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## A comparative study of repressed needs among children of joint and nuclear families

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### Abstract

The current research attempts to study the repressed needs among children of joint families and nuclear families. It was hypothesized that children of joint families will differ significantly from the children of nuclear families in their repressed needs. Child Apperception Test (CAT) of Bellak and Ballak (1949), which was adopted by Choudhary (Indian version) in 1974, was used. A sample of 80 children of joint families and 80 children of nuclear families was selected. The children of joint families were different significantly from children of nuclear families in their repressed needs. These two categories of children are different in characteristics like Fear, Anxiety, Regression, Control, being jealousy. While children of joint and nuclear families showed no significant difference in defense mechanisms and on the total score of CAT. Hence the hypotheses were partially confirmed.

**Keywords:** nuclear families, fear, anxiety, regression, control

### Introduction

In nuclear families, children have more scope for themselves and their self-activities, which usually makes them detached from the family and social activities and relations. However, staying with a joint family straight away chucks out any indifferent behavior, which can help the children, when they are grown up, in articulating their emotions to others. The pattern of joint family shows us to get better our self-control and teaches to respect others. A frequently used saying that my family is my strength is factually adequate. In a joint family for minor obstacles, the child perceives it without disturbing his ongoing activities. The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether the family structure is associated with child well-being.

The need pattern of children and findings supported that art foodstuffs of the artist have their meaning in thoughtful of the unconscious brain. It also expresses the repressed anonymity and needs of the individual which are not fulfilled. Spontaneous songs, paintings, story writings, speeches drawings, songs, and dance are some of the projective assessments to provide release and satisfaction to such children. It is also expressed that the outcome of the art behavior of a normal person must vary in degree from an abnormal one. Deviated human drawing in a story represents the mentally defective person and the outcome of art behaviour is a reflection of both the past and present of the person. Jain (1990) <sup>[5]</sup> found in a comparison of children of joint and nuclear families, on Adjustment, Frustration, Level of Aspiration and Achievement when made, differences in some personality characteristics such as reaction to frustration and level of aspiration between the two groups of children. Leach and Eyer (1997) <sup>[6]</sup> needs of the growing child require the mother to loosen her hold on the child and this task may be easier for the joint family whose job is an additional source of identity and self-esteem. Bambara (1999) <sup>[2]</sup> Joint families start out with an irreplaceable bio-emotional advantage in relating to their infants when they are reared by them. When they are sent to nurseries and daycare centers it does not meet the child's needs. The extended time in daycare due to the mother's employment is likely to damage a newborn's development.

**Problem and its significance**

The current research attempts to study the repressed needs among children of joint families as compared to children with the nuclear family. It was hypothesized that children of joint families will differ significantly from the children of nuclear families in needs like Affiliation, Achievement, Dominance and Pressured like Dominance, Affiliations, Lack, and Loss. The motives, trends, and feelings among children of nuclear families will differ from their counterpart group because of the availability of their family members.

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**Research Design**

The present research design is a field experiment research design in which family structure - Joint and Nuclear families is an independent variable whereas, the repressed need of children is the dependent variable. The test was administered under semi control conditions without disturbing the neutrality of the surrounding conditions.

**Procedure**

The purpose of the research was explained to family members CAT has been administered individually to each subject after getting his/ her parent's consent. After completion of the test, the responses of each subject were analyzed with the help of appropriate statistical analysis.

**Test used**

In the present investigation Child Apperception Test (CAT) Bellak and Ballak (1949) [3] which was adopted by Choudhary in 1974 is used. It is adaptation of the original CAT, It has slight modification in the pictures which were suitable to Indian conditions and culturally relevant. The author herself accepts the lack of freedom when adapting a test as she has felt during making the CAT pictures by comparing with the original version. Therefore, all of the cards are modified according to the Indian children's mindset. It contains 10 pictures of animals and standardized over the school children of Indian northeastern states.

**Sample**

For current research sample is selected with the help of incidental purposive sampling technique. 80 children of joint families and 80 children of nuclear families were selected from by and large similar types of schools of Agra City and all of them were from 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> standard, with a mean age of 11.21 years each selected child has one sibling only.

