

# Psychological profile evaluation of Juvenile Delinquents of Koshi : A Case Study through TAT (Thematic Apperception Test)

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## ABSTRACT

The study followed a qualitative design using Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) for the collection of data. The sample consisted of two male juvenile delinquents of the age 16 & 18 years in Madhepura town. The data were analyzed using Leopold Bellack's method of TAT analysis.

The Psychological concept of personality is a relatively stable pattern of behavior, thoughts, or actions that distinguish one person from another. The present study aims to profile the personality of juvenile delinquents using a projective technique to develop a perspective on the relationships between the individual characteristics and the array of crime committed by juvenile offenders. The findings indicated that most of the people involved in criminal activities face relationship issues either with the family members or with peers. Social and cultural factors have emerged to be some of the major contributors to the act of delinquency by juveniles. The study can be replicated in schools and correctional homes to identify the psychopathic traits and develop appropriate strategies to reform the personality of the juveniles.

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## 1. Introduction

Juvenile is an individual who is above the minimum age of criminal responsibility (varies internationally), below the age of criminal maturity and is legally able to commit a criminal offense. In India, the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, proposes "any person under the age of 18" to be considered a child and the age of criminal responsibility to be at 7 years(1). "Delinquent" is defined as a person who is found guilty, while delinquency is the act of being involved in behaviors which are in conflict with the law by a minor. Thus, the concept of juvenile delinquency can be stated as when a child or young person is at fault for some offense or antisocial behavior or the demeanor of the child is beyond parental control. The word juvenile has been derived from the Latin word "juvenis," which means young and the word delinquency has originated from the word delinquent which means "to omit."

Nowadays, youth are subject to individual risks as well as opportunities that could be beneficial and some potentially harmful. Quite often, youth take advantage of illegal opportunities by getting involved in various offenses, drug addiction, and violence. In the process of identifying the causes of criminal behavior, determining the factors contributing to the development and sustainment of delinquent identity becomes a priority as it is always constructed as an alternative to the conventional identity of the larger society.

The identity developed based on the personality characteristics of juvenile delinquents is reflected through the profiles of delinquent acts committed. These acts of delinquency may be a result of poor quality of life experienced by the individuals in terms of consistency of discipline, level of tension and ease of communication.

The juvenile offenders who are arrested and prosecuted are profiled to understand the pattern and causes of crime.

This is based on the understanding that the data will help in identifying offenders and prevention of crimes in the future. For the profiling, quantitative and qualitative measures are used.

The Thematic Apperception Test, or TAT, is a type of projective test that involves describing ambiguous scenes. Popularly known as the "picture interpretation technique," it was developed by American psychologists Henry A. Murray and Christina D. Morgan at Harvard University in the 1930s.<sup>1</sup> To date, the TAT is one of the most widely researched and clinically used personality tests.

The TAT involves showing people a series of picture cards depicting a variety of ambiguous characters (that may include men, women, and/or children), scenes, and situations.

## 2. Methodology

Twelve TAT cards were used in three sets of four cards each.

The three sets were as follows:

Set A -Cards 2, 3BM, 7BM, 14.

Set B -Cards 4, 6BM, 13MF, 20.

Set C -Cards 1, 10, 8BM, 12.

The cards within a set were always given in the same order. The sequence in which the sets were used varied randomly. The order in which the three experimental conditions occurred was also random. With three sets of cards and three experimental conditions, there were thirty-six different ways for the card-series and conditions to be matched. Varying the sequence of the conditions and the cards

Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), a projective technique, so as to develop a perspective on the relationships between

the individual characteristics and pattern of crime committed by juvenile offenders.

A study was conducted with data collected from 2 male juvenile delinquents of age 16 & 18 years, selected through purposive sampling technique from juvenile homes in Northern Bihar, India. The significance of collecting data from this particular age group could be based on the report published by the National Crime Records Bureau. According to the (NCRB) report, stated that over the years there has been an increase in

the rate of crimes committed by the juveniles in the age bracket of 16-18 years.

The following criteria were included in the study:

- a) Juveniles available in correctional homes.
- b) Correctional homes located in Koshi.
- c) Delinquents are of the age of 16 & 18 years.
- d) Delinquents who could communicate in Hindi language.
- e) Delinquents with sound mental health.

**3. Result**

S.No	Cards Used in TAT									
	Card 1	3BM	7BM	13MF	6BM	8BM	Card 4	Card 1	Card 6	4MF
Case 1	violence; animal killing	violence in family	isolation	relationship issues	violence in family	theft; murder	relationship issues; separation	paranormal activities; isolation	violence in family; relationship issues	violence; abduction; separation
Case 2	Family bond	Family bond	separation; anxiety	separation; isolation	family conflicts	conflicts in family; frustration; anxiety	separation; anxiety	relationship issues; anger; dominance	family conflicts	love for sibling

The TAT protocols of the participants were qualitatively analysed, keeping their family background in consideration. The major theme emerged from the TAT protocol of juvenile delinquents is presented in Table . Case wise discussion of the emerging personality profiles based on the interpretation of TAT protocols is as under.

**4. Conclusion**

The current study is a personality profile of juvenile delinquents by the method of qualitative data analysis. The

emphasis on "needs" and "presses" laid down by the TAT helped to understand the conflicts and emotions, reflecting the psychological causes for juvenile delinquency. The test can also be used as a pre- and post-assessment measure to assess the impact of counseling and psychotherapy. Further, the study can also be replicated in schools and correctional homes to identify the psychopathic traits and suggest preventive measures to aid overall social and psychological development of the children.

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