tests help with deciding what type of career would suit a person, <https://assignbuster.com/measures-of-emotional-and-behavioral-functioning/>

what environment the person would be comfortable working in, etc.

Personality tests are sometimes recommended before a person embarks on a new job. Attitude and interest may be thought of as the visible aspect of a personality. Different types of personality will have different impact on a person's attitude toward a particular object or action. Attitude is related to self-perception and, to some extent, social acceptability. Measures of attitude may be broadly classified into Direct Measurement (likert scale and semantic differential) and Indirect Measurement (projective technique). Like personality tests, attitude measurements scales need to be reliable and validated. A very standard measurement of attitude that everybody has experience with in some form or other is the opinion survey used in marketing or media research. Occupational interest surveys are used for vocational guidance and pre-employment counselling. One such test is the Kuder Occupational Interest Survey which yields a candidate's scores on a number of vocational interests like mechanical, scientific, artistic, music etc. The test results are presented as percentile scores. Hence, the main differences between the personality and attitude and interest measurements are that the former is used to look at the person as a whole and in an indirect method. The latter tests look at the fitment of the person in areas of suitability. Attitude and interest tests cannot be used for therapy purpose, as there is usually no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. References Burger, J. M. (2010). *Personality* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing. Michell, J. B. (1997). Quantitative science and the definition of measurement in psychology. *British Journal of Psychology* 88, 355–383.