CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY
The present research work was an endeavour to study
the murderers in terms of their personality and adjustment.
Murder is the most shocking an abominable crime against
human body and ranks as the greatest crime under the law
(Deb, 1958). Despite of its being the most heinous crime,
murder rate is increasing in India at an alarming rate as is
evident from the increase of 58.7 % in its incidence during
the decade ending 1973 (Crime in India, 1974). The act of
murder has the quality of absolute finality unusual among
other crimes as the consequences for the victim cannot be
undone. In the civilized society, a very high premium is
placed on the sanctity of human life, so the killing of
another human being is the ultimate renunciation of behaviour
norms. Consequently, according to Johnson (1966) murder
holds an unusual fascination as a subject for fiction and
research.

Numerous studies have been reported from the Western
countries studying homicidal behaviour during the recent
years (Wolfgang, 1958; Blender, 1959; Wolfgang and Ferracuti,
1967; Blackburn, 1971, 1972; Blackman et al., 1974; Erdreich,
1974; Gillies, 1976 to quote a few), but very little
published material from India could be unearthed on this topic. The studies done by Somasundram (1965, 1970), Shanmugam (1969), Gupta and Sethi (1974), Singh, G. and Verma (1976), Sethi et al. (1977) were largely based upon clinical observations carried on selective sample. Thus a need was felt to carry out a study to get a knowledge of the personality of murderers as compared to the non-criminals, as the psychological theories of criminal behaviour lean heavily at present towards personality factors (Elliott, 1952). Although there are other factors also which contribute to the final product of the criminal, yet it is the personality factor which plays a major role (Jaspal, 1977).

The theoretical framework adopted in the present research work was Eysenck's personality model (1964, 1970) as applied to the criminal behaviour. Eysenck (1964, 1970) described antisocial and criminal behaviour as a disorder of under-socialization. According to Eysenck (1970), in the extraverted neurotic there has been a relative failure of socialization, resulting in the lack of a sense of responsibility towards society and the various forms of antisocial behaviour displayed by the criminals. This under-socialization is due to lesser conditionability. On the other hand, the individuals who condition better would socialize well. Eysenck had said that the process of socialization consists
in the formation of a set of conditioned fear reactions. According to Gray (1965) however, these conditioned responses form more strongly in introverts due to their susceptibility to fear and punishment. Eysenck (1970) further contends that a certain proportion of criminals who are often considered most difficult, inveterate and incorrigible would be expected to score high on Psychoticism which is characterized by the traits like solitary, troublesome, cruel, insensitive, aggressive etc. Thus, according to Eysenck (1970) criminals would be those individuals whose personality placed them in high E/I, high N and high P quadrants.

The second area of study for the present research work was adjustment. Adjustment is nothing but learning of behavioural patterns approved by the society. Eysenck (1970) has also maintained that propensity to crime is universal but is held in check by the "conscience". This conscience is developed as a result of socialization and makes an individual conform to society's norms, laws, and customs. It also helps him in development of a favourable self-concept, learning of socially approved goals, realistic aspiration level and frustration tolerance. But many conditions like personality imbalance, unsatisfactory parent-child relationship, broken homes, distasteful occupation and like may obstruct his attempts to self-expression and adjustment. As such, one
may suggest that criminals who have already drifted away from societal norms should have lesser adjustment in the areas of home, social, emotional and vocational fronts. This has been confirmed by many studies (Singh, A., 1976; Nirmal, 1977; Singh, A., 1979a, 1979b; Mohan and Singh, in press a).

A few earlier studies showed a close connection between low home, emotional, marital adjustment and murder. Johnson (1966) viewed murder as a crime of passion and Ahuja (1970), Sharma, S. (1976) and Singh, A. (1979b) observed that it was often a family affair. Some other studies reported that a majority of murder victims were either family member or close friends/immediate neighbours (Gupta and Sethi, 1974; Singh, G. and Verma, 1976; Sharma, S., 1976; Singh, A., 1979b) and thus showed the role of home, marital and emotional maladjustment in the genesis of murder.

A factorial design of $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$ was used in the present study. Two groups of 160 subjects each viz. murderers and non-criminals were further classified on the basis of sex, residential background and educational attainment. They were administered two tests of personality viz. EPI (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964) and PEN (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1968). Adjustment was measured in the present study with the help of Bell's adjustment inventory (Bell, 1937) and Burgess et al.'s (1956) Marital Adjustment Scale as modified.
by Mohan and Singh (in press, c).

The male murderers were selected from the Central Jail, Patiala and Central Jail, Ludhiana. The female murderers were selected from the Women Jail, Ludhiana; Women Jail, Hissar and Model Prison, Lucknow. The undertrials were excluded from the sample. The non-criminals were selected out of the general male and female population of Chandigarh, Ludhiana and Delhi and comprised of teachers, doctors, farmers, semiskilled and unskilled workers and housewives. Since the two groups of subjects were strictly matched according to design cells therefore the sample consisted of an equal number of males and females, those belonging to rural and urban areas and with low and high education.

Means and S.D.'s were calculated for each of the condition viz. - murderers-non-criminals; male-female; rural-urban; and low education - high education. An extensive analysis of variance was made using the factorial design of 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 to see the significance of the difference between the cell means. Separate analysis of variance was computed for each of the personality and adjustment variable studied.

