

CHAPTER XVI

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEST USERS

Mental tests have been widely, and often unfairly, criticised. But the progress of testing is probably hindered to a greater extent by its friends, who are ignorant of its limitations than by its enemies.¹

- Vernon, P. E.

If tests are to be applied and interpreted properly, the testers should acquaint themselves with "these" limitations, analyse them and understand the underlying principles thoroughly. If testing is handled by skilled persons, it provides far surer and more accurate tool for the assessment of abilities than do subjective impressions or the ordinary examination paper.

To achieve useful and better results, it is, therefore, necessary that the present test should be used by skilled persons only. The test users should have at least elementary knowledge of mental testing.

The scores obtained on the test are comparable with the test norms only if the test is administered and scored in a standardised procedure. It is of utmost necessity, then, that the user of the present test acquaints himself thoroughly

¹ Vernon, P.E., "The Measurement of Abilities", University of London Press Ltd., London, E.C. 4, 1956, pp. 195-196.

with the test and the procedures of administering and scoring it.

The test is, undoubtedly, a group test. It can, yet, be administered individually also. The procedures of administering and scoring the test are the same in either case.

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Any test user should study the following suggestions between lines and carry them out thoroughly to achieve useful and better results through the use of the present test.

- (1) The whole test should be read and understood **thoroughly**. If the test manual is available it should be procured and read.
- (2) The test-user should be crystal clear as to the purpose of using the test. The test may be used for any one of the following three purposes.
 - (a) For selecting prospective teachers for training.
 - (b) For employing untrained teachers in the schools.
 - (c) For vocational guidance.
- (3) The tester should know the reliability and validity of the present test and decide himself how far the test will serve his purpose.

- (4) The tester should study the printed instructions given on the front page of the test-booklet with a view to seeing precisely how the test works, and should then follow these instructions to the letter. He should also note down the instructions that are given in Appendix I, to be given orally alongwith the printed instructions.

No change should be made in the printed instructions or even in the list of oral instructions. Very likely the test could be improved by making some changes in instructions, but then it would no longer be the same test, and the established test norms or the forecasting equation would no longer hold good.

- (5) Our testees being invariably matured persons, the requirements for creating psychological atmosphere for taking the test may not be looked to very strictly, but care should be taken to see, at least, that they are comfortable in the testing room and are undoubtedly in a mood to take the test.

- (6) While administering the test the following procedure is to be followed.

- (a) Distribute first the answerbooks and instruct the testees to fill in the particulars on the front page.

- (b) Secondly, distribute the test-booklets with an instruction to read carefully the printed directions on the front page.
 - (c) Thirdly, the test-administrator should read aloud verbatim a typed manuscript of the oral instructions.
 - (d) Fourthly, any legitimate question from any testee should be answered.
 - (e) Lastly, ask the testees to open page 3 of the test-booklet and start answering items in sub-test I, with an instruction to read the directions at the top of the page and study the illustration given there carefully.
 - (f) The testees should not ask any questions while answering the items. They should be allowed only to ask the meanings of difficult words.
- (7) There is no time limit in administering the test. The testees should be given as much time as they need in answering all the test items. This should be told to them in unequivocal terms in the beginning.
- (8) The testees should be plainly informed at the outset that they should respond to all the items

and omit none. The test administrator should make sure that a testee has answered all items while accepting his answer book at the end.

- (9) The whole test-battery should be administered at a time.
- (10) The scoring instructions must be followed as meticulously as the instructions for applying the test. The tester may sometimes disagree with the response provided in the scoring key, and think that some alternative is just as good or better. This may be so, but once personal opinion enters the scoring ceases to be objective, and the results again cannot be compared with the test norms.

Vernon¹ writes,

No mental test score should ever be accepted at its face value, nor trusted in the same way as physical measurements are trusted. Even the best tests, it should be remembered, only measure to within a certain Probable Error.

Eventhough the reliability and validity of the present test are reasonably satisfactory, the test-user should be careful in interpreting the test score. It should be remembered that the forecasting ability of the test-battery is

1 Vernon, P. E., Op.Cit., p. 194.

16 per cent, showing that the test does not say everything about the testee's aptitude for teaching. It is suggested that in order to know more about the aptitude for teaching of a prospective teacher over and above our knowing his aptitude test score, some more information about his knowledge of subject matter, his health and the traits of sincerity and industry be collected through some proper techniques.

The aptitude test score, together with this detailed information about the prospective teacher, will enable the test-user to predict the testee's probable success in teaching with greater confidence and on sounder basis.