

Handwriting Analysis and Blank Picture of Thematic Apperception Test in Relation to Richness of Imagination

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Introduction

An image or visual stimulus in the environment plays an essential role in exercising the imagination. An imagery based account of the imagination is directed to the mental imagining but if the image is entirely eliminated then it brings out the true nature of imagination. Hammer (1958) hypothesised that painters, composers, designers, and anyone who uses their imagination projects his personality through the form of self expression. Roeckelein (2004) describes imagination as the "recombination of memories of past experiences and previously formed images into novel constructions".

Projective techniques are strategies used to access presumably repressed content that is often unconscious or difficult to get access. Projective techniques are predicated on the assumption that a person will cast his or her unfiltered perception, feelings, and desires onto neutral or ambiguous images (Branthwaite, 2002). There are five classifications of projective techniques based on response elicited (Linzey, 1959), namely associative, completion, constructive, ordering and expressive techniques.

Thematic Apperception test (TAT) is a constructive projective test developed by Morgan & Murray (1935) which uses stimulus pictures of intentionally varied ambiguity to evaluate a person's pattern of thoughts, attitudes, observational capacity and emotional responses to ambiguous test materials. TAT is so integrally involved with Murray's concept of personality and the hypothesis is, that when someone attempts to interpret a complex situations he is apt to tell as much about himself as he is about the phenomenon on which his attention is focused. It is a test of imagination in which subjects have to write a story on and around the picture image shown to them. They have to write what led to the situation, what is going on and what the outcome will be? They have to describe thoughts, feelings and actions of the characters involved in the story. At such times the subject is off guard, since one believes that one is merely explaining objectives occurrences. There are eleven pictures and one blank picture and each of these pictures has a differential evocative power with respect to different aspects of personality. A blank picture is described where no situation or character presented to the subject. One is free to imagine a situation and characters of his or her own choice and then have to write a story. It is the last picture to be shown in the set of 12 pictures of TAT.

Assumptions underlying TAT & its significance to Blank Picture

1. In creating a story the storyteller ordinarily identifies with one person in the drama and the wishes, strivings and conflicts of these imaginary persons may reflect those of the storyteller. The same is applicable to the blank slide as the storyteller writes a story with a hero, who is none other than the person himself.
2. The storyteller's dispositions, strivings and conflicts are sometimes represented indirectly or symbolically and the same goes to blank picture also. The storyteller imagines a picture of his own and the hero's dispositions, conflicts get reflected indirectly.
3. All the stories are not of equal importance. Similarly, blank picture may provide a very large amount of valid diagnostic material, while others may supply little or none.
4. Themes that appear to have arisen directly out of the stimulus material are less apt to be significant than those that do not appear to have been directly determined by stimulus material.

5. Recurrent themes (that show up in three or four different stories) are particularly likely to mirror the characteristics of the storyteller.
6. The stories may reflect momentary characteristics of the storyteller as well as enduring characteristics in blank slide the storyteller plots a theme which is close to his/her personal life so that's one of the most important reason blank story matters in psychological assessment.
7. The storyteller may reflect events from past that the subject has not himself actively experienced, but has witnessed or observed (street scenes, motion pictures). Although the subject has himself not experienced but he selects them, is itself indicative of his own impulses, likings and conflicts. The blank picture intends to dig out personalised specific core unconsciousness of an individual and it provides good leads to be verified for confirmation by other methods.
8. The eleven stories along with the blank one may reflect the group membership and socio-cultural determinants in addition to individual or personal determinants.
9. Dispositions and conflicts inferred the storyteller's creations may be unconscious and thus may not always be reflected directly in overt behaviour or consciousness. There is always a "Beta Press" in the blank story. Beta Press refers to individual's perceptions and interpretations of specific aspects of the environment. Most behaviour is a direct result of Beta Press, the environment determinants that elicit specific behaviour from individual specific needs within him or her.

Blank Picture : It's Importance As Single Identity

If we view blank picture in isolation it holds immense importance. It completes the imagination of an individual by constructing theme of his own liking and interest in which he reveals, what he was unable to do so in the previous eleven pictures. The twelfth picture is purposely kept blank to culminate or conclude the flow of unconscious with individual's own choice. It gives a feeling of satisfaction to the storyteller as it gets concluded in a manner of his choice and wish. This feeling of completeness means the subject is able to write the story based on his core unconscious, where the personality revolves which otherwise was not able to get expressions in the rest eleven stories. Hence the blank picture is the true measure of imagination based on imageless picture.

