



Original Article

Comparing clinical analysis of tree house person drawing among 12-14 years aged children in Shahed and ordinary groups

*Roya Qasdi¹; Keyvan Arvandian²; Farideh Rezaei¹; Hamid Reza Hatami³

¹MA. in clinical psychology, Research Sciences Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

²MA. in clinical psychology, Kish Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kish, Iran.

³Associate professor of military psychology, Imam Hossein Comprehensive University, Tehran, Iran.

Abstract

Introduction: The tension of war on veterans' children can be endangering the identity formation and growth, especially teenage girls. The aim of this study was to compare the clinical analysis among 12-14 years aged children in Shahed and ordinary groups.

Materials and Methods: The population of this causal-comparative study included 60 girl students in the first to third grades of median school during academic year of 2014-15 in Shahed families and matched ordinary girls. The samples selected via randomized cluster sampling. All girls evaluated through drawing of house-tree-person test.

Results: The results showed that the indexes of house-tree-person graphic drawings are higher among Shahed children compared to ordinary children such as anxiety, depression, impulsivity and lack of adaption but in the scale of low self-esteem, anger and relationship problems, there are no significant differences between two groups.

Conclusion: The results showed that the indexes of house-tree-person graphic drawings are higher among Shahed children compared to ordinary children.

Keywords: Children, Clinical indexes, Home-tree-person drawing

Please cite this paper as:

Qasdi R, Arvandian K, Rezaei F, Hatami HR. Comparing clinical analysis of tree house person drawing among 12-14 years aged children in Shahed and ordinary groups. *Journal of Fundamentals of Mental Health* 2017; 19(3-Special Issue): 375-378.

Introduction

Iran witnessed the loss of 221 thousand 682 of its best children during the period of holy defense or imposed war, who defended the country without any expectations.

Also, this war left behind 858,554 veteran fighters, so 60% of these veterans are below 25%, and the remaining 40% are veterans of 25% and above. The imposed war also caused us to witness the existence of 42 thousand and 41 released persons (1). Research has shown that the rate of

neurotic disorders and self-injurious behavior in witness students is far higher than that of non-witness students. The absence of the father and the child also cause the mother to have serious psychological-behavioral problems (2).

According to a report prepared in 1996, citing the report of the World Health Organization, until 2020, mental illnesses will be among the leading and debilitating diseases (3).

In addition, researchers found that fears are more common in preschool children (71 percent)

*Corresponding Author:

Research Sciences Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Received: Feb. 13, 2017

Accepted: Mar. 15, 2017

(4) and reach their peak at the age of 7 to 9 years (87 percent) and decrease after the age of 10 to 12 years (68 percent) (5,6). For this reason, researchers have emphasized the adverse effects of the absence of a father on the child.

Interpretation of paintings and, generally, projection tests are based on psychoanalytic theory. When the subject is asked to draw on a sheet of paper, he projects his mental images, feelings, thoughts, inner states, conflicts, and other unconscious characteristics onto what he draws. Among the projection tools developed on this basis, we can mention the person drawing test and the house-tree-person test (7,8). They are suitable in this regard.

The results of research on war-affected Bosnian children, 27% of whom had fathers injured or absent, showed that 47% of these children had depression, 23% of them had anxiety, and 28% had stress disorder reactions. They had after the accident (6,9).

Projection painting is still one of the ten most used tests, with 41%, 33%, and 30% of psychologists reporting that they use moving family painting, person portrait painting, and house-tree-person painting, respectively.

In the test, each tree, house, or mannequin is a symbolic and unconscious embodiment of the child's personality and shows his emotional balance and intellectual style (10).

According to the research carried out by domestic and foreign researchers, some of which have been mentioned, the present study investigates the behavioral and emotional problems of Shahid students with ordinary students based on the analysis of the clinical indicators of house-tree-person painting.

Materials and Methods

The research method was a causal-comparative study. The statistical population included 60 female students from control and ordinary families in the first to third years of middle school in control and ordinary schools in 2013. By random cluster sampling, 30 girls with control fathers and 30 with normal fathers were purposefully selected for comparison and measured by drawing the house-tree-person test. During the test, clinical observations were made by the researcher for a more precise interpretation of the drawings.