**Result and Interpretation**

**Table 1:** showing mean & SD Values on Child Apperception Test for groups of children with joint & nuclear families.

Categories		DM	PID	Iden.	CAT
Children of joint families	Mean	67.63	8.12	3.96	78.31
	SD	20.64	2.11	1.29	26.22
Children of nuclear families	Mean	64.78	5.16	2.03	76.10
	SD	20.18	1.92	1.22	29.32

**Table 2:** Showing ‘t’ value on Child Apperception Test of both the groups of children

Categories	D.M.	P.I.D.	Iden.	CAT
Children of joint families (N=80) V/S	0.89	8.96	3.60	0.88
Children of nuclear families (N=80)	NS	**	**	NS

\*  $P < .01$ , NS – Not Significant, DM– Defiance Mechanism. PID– Phobic, Immature, Disorganized. Ident. – Identification., CAT– total Child Apperception Test Score.

As per Table 2, the children of joint families are different significantly from children of nuclear families on the Child Apperception Test i.e., PID ( $t=8.96$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and Ident ( $t=3.60$ ,  $p < .01$ ) respectively. This shows that children of joint and nuclear families are significantly different in Phobic Immature Disorganized behavior. This means that these two categories of children are different in Fear,

Anxiety, Regression, Control, being jealous or being loved by parents of same-sex or parents of the opposite sex. These reactions are more dominated among children of joint families, While children of joint and nuclear families have not shown any significant difference in Defense Mechanisms DM ( $t=0.89$ ) and Total Child Apperception Test Score CAT ( $t=0.88$ ). This reflects that children of both groups are the same in rebellion, stubbornness, isolation, regression, denial deception, etc. Though mean value of children of joint families is slightly higher than nuclear families on both DM category and total CAT scores.

**Discussion**

The purpose of the present study was to see the difference between need patterns of children of joint and nuclear families. In the present study children of joint families perceive maternal rejection may be due to their working status. The review of the study conducted in this area evidences that parental attitudes including child-rearing practices and their feeling of acceptance, and rejection towards the child play an important role in the development of the personality of the child. Motives like ‘Dominance’, ‘Aggression’ and ‘Heterosexuality’ were found higher among these children, it may lead to frustration and tends to be non-conformist. These children have also expressed violation of maternal norms in their stories. On the other hand, children of a nuclear family perceived maternal acceptance higher than the joint mother. Motives like ‘Achievement’, ‘Acceptance’, ‘Affiliation’, and ‘Endurance’ were also reported higher among the children of this category. These children prefer to put things in order as per the family norms. Children of joint females feel less affiliated with their parents and as a result obtain a lesser score on ‘Order’, ‘Abusement’, and ‘Endurance’. The above views are in the line with Bahadur & Dhawan, (2008) [1], who say that the general family is one of the fundamental units of society and takes care of the diverse needs of the child. Present findings also support the conclusion of McGoldrick *et al.* 2005 [8], and McGill 1992 [7]. They reported that the family system encourages the life of children in all aspects which enables them to live a happy and productive life and the family functioning by defining barriers, cooperation rules, connection patterns, adequate practices, regulations, s and ranking in the family. Most commonly used classification has two types i.e. joint and nuclear family systems (Richard *et al.*, 1985) [11] A nuclear family system is represented as a two-generation family consisting of a father and mother and children or a single, possibly widow, parent and his/her children Similarly, joint or extending family is defined as ‘three or more generations lived together with both vertical and lateral extension having a single line of authority, matrilineal, Nighat (2013) [10].s

Present findings are also in the line with the study of Mishra (1998) [9] in which he has reported that perceived maternal acceptance-rejection influences the motivational pattern of the child. A significant difference in eight motivational patterns was reported i.e., Achievement, Order, Affiliation, Dominance, Abasement, Endurance, Heterosexuality, and Aggression. However, on Motivational Pattern, Deference, Exhibition, Autonomy, Interception, Nurturance, and Change, the two groups of the subjects were not found to be significantly different from each other. Similarly, the findings of Bambara (1999) [2] are also supported by the

above views of the present investigation.

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