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The Study of Calligraphy and Painting among Schizophrenic Patients

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ABSTRACT

"Oversensitivity" might be the cause of most mental diseases among people. Though, a part of schizophrenia is rooted in genetic and hereditary grounds and could not be totally removed, one can diminish the disease by using some artistic instruments to cut the suffering down in order to encourage the patients getting back to the logicity. After all, everybody knows that sensitivity surely is of the most fundamental factors for artistic fine arts to be created throughout the ages of the history. Thus, we could help the patients to release their emotions in an artistic manner via providing them with the art as 'instruments' as well as giving direction to their feelings and attitudes. Moreover, they will be venting their emotions to have a good feeling of meaning and of confidence and self-esteem.

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INTRODUCTION

Importance and Statement of the Problem "Oversensitivity" might be the cause of most mental diseases among people. Though, a part of schizophrenia is rooted in genetic and hereditary grounds and could not be totally removed, one can diminish the disease by using some artistic instruments to cut the suffering down in order to encourage the patients getting back to the logicity. After all, everybody knows that sensitivity surely is of the most fundamental factors for artistic fine arts to be created throughout the ages of the history. Thus, we could help the patients to release their emotions in an artistic manner via providing them with the art as 'instruments' as well as giving direction to their feelings and attitudes. Moreover, they will be venting their emotions to have a good feeling of meaning and of confidence and self-esteem. Schizophrenic patients tend to objectify, lacerate, blend, freeze in a motionless way, add extra ornaments and decorations, exaggerate the shapes and figures in the process of drawing. The features of those drawings and artistic presentations created by schizophrenics are as the following:

1. The patient tends to fill all parts of work in a void manner.
2. Focusing on shapes like decorative or garnishing, and geometric ones as well as order and repetition.
3. The free shapes exceed the right angles.
4. Visual immediacy: The contradictory combination of things in nature which have nothing to do with one another. In fact, they are irrelevant despite their adjustability.
5. Most schizophrenics portray human figures in a nude way even dressed; that is they tend to show the body lines along with the clothes worn.
6. The lines are too simple and tough.
7. The shapes in their painting convey bifurcated meanings, which seems a sign of recoverability among these patients.
8. The patient thinks of words in drawing, that is he views them as objects.
9. A set of pictorial and graphic rules are followed by the patients in their drawings, in the same and similar conditions.
10. Pathological generalization and expansions among the shapes of a sketch.
11. Violence and frigidity in the portraits' faces.

Regarding the overall atmosphere of the case, one can conclude that sensitivity could be the main factor in the way personal observation and comprehension occur. You dare say these patients can be capable and outstanding artists if they are provided with the appropriate artistic devices and tools. For instance, great artists like Van Gogh suffered from such a mental disease, yet he handled it by getting to know the artistic instruments and having had the extra-ordinary sensitivity.

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The Perspectives of the Study:

Art has always been considered by the great psychologists and psychoanalysts since long ago, and vast studies and researches have been conducted by them about mental conditions and states of artists through psychological analysis of a number of artistic works as well as their fans. Today, those studies are termed as "Art Psychology" which appears quite interesting and significant.

The psychology of arts, in its recent form, was generally launched by Sigmund Freud, which was followed by others like Kessler and a few more researchers. Although there is no certain and comprehensive book along with the so-called topic, various research papers have been issued, which are offered in the reference section. Since the topic might be of interdisciplinary, there are not sufficient references.

According to this assumption that each and every artistic career emerges from the unconscious mind, meaning that it is rooted in stark self-motivation, one can say the existence of an unconscious subject matter will surely seem influential in the formation of an artistic work. Painting may be regarded in some way as the suggestion of messages and mentalities, thus an schizophrenic patient who is unable to articulate his hallucinations into speech might transmit them through forms and images.

Achieving an introductory knowledge about schizophrenia and the way the diseased ones (especially schizophrenics) paint would be of the targets of this study. Such process of precise analysis might be applied in recognizing schizophrenics – which seems to be much extensive in our time – in order to reach a better and more efficient treatment for the patients.

The Study Questions:

The present study seeks to find answers to the following questions:

1. Do the patients draw lines differently from normal people?
2. Do the schizophrenics use more bright colors (yellow, red, purple, and dark green), compared to the normal individuals?
3. Do their paintings reflect anxiety and violence?
4. Do these patients apply various colors compared to the normal people?
5. When drawing Bender-Gestalt forms, are there any differences between the patients and normal individuals in terms of designs' overlapping and constriction; and also if there are more dark lines, dashes and circles instead of points in schizophrenics' shapes.
6. In drawing Bender-Gestalt forms, do patients use more wave-like lines and omit angles more than normal ones? And, are the repetitious subjects seen more then?
7. Are sexual issues put forward in schizophrenics' paintings more?

The Study Hypotheses:

Accordingly, the following null hypotheses are investigated in order to answer the research questions:

1. Lots of disintegrated and broken lines can be seen in schizophrenics' paintings.
2. These patients use brighter colors more than normal people.
3. Anxiety and violence can be witnessed in the patients' paintings.
4. The patients and normal individuals vary in regard to applying variety of colors.
5. In drawing Bender-Gestalt shapes, the patients utilize more dashes and dark lines as well as more circles instead of points than normal humans.
6. There are many differences between the patients and the sane in terms of the designs' overlapping and constriction in Bender-Gestalt drawings. Also schizophrenics tend to make wavy lines in their designs and remove all angles.
7. Sexual matters appear in a symbolic way among schizophrenics.
8. Schizophrenics incline to repeat subject matters in their paintings.

The Research Methodology:

The considered statistical population in this research would be just limited to schizophrenic patients. The samples will be chosen among those referring to psychiatry wards and schizophrenics transferred into chronic mentally diseased hospitals to be tested. Finally, just a few of them would be selected for the ultimate examinations based on thorough scrutiny of their medical records as well as the introductory tests (like free subject paintings with color pencils and Gouache). In order to get more accurate results, gathering information through the patients' statements and their families, also from their medical files, as well as interviews with nurses and doctors can be of great use. Also, painting techniques with water color and Gouache – by giving them proper papers and paint brushes and asking them to paint whatever they like and then using painting manikin test, Bender-Gestalt and A.T.A tests will be utilized to gather the data.

Research Costs:

For the time being, no proper and definite estimate of the total costs of the present study could be made.

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