Since the same subjects were tested on all the personality and adjustment tests, a correlational analysis
was also made. This revealed many intercorrelations among
the various variables and in order to give these intercorrelations some statistical legitimacy, factor analysis
was applied to the intercorrelations by the method of
principle axis (Fruchter, 1967). Five factors were extracted
for the murderers and it was found that E (both PEN and EPI).
Sociability and Impulsivity form the first factor; N (both
PEN and EPI) and emotional adjustment formed second; Lie
scales of PEN and EPI formed the third; while the fourth
factor comprised of marital adjustment and P. Home and
Emotional adjustments formed the fifth factor. For non-
criminals, four factors were extracted. Factor I comprised
of P, N, Home and Emotional adjustments; factor II comprised
of E (both PEN and EPI), Sociability and Impulsivity.
Factor III was made up of the lie scales of EPI and PEN.
Factor IV comprised of Home and Marital Adjustment.

The results of analysis of variance revealed that
there were significant differences between murderers and
non-criminals on most of the variables studied. The first
personality variable was E/I and the present results showed
that the murderers and non-criminals do not differ from each
other on extraversion. This was explained on the basis of
a large number of sociability items in the E/I scale of PEN
and EPI. The preponderance of sociability items over
impulsivity items gives only a global picture where the two
factors could be serving to cancel each other out (Jaspal, 1977). Thus, the E/I scale of EPI was split into its two components viz. sociability and impulsivity to see separately the contribution of these factors towards criminality. The results clearly supported Eysenck and Eysenck's (1971) deduction that criminals would be higher on impulsivity and lower on sociability.

As regarding N and P, the present results are clearly in line with most of the earlier studies and thereby support Eysenck's (1970) theory regarding criminals being higher on N and P. The murderers scored significantly higher on N and P as compared to the non-criminals. The finding regarding N and murder was explained in terms of Eysenck's (1970) contention that a highly labile autonomic system (high N) interferes with efficient avoidance learning. As regarding P, the content of the P items suggested that high P persons should respond less well to avoidance training which emphasizes the acquisition of an empathic response to the distress of another (Feldman, 1976). Since murderers apparently lack this empathic response (because of the killing of another person) it is no wonder that they scored very high on P.

The present results on the second area of study, i.e. adjustment, showed that the murderers had a poorer home, marital and emotional adjustment as compared to the non-criminals. This was explained in terms of the nature of
murder as well as the victim-offender relationships. In most of the earlier studies, it has been established that murder victims are more often the immediate family members of the offender and this indicates a poorer home and marital adjustment. Murder itself has been termed as a crime of emotionality (Johnson, 1966; Wolfgang, 1969) which occurs at a point of intense emotion and a feeling that to continue the relationship is inconceivable while to give up is impossible (Cormier, 1962). Thus, the murderers ought to be poorly adjusted in the areas of home, marriage and emotionality and the present study clearly brought it out. The murderers scored lower on home, marital and emotional adjustment as compared to the non-criminals thereby supporting most of the evidence accrued in this respect.

Furthermore, adjustment was found to be a global overall phenomenon for non-criminals, but for murderers, it yielded an individualized factor structure. It was found in factor analysis that home and emotional adjustment formed one unitary factor in case of the murderers, while marital adjustment formed a separate independent factor. But for non-criminals, home and marital adjustment formed one factor while emotional adjustment another. This difference in factor structure between murderers and non-criminals was explained on the basis of the results obtained regarding their personality where the murderers scored very high on N
Neuroticism has been termed as 'emotional lability, physiologically related to quicker arousal of sympathetic autonomic nervous system' while Psychoticism has been defined as a general tendency to be odd, isolated, troublesome, aggressive, hostile to even near and dear ones, and like. As such, there should be a negative relationship between N, P and adjustment and the present results clearly showed this in factor analysis where N and P had negative factor loadings on those factors on which adjustment yielded positive factor loadings.

In many earlier studies it has been pointed out that some other factors like education, rural-urban habitat and sex effect the personality and adjustment of criminals as well as non-criminals (Singh, A., 1976; Jaspal, 1977; Mohan and Singh, in press b). So these factors were also studied separately in the present research. It was found that in general, the rural subjects of both murderer as well as non-criminal groups scored higher on P and N as compared to the urban subjects but on E/I the differences were too small. On adjustment, the urban subjects showed a better home, marital and emotional adjustment. As regarding education, it was found that subjects with higher education were more sociable and extraverted and had a better home, marital and emotional adjustment as compared to the less educated subjects. These results were explained in light of earlier findings in this
On the variable of sex, no significant differences were obtained on E/I and sociability. On impulsivity, the males scored higher than the females. Same was the case with P. On the other hand, on N, the females scored significantly higher than the males. As regarding adjustment, the males showed a better adjustment on all the three adjustment variables studied as compared to the females.

These results were explained in light of the earlier studies e.g. (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1969, 1973, 1977a; Mohan, 1976 and Jaspal, 1977) wherein it was reported that generally females score higher on N while males score higher on P. As regarding the lower adjustment of females, in some earlier studies it was stressed that female delinquency is an imbalanced interaction between the individual's expressive and normative forces (Cortes and Catti, 1972; Singh and Sharma, 1979; Singh, A., 1980). Therefore, disrupted and disorganized homes (as shown by poor home and marital adjustment) should be more prevalent among female delinquents because they are constitutionally less prone or predisposed to crime (Cortes and Catti, 1972) and the present results fairly corroborated these assertions.