Research instruments

- A) *House-Tree-Dummy Drawing Test (HTP)*: This tree house test was developed initially by Buck and Homer, who argued that in addition to human image drawings, house and tree drawings are probably related to the related aspects of the person. Therefore, subjects tend to paint them and create more associations compared to other objects that are more neutral (11). The most widely used projection drawing tests are the human and house-tree-dummy tests. The method of HTP implementation is that a sheet of A4 paper, a pencil eraser, a black pencil, and a pencil sharpener were provided to each child, and the researcher asked them to draw a person, a house, and a tree on a sheet of paper. He noted the appropriate behavior. This test has its related scales and indicators. In addition to the indicators of each test and scale, the examiner noted some important points such as the drawing hierarchy, stopping more on some members and components, slow and fast drawing, drawing time, etc. These points helped interpret the results of each test according to the indicators of the scales for the analysis and interpretation of the results. Empirical research on HTP confirms it to some extent. Buck found a significant correlation between the Wechsler test and quantitative HTP scoring (70-75%).
- B) A relatively low but acceptable correlation was obtained between the WAIS-R and the Buck score in a more recent study. The agreement between raters (scoring validity) is 0.93. The correlation between HTP and WAIS is between 0.7 and 0.75 (11).

Results

In term of demographic variables, fathers aged 41-45 accounted for the largest number, and mothers aged 36-40 accounted for the largest number of mothers.

Again, fathers and mothers with diplomas and lower education have the largest number. According to the Chi-square of 34.452, there is a significant difference in students' emotional problems with veteran parents and ordinary students.

Table 1. The scales and indices of drawing tests

Index	P-two domains	Freedom degree	X2
Anxiety	0.005	6	18.752
Low self-esteem	0.121	4	7.300
Aggression	0.319	3	3.514
Depression	0.005	5	16.804
Impulsivity	0.004	5	17.330
Non-adjustment	0.030	6	13.935
Communication problems	0.444	3	2.677

Table 1 and Chi-square, respectively, for anxiety, low self-esteem, aggression, depression, impulsivity, incompatibility subscale, and equal to 18.752, 7.30, 3.514, 16.504, 17.33, and 935.13 has been obtained. Because the significant value in anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and incompatibility subscales is less than 0.05, there is a significant difference in these subscales in Shahed and ordinary students. However, in the subscales of low self-esteem, aggression, and communication problems, there is no significance between these two groups of students.

Discussion

In Iran, no research has been found that investigates the emotional and behavioral problems of Shahed children with this tool (drawing test), so a comparison is made with research that has dealt with these problems with other tools.

The results of the present study showed that, in general, the students of witness children suffer from these problems far more than their peers who do not witness children. These results agree with the findings of Kono et al. (12), Chih-Ying et al. (13), and Ma Heng Xia et al. Furthermore, the findings of the research indicate that in witness families, the emotional and emotional withdrawal of the father and his disability are related to the reduction of interactions and communication within the family and the change in the communication patterns of the members with each other.

The results showed that anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and incompatibility were more in the control students than ordinary students. In the drawings of witness children, symptoms of anxiety (including thin, incomplete lines, extra details, shading, distortions, components,

unstable and irregular, use of pencil eraser, components too far apart), symptoms of depression (from such as small size, margin, and bottom of the page, deletion of parts, reduction of parts and members, short or hidden sizes, stereotyped and identityless and tall and thin person), impulsiveness symptoms (including deletion of specific items, the tendency towards left, lack of proportionality, aggressive content, total omission of essential elements, spending little time, inappropriate drawing of elements), signs of compromise (including simplification of head, body, tree, house, poor overall quality, poor artistic quality, precision and correctness, distortion of components, imbalance) and in general there were symptoms of emotional and behavioral problems. These findings are in line with the research results of Bahrami (18), Amini (19), Asgari (20), and Papageorgiou (21), but in the present study, the results indicate the absence of significant differences in subscales such as self-esteem. Low has aggression and communication problems.

It seems that the factors such as the father's injury and the mental pressure transferred to the mother can create more vulnerable conditions for the children of these families compared to other sections of society. However, in cases where we conclude that there is no difference, it can be attributed to the effect environments like Shahed schools (where the current research was conducted) can reduce such problems by creating a sense of empathy and sympathy among Shahid students.

