

A Comparative Study on Story Telling by Thematic Apperception Test

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Abstract: Introduction: Thematic Apperception Test probes the psychodynamics of the individual's personality. It is the projective technique commonly used in clinical and non clinical settings. It reveals the action and counteraction of the forces depicting needs, wishes, desires, conflicts, anxieties and defenses of individual's personality. Objectives: To assess and compare the psychodynamics of 25 years male substance users. Methods: In this present study a comparison was made between two 25 years male substance users. TAT was administered on them after detoxification phases. Results: Findings highlighted one person (Brown Sugar Addict) has adequate self-image, perceives the environment as friendly and congenial. He reveals need for achievement and recognition. He has autonomy/compliance conflict and defenses he recourses to sublimation. While other person (Buprenorphine addict) shows degraded self-image, need for achievement fused with aggression. Conflict between intra-extra aggression results in isolation and withdrawal tendency. Conclusion: Thus it could be concluded that TAT reveals covert and overt personality dynamics beautifully by story telling. The present study follows the steps in this direction. Further replication is needed for confirmation of the present study.

Keywords: Psychology, Thematic Apperception Test, Story telling.

INTRODUCTION

Thematic Apperception Test probes the Psychodynamics of the individual's personality. It is the projective technique commonly used in clinical and nonclinical settings. In a procedure such as the TAT, the subject is asked to perform a complex task. His mind runs freely, that is, to induce some self-exclusion of the ego. The subject is asked to tell a story about the picture, to tell about what is going on, what led up to the situation and what the outcome will be. As in free association and artistic production, performance on the TAT and other projective techniques presupposes on oscillating functions of the ego. 'The letting go' gives us the drive content thus far primarily studied in projective methods. By observing the oscillating functions and the defenses against the drive material the ego strength could be inferred.

The ability to relate to and from the latent to manifest – from the projective test to actual behavior – has been considered the crucial problem of projective testing. A good analyst would never interpret a dream from the manifest content without knowing the life situation. Similarly the psychologist should only interpret the unconscious data, in the light of, and in the complementation of behavioral data. The ego must be considered the intervening variable between the latent and the manifest level. TAT reveals the action and counteraction of the forces depicting needs, wishes

, desires, anxieties, conflicts and defenses of the individual's personality.

In this present study a comparison was made between two 25 years male adults.

RESULTS:

- 1) Subject 25 years old unmarried male adults

Story – 1)

A boy is sitting in front of the violin. The boy stated he would be the violin master one day. He would make practices and his desires would be fulfilled.

[Need for achievement & recognition adequate self-image]

Story -2)

Father, mother, and daughter were there in the picture. The girl would be outstation for perusing her career. She would miss the family. Lovely family atmosphere exist.

[Able to establish proper emotional bond, need for achievement]

Story - 3)

A boy is lying down, might be due to financial failure. He felt that he would be able to overcome this situation and would move forward.

[Feeling of inadequacy. But able to compensate]

Story – 4)

Husband and wife are there. They have a lovely relation within them. At present wife tells something, husband cannot make the decision. Ultimately he would be able to make the decision with the help of wife.

[Proper heterosexual bond , need autonomy , happy outcome]

Story – 6B

Mother and son are there. They are discussing about serious issues, they will solve the issues.

[Identifies with mother figure, mother figure is seen as co-operative and helpful]

Story – 7B

Father and son are there . Son is taking advice from the father. With the help of the father son would be resolve his problem.

[Identifies with father figure, father figure is seen as helpful]

Story – 8B

Doctor successfully does the operation and feels proud of it.

[Need for achievement, defense- sublimation]

Story – 13 MF

Husband was worried that her wife is critically ill. With the helpful of the doctor she would be ok and husband would be happy.

[Environment is seen as non-congenial, but with the Support, difficulties could be overcome]

Story – 17BM

A man is showing circus and he would gain a lot of recognition from society .

[Narcissistic trend – need for achievement and recognition]

Subject – 2 25 years old male adult

Story - 1

The boy is looking at the violin but couldn't play it . He is feeling sad and inadequate . He would try but feels low.

[Depressed and inadequate self-image]

Story - 2

A girl is ready to go somewhere. The man is in the field. The woman is looking sad.

[Unable to establish emotional bond, depressed mood]

Story – 3BM

The boy is lying down, crying, Probably he would commit suicide.

[Depressed – self – directed aggression]

Story - 4

Husband and wife are discussing serious issues. He would like to win over the matter, but wife is not co-operating . He is feeling disappointed.

[Need for autonomy , Need for achievement fused with aggression results, in depression]

Story – 7BM

Father and Son, Son tries to seek support from father, but at the same time seeks autonomy. Finally he would make his own decision.

[Father figure is seen as supportive , Need for autonomy]

Story – 8BM

The boy is in doubt. He identifies himself with the ill person and sometimes he feels that people from outside are killing him. He feels depressed and helpless.

[Depressed self image, Conflict between intra/extra aggression]

Story – 13MF

Husband has found that wife is dead. But couldn't find the reason, whether she has natural death or outsiders have killed her.

[Aggression is projected on opposite sex figure. Conflict - intra/extra]

Story – 17BM

The person had stolen something and tried to escape.

[Degradedself-image]

Interpretation

In the first case the person has adequate self-image, perceives the environment as friendly and congenial. He reveals need for achievement and recognition. He has autonomy/compliance conflict and defenses he recourses to is sublimation. In the second case the person shows inadequate self-image and fused with aggression. Conflict between intra/extra aggression results in isolation and withdrawal tendency.

Conclusion :

Thus it can be concluded TAT reveals covert and overt personality dynamics beautifully by storytelling.

Reference:

Bellak , Leopold (1956). The TAT and CAT in clinical Grune& Stratton New Yark 1954.