Handwriting starts out as a chain of isolated motor movements, but it is radically altered with practice, and converted into a 'kinetic melody' no longer requiring the memorizing of the visual form of each letter or motor impulse for making every stroke (Luria,1973). As one writes, imagination plays a crucial role, it's the inner speech. Graphologically, unconscious automatism is a realm that encompasses latent memories, the censor, the defense structure, symbolic behavior, and the automatism. Handwriting crosses that border between thoughts and physical expression, reflects the psychology of mind. When the censor is weakened in the last blank picture of TAT, the repressed material thereby released unconsciously in the form of hypercathexis through the symbolic act of handwriting. The imagination exercised during dynamically creative unconscious in the blank picture contains idiosyncrasies and also individuality. These automatisms indicate the richness of imagination which can be observed into the artful science of handwriting. Since the graphology and TAT are both projective in nature, therefore the aim of the study was to explore handwriting analysis and blank picture of TAT in relation to richness of imagination.

Aim : Handwriting characteristics of imagination in blank picture of thematic apperception test

Null Hypothesis: There will be no difference between blank picture of TAT and handwriting analysis in assessing richness of imagination.

Methodology

Sample: The stories on blank picture were collected from a sample of seven subjects who wrote Thematic Apperception Test. All subjects were male and their average age was 20 years. They have passed the school.

They were from middle socio-economic status and mentally normal healthy individuals. They all were right handed.

Procedure: The various features in handwriting through which features of imagination can be commented upon were taken into consideration (Amend & Ruiz,1980). Seven features of handwriting which depicts imaginations were upper zone, arcades, loops, t bar above stem, crossing t bar over looped stem, round i dot placed high above the stem and sharp accent i dot high above the stem. The qualitative approach of research was carried out. The seven samples of stories in blank picture of seven storytellers were analyzed in a structured way. To enhance objectivity and validity of findings, an independent professional graphologist was involved to do the assessment. Blind analysis was carried out by another independent graphologist as recommended by Wallner (1975) and Nevos (1989). Some information about the sample was shared to the independent examiner such as the gender, age and whether storyteller was either a left-hander or a right-hander. Following were handwriting samples of seven story teller:-

Storyteller 1

12. Sameer was working as an engineer in UAE. He worked well for long time & got good exposure of knowledge & good hold of money. He went back to his country to be with family & work there. but his young age & unemployed in country left with less productive jobs. So Sameer studied the idea of business. He thought to make an arabic cafe. He studied likes of locals. Pros of hanging out. He went to big cafe owners & asked for joint venture as it reduces risk. He got all permission & looked for a cook. He tasted the cook & started business. Promoted it on FM & social media. Soon youth liked the new flavour & someone saw a hike in business. It was running good & Sameer was happy as it gave some employment to locals too.

Storyteller 2

12. Varun, was an electrical engineer, she always fancied flying objects, so he decided to build a drone, he took his friends along with him in the project, Varun searched the internet for various new designs, and technology being in. He divided the different tasks among his team members for more efficiency. They decided to put a camera and Infra Red imager in the drone to be used by the armed forces after various testings, the drone was completed. Varun presented the idea to PRDO, who gladly accepted the drone, and assign.

Storyteller 3

12. Deva is a Intelligent Boy in a Tribal village. he had Inspiration to join in Service. For that he used to go running across the vally. one fine Day while doing Running he Hear a Sound of Crash, He ran to the Direction of sound. he saw a Training aircraft was crashed. he Tryed to Help the Pilot but The Craft is so heavy to lift. He Ran back to village call people. and Rescure the pilot. and admit to hospital and Save his life. Pilot After recovery meet him and Thanked him. He also got that years President galaxy award. he continues work for preparation his service.

Storyteller 4

12. This story of the Vudhugan (Vudhugan) place. One one person very hard work on his feetness dears on the railway station. After after he get a study & take some achive in his life. He get out of the village & he show some all states & their people & observed must done after he come in village & get in politics. & he get a three time Chief minister of the Vudhugan & he get very hard work for the Vudhugan & now he get a Prime-minister of India & its name of "Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi".