Conclusion

The results showed that anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and incompatibility were more in Shahed students than in the controls.

References

1. Muris P, Merckelbach H, Gadet B, Moulaert V. Fears worries and scary dreams to 4- to 12- year old children: their content developmental patterns and origins. *J Clin Child Psychol* 2000; 29: 43-52.
2. Marl G. [Psychological assessment guide for psychologists]. Pasha Sharifi H, Nikkhoodi MR. (translators). 9th ed. 2015: 976. (Persian)
3. Achenback TM, Sameroff A, Lewis M, Miller SM. Assessment of psychopathology. *Handbook of developmental psychology*. New York: Kluwer Academic; 2000: 541-60.
4. Kilian G. House-Tree-Person technique. Nova University; Florida; 2012: 338-51.
5. Oguz V. The factors influencing children's drawings. *Procedia Soc Behav Sci* 2010; 2(2): 3003-7.
6. Roysircar G, O'Leary K. Development of the Haiti House-Tree-Person Test: A measure of Haitian children's resilience and vulnerability. Antioch University of New England Kimberly University at Albany, Suny; 2013: 2-49.
7. Judd M. The validation of the person-house-tree drawing Assessment for children aged from five to ten years in main stream education. Ph.D. Dissertation. Faculty of Education Science Technology and Mathematics. The University of Canberra, 2014: 2.
8. Jian GU, Kang LI. The application of house-tree-person technique in group counseling. *J Tangshan Teachers College* 2010; 32(4): 2-5.
9. Chen Kan, Guangxing XU. A research on the diagnosis of depression through the projective drawing test. Department of Psychology, Eastern China Normal University Shanghai, 2008: 40-49.
10. Al-Turkait F A, Ohaeri JU. Post-traumatic stress disorder among wives of Kuwaiti veterans of the first Gulf War. *J Anxiety Disord* 2008; 22(1): 18-31.
11. Buck JN. The H-T-P Test. *J Clin Psychol* 1948; 4: 151-9.
12. Konno R. Cognitive dysfunction in schizophrenia patients seen in the drawing- is noted that the image viewpoint of others. Musashino University, Graduate School of Human and Social Research Department, 2015: 20-27.
13. Chih-Ying L, Lyinn C, Ping-Chuan H, Hsiung PC, Chen TJ, Liu SK, et al. A psychometric study of the kinetic-house-tree-person scoring system for people with psychiatric disorders in Taiwan. *Hong Kong J Occup Ther* 2014; 24(1): 20-27.
14. Hong-Xia MA. Relationship between psychological state and house-tree-person drawing characteristics of rehabilitation patients with schizophrenia. College of Psychology, Hebei United University Tangshan; 2013.
15. Johnson H, Thompson A. The development and maintenance of post-traumatic stress disorder (P.T.S.D) in civilian adult survivors of war trauma and torture: A review. *Clin Psychol Rev* 2008; 28(1): 36-47.
16. Najarian b, Pooravaz M. [Prevalence of psychological and behavioral disorders in control and non-control students in primary schools in Ahvaz]. *Journal of Humanities University of Al-Zahra* 1991; 3: 7. (Persian)
17. Saberi H. [The epidemiological and behavioral emotional disorders in elementary school children]. *Journal of psychiatry and clinical psychology* 2008; 2(8): 19-34. (Persian)
18. Bahrami H. [Projection of personality tests]. Tehran: Allameh Tabatabaei University, 2014: 4-20. (Persian)
19. Amini D, Afroz G, Sharifi P, Homan H. Cognitive disorders and emotional problems of deaf children using art test house-tree-person and person test compared with normal children in Hamadan province. *Scientific journal of Hamadan University of Medical Sciences and Health Services* 2012; 20(1): 49-54.
20. Askari S. [The difference drawings of normal children and children with anxiety disorders from 4 to 6 years old]. Tehran: Al-Zahra University, 2011. (Persian)
21. Papageorgiou V, Frangou- Garunovic A, Lordindou R, Yule W, Smith P, Vostanis P. War trauma and psychopathology in Bosnian refugee children. *Eur Child Adolesc Psychiatry* 2000; 9(2): 84-90.