

The Thematic Apperception Test



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+ INTRODUCTION:

- The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) is a projective personality assessment psychological test
- The TAT was developed in 1935 by American psychologist Henry A. Murray and Christiana D. Morgan at Harvard University.
- The TAT was originally designed as an aid to eliciting fantasy material from patients in Psychoanalysis. However, it's uses have evolved over the years.



+ THE TEST PROCEDURE

- The complete version of the test contains 31 picture cards. The subject is asked to tell a story for each picture that is presented to them, including the following:

- 1) what has led up to the event shown
- 2) what is happening at the moment
- 3) what the characters are feeling and thinking
- 4) what the outcome of the story was



+ THE PICTURE CARDS:

- Out of the 31 cards, 30 cards are picture cards, all black and white, which contain a variety of scenes designed to present the test taker with certain classical human situations. One card is left blank where participants are asked to imagine a picture and then tell a story about it.
- The original 31 cards were divided into three categories, for use with men only, with women only, or for use with subjects of either sex.
- In practice, an examiner might administer as few as one or two cards or as many as 31.





INTERPRETATION OF CARDS:



- In interpreting responses to the TAT, examiners typically focus their attention on one of three areas:
 - a) the content of the stories that the subject tells
 - b) the feeling or tone of the stories and the participant
 - c) or the subject's behaviours apart from responses

These behaviours may include verbal remarks (for example, comments about feeling stressed by the situation or not being a good storyteller) as well as nonverbal actions or signs (blushing, stammering, fidgeting in the chair, etc.)

- The story content usually reveals the subject's attitudes, fantasies, wishes, inner conflicts, and view of the outside world.
- The story structure typically reflects the subject's feelings, assumptions about the world, and an underlying attitude of optimism or pessimism.

+ SCORING SYSTEMS:

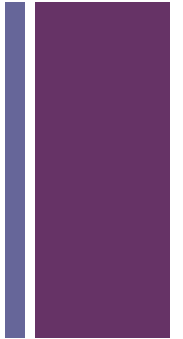
- Several formal scoring systems have been developed for analyzing TAT stories systematically and consistently. Three common methods that are currently used in research are the:
 - 1) Defence Mechanisms Manual
 - 2) Social Cognition and Object Relations (SCOR) scale
 - 3) Personal Problem-Solving System—Revised (PPSS-R)



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PSYCHOMETRIC CHARACTERISTICS:

- Reliability
- Validity





APPLICATIONS OF TAT:



- Personality Assessment:
Helps to evaluate a person's patterns of thought, attitudes, observational capacity, and emotional responses to ambiguous test materials
- Expectations:
Reveals the expectations of participants in relationships with peers, parents or other authority figures, subordinates, and possible romantic partners.
- Recruitment:
The TAT is often used in individual assessments of candidates for employment in fields requiring a high degree of skill in dealing with other people and ability to cope with high levels of psychological stress— such as law enforcement, military leadership positions, etc.
- Forensic Purposes:
TAT is sometimes used for forensic purposes in evaluating the motivations and general attitudes of persons accused of violent crimes.
- Consumer Behaviour:
TAT is widely used to study consumer perceptions and motivations.



CONCLUSION:



- Despite criticisms for being unscientific, the TAT continues to be used as a tool for research into areas of psychology such as dreams, fantasies, mate selection and what motivates people to choose their occupation.
- However, for accurate results, the TAT must be interpreted in the context of the subject's personal history, age, sex, level of education, occupation, racial or ethnic identification, first language, and other characteristics that may be important.
- Sometimes it is used in a psychiatric or psychological context to assess personality disorders, thought disorders, in forensic examinations to evaluate crime suspects, or to screen candidates for high-stress occupations



Thank You 😊