Storyteller 5

12. Relit is a senior engineer in a Bank of India. His manager call him in his cabin tell about his work but he have to go the next day village and tell about the P.M. JAN DHAN Yojna through his village and how best get a benefit of it. Relit go to the nearby village and talk to Sarpanch about the P.M. Jan Dhan Yojna. he tell the village about Yojna that they will a good

Storyteller 6

12. Mark has been an enthusiastic person as a young child & loves music. So, when he grows older, he becomes a music producer, he makes good music videos but wants something more which could connect the music videos to people on another level. So, he finds out about VR technology & uses that as a medium to connect music videos to people which is fascinating and he achieves something greater which he

Storyteller 7

12. Amit was an NCC cadet. One day he was returning from his NCC parade. He saw one accident. That one scooter crash with one motor. He immediately rush on the spot and give that person first aid. First he take him to road side. Then with the help of that motor he hospitalise that injured person. He took care of that person till his family member come. Then he go to home after doing that job. He feels satisfied with his efforts. and feels victorious.

These handwriting samples of story in blank picture written by seven storytellers were analyzed against the presence or absence of seven features of handwriting that depicts richness of imagination exercised as specified above.

| Handwriting Features of Imagination Richness | Presence or Absence of Handwriting Features Storytellers | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 1 Overly extended Upper Zone | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 2 Big Arcade | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 3 Tall Loops | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 4 t bar high above the stem | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 Crossing t bar in a looped stem | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 Round i dot placed high above the stem | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 7 Sharp accent i dot high above the stem | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| 1 means presence and 0 means absence of handwriting features of imagination richness | | | | | | | |

The scoring of the TAT has been largely restricted to content analysis, a qualitative approach of assessment. The scoring of the story in blank picture has included three aspects for richness of imagination which can be categorized- fantasy, realistic and preconceived. Scoring has been made simple and objective in nature. Richness of imagination was assessed on the basis of content analysis of story by the professional expert of projective technique.

| Story | Theme of the Story in the Blank Picture | Fantasy (Day dreaming & Creative) | Realistic (Moderate Projection & Moderate Creative) | Preconceived (Routine & Mundane) |
|-------|---|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | A foreign returned engineer establishes business of Arabic cafe in India | × | √ | × |
| 2 | An electrical engineer builds a drone and presented idea to Defence Lab | × | √ | × |
| 3 | A boy gets gallantry award by the president for rescuing the pilot from crashed aircraft | √ | × | × |
| 4 | Story of Narendra Modi becoming PM of India | × | × | √ |
| 5 | Senior executive of bank along with sarpanch making aware of villagers about PM Jan Dhan scheme | × | × | √ |
| 6 | A music lover & producer explore the VR technology to connect the music videos and people on another level. | √ | × | × |
| 7 | A NCC cadet provides a first aid to the injured person in a road accident situation. | × | √ | × |

Discussion

In blank picture the stimulus being imageless, gives an opportunity to express impulses, it puts pressure and repressed impulses in unconscious to get expression of mental images which plays an essential role in the imagination. As discussed, the blank picture is of vital importance and it provides immense “leads” to fulfill quench of imagination in an individual. The blank picture is a way of making the invisible visible, the irretrievable retrievable in some manifest form. It illuminates the unconscious process of which the subject was not aware. Hence, the blank picture of TAT was taken into consideration as best possible way to measure the richness of imagination. Graphology being interdisciplinary creative research field of projective technique has stimulated the present research topic of assessing richness of imagination.

Refer table 1, the storyteller no. 6 scores highest (4) on handwriting features of imagination richness, followed by storyteller no. 3 who scored 3, least scorers were storyteller no. 4, 5, 7 who scored 1 each. This reveals that the handwriting of storyteller no. 6 has featured maximum indicators of imagination richness namely – overly extended upper zone, big arcades, tall loops, and round I dot placed high above the stem, whereas second most scorer storyteller no. 3 showed the overly extended upper zone, round I dot placed high above the stem and sharp accent I dot high above the stem. Hence, it can be said that handwriting features of storyteller 6 and 3 reflected maximum richness in imagination while writing story on blank picture of TAT. Now refer table 2, the themes of story written in blank picture were divided into three categories of imagination richness – fantasy as highest, realistic as moderate and preconceived as least imagination. Here also, storyteller no 6 and 3 scored highest by using fantasy in their imagination while storyteller no. 4 and 5 were least using preconceived ideas. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted that there was no difference between blank picture of TAT and handwriting analysis in assessing richness of imagination.

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