

Thesis Review

Parents of Paranoid and Hebephrenic Schizophrenics "A Comparative Study"

A thesis submitted for partial fulfillment of M.D. Degree in Psychiatry. By: Victor Samy Mikhael. Supervised by: Prof. Ossamah H. El - Sherbini and Prof. Seham H. Rashed, Benha Faculty of Medicine, Zagazig University 1989.

This thesis is composed of about 200 pages with a classical introduction and review of literature that lacks recent advances in this area of research of the parental psychopathology of schizophrenic patients.

In summary, as the title indicates, the aim of the work was to study the personalities of mothers and fathers of paranoid and hebephrenic schizophrenics (male patients) and the relationship between parents. Additional aims included studying parent - child relationships and comparing all studied variables among the two diagnostic subgroups. The sample consisted of 66 male patients "selected" from Abbassya State Psychiatric Hospital (32 paranoid and 34 hebephrenic schizophrenics).

A control group was selected from male workers and nurses from the same hospital. The method involved application of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) to parents of both groups and a Child Attitude Questionnaire (translated into Arabic) which investigated 18 different attitudes of parents toward their schizophrenic sons and the relationships between parents retrospectively.

Results showed that parents of paranoid schizophrenics showed a pattern of dominance - submission and skewed marital relationship, while the reversal of parental roles occurred in parents of hebephrenic. Fathers of paranoid schizo-

phrenics appeared to be domineering with some abusive characteristics, while fathers of hebephrenics were submissive with passive and adequate traits. Paranoid personality patterns predominated fathers of paranoid schizophrenics, while schizoid personality prevailed among fathers of hebephrenic schizophrenics. Mothers of paranoid schizophrenics showed affective symptoms while mothers of hebephrenic schizophrenics appeared to be anxious and neurotic. Parental attitudes showed fathers of paranoid schizophrenics to be guilt - provoking while those of hebephrenic schizophrenics were permissive and accepting.

The overall assumption behind this work appeared to be related to the previous study on the psychopathology in families of Egyptian schizophrenics done by the first supervisor, El - Sherbini (1975). Thus this work appears to be a step forward and a continuation in this direction. However, there seems to be some methodological difficulties concerning the assessment of the parental personalities and interactions. A more comprehensive personality assessments could have been used e.g. MMPI, other measures of psychopathology such as observation, scales or direct interviews should have been implemented, and the control group could have included siblings of patients or at least some of their reports about parents to validate the ob-

tained results. This work could have been a major work in the area of families of psychiatric (or schizophrenic) patients if it attempted to validate a semistructured interview or assessment of parents of Egyptian psychiatric patients. No mention, in this work of the contemporary pioneers of family dynamics, therapy or assessments in other countries or Egypt. There was also no mention of work done on Egyptian psychotic patients and their families. Future studies in this area should

adopt on international modified family, diagnostic and assessment procedures to be added to the continuously developing structured techniques in Arabic that will help researchers, clinicians and investigators in the understanding and care of our psychiatric population.

M.H.D.