

Schizophrenia- attitudes about reality

Psychology



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The paper "Schizophrenia-Attitudes about Reality" is an outstanding example of an assignment on a psychology. The matter of discussion is about schizophrenia a mental disorder or illness. The core objective is to extrapolate from the general public a group comprising ten individuals the intensity of schizophrenic attitude in them. It is done by presenting to them a standard questionnaire comprising of fifteen statements/questions which denote the symptoms of schizophrenic thinking. Based on their replies the mean showing how much the group of individuals are close to or far behind from schizophrenic attitude and standard deviation which is the square root of variance indicating the measure of variation from the average is computed ("standard deviation", 2009). After the statistical calculations, the score obtained by me is compared with the rest to know where I stand. Moreover, a particular group of persons which have little or no schizophrenic thoughts is analyzed and the reason for their healthy and sound mind is discussed. The term Schizophrenia, derived from Greek is a mental disorder caused by some basic differences in the activity of the brain, accompanied by some changes in the levels of serotonin and dopamine. A person with schizophrenia exhibits some behavioral and emotional changes. Adults are mostly affected by this illness. People who are diagnosed with schizophrenia have to undergo psychiatric treatment and are advised to take drugs prescribed by a psychiatrist. As by default, psychiatric drugs tend to have fewer or more side effects like weight gain, feeling sleepy some time or at all times. Along with medication, psychotherapy also plays an important role in the treatment. Psychotherapy includes cognitive behavior therapy which includes few or more sessions with a trained cognitive behavior therapist, counseling with family members can yield better results. Diagnosis,

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Symptoms, and Causes: The most common symptoms include abnormal thought process, inability to function normally, difficulty in speech and communication. " It most commonly manifests as auditory hallucinations, paranoid or bizarre delusions, or disorganized speech and thinking with significant social or occupational dysfunction"(" schizophrenia", 2009; para 1) The disease is diagnosed by family members or friends if they note some abnormal changes in the person's behavior. Subsequently, he has to be taken to a psychiatrist or a mental health professional for the clinical assessment. The disease is diagnosed by three types of symptoms. (" Standardized criteria", 2009) The causes of schizophrenia may vary from genetic, biological, social and psychological factors." Evidence suggests that the diagnosis of schizophrenia has a significant heritable component but that onset is significantly influenced by environmental factors or stressors."(Causes, 2009) It happens that schizophrenia is mistaken for multiple personality disorder. " Often, schizophrenia and multiple personality disorder (MPD) are confused, and some people believe they are the same. In reality, they are two distinctly different disorders. Schizophrenia is a brain disorder that some people are born with -- it may be inherited, but symptoms don't usually develop for many years" (Schizophrenia, 2003; para 1) Task and assignment As mentioned in the abstract the goal of this particular task is to discuss and get sufficient feedback about schizophrenic disorder from the general public. The survey is to be taken. It helps to know about the illness practically. Sufficient experience and an insight into the subject are gained by dealing with each and every individual. A questionnaire is prepared. (See Below). The signs and symptoms of the schizophrenic disorder are framed as questions. By extracting the answers from a group of

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ten people the measure of the disorder or the degree of schizophrenic thinking in them is known. It also serves as a tool for initial diagnosis and is extremely helpful for psychologists, counselors and cognitive behavior therapists. A set of fifteen questions is submitted to them. They can either answer ' YES' or ' NO'. The score is the count of positive responses (' YES') is printed in the table. On surveying with people, for some statements, they agree with both the options. For instance, considering question number ten (10) ' I prefer others to make decisions for me' from the sample questionnaire attached, very few people feel that sometimes or at rare times they let others take decision for them. One more question which puts them in a dilemma is ' When introduced to strangers I often wonder whether I have known them before'. Very often many people even I too feel that we would have met the person whom we are introduced somewhere before. In such cases, the answer which is very close to one of the two options is recorded.

The following is a set of statements, the instrument which is given as a questionnaire to participants who participated in the survey. Let us discuss those in short. 1. I am easily confused if a number of things happen at the same time.

Of the people I surveyed, most of them gave an instant positive response to this statement. According to my opinion, this is a negative symptom which may not be present in schizophrenic patients but mostly visible to normal persons. I conclude we cannot arrive at a decision based on this factor.

2. I often change between positive and negative feelings towards the same person.

3 I often get a restless feeling that I want something but do not know what.

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The person lacks basic reasoning. The thought process includes defining a goal, identifying strengths and weaknesses and finally implementing. When it becomes difficult to integrate all these, it leads to disorganized thought pattern leaving the person with a restless feeling.

4. I suddenly feel shy when I want to talk to a stranger.

Social dysfunction is one of the positive symptoms which ranks top. So the functioning in major areas like work, communication gets affected. It can also be viewed as the nature of a person and is not a problem unless he is troubled by a lack of social skills and most do not fall under this category. If the answer is yes, he/she should be observed further for symptoms like poor speech, lack of interest and motivation in life etc.

5. I find it difficult to concentrate; irrelevant things seem to distract me.

Many people complain of poor concentration. When it remains alone, the issue is taken lightly. But when a person is unable to concentrate when the mind is clogged with something meaningless it is better to take a test.

6. Now and then when I look in the mirror, my face seems quite different from usual.

Assigning meaningless opinions to our body. There were nil responses to this question. I perceive this symptom appears a long time after the onset of the disease.

7. People can easily influence me even though I thought my mind was made up on a subject.

8. I often have grave difficulties in controlling my thoughts when I am thinking.

Thought disorder is again a positive symptom. When I ask this question to a normal person, they are not even aware of the fact that thoughts dominate

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them. A normal can easily divert to other engagements. This normal phenomenon is a challenge to them when they are diagnosed.

9. I would like other people to be afraid of me.

10. I prefer others to make decisions for me.

11. Sometimes people who I know well begin to look like strangers.

12. It is possible to harm people merely by thinking bad thoughts about them.

A meaningless as well as a false belief which appears as delusions. They decide this for themselves with no evidence. We could have come across a few percentages of people. When it is not the attitudinal changes which can be easily judged and if other normal functions are an overwhelming struggle for them then the scenario is becoming serious. No one among the participants gave a positive response to this question.

13. When introduced to strangers I often wonder whether I have known them before.

There are two positive responses to this question who opined that it happens at times.

14. Good luck charms do not work.

15. I have sometimes felt that strangers were reading my mind.

Assuming events not connected to us appears to be connected. The number of people who concede with this statement is only one. As far as this person is concerned it is not a bothering issue. When a particular reference is made frequently the statement is to be reconsidered.

The details of the survey are mentioned in the following table. There are three columns, column one denoting the participants in the survey, their age
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and gender being mentioned within the brackets, column two denoting the scores obtained and column three provides their scores in percentage. R1, R2.... R15 denotes the survey responders. As per the constraints of the project, the author is the first responder in the survey. Hence I mention myself as R1 and correspondingly my details are entered in the first row of the table. The mean and the standard deviation are computed and mentioned at the bottom of the table.

To have a clear picture of the subject, a graph showing the responders and their corresponding scores are shown below.

Comparison with other scores:

Me being the first responder, I have obtained a score of 5. The average score is 3.6. I am not close to the average. Compared with the average my measure of schizophrenic attitude is a bit high. According to my point of view, the major factors for the difference are decision making, a dilemma in mind and unstable opinions? The opinion keeps oscillating. Taking other responders into consideration I observe most of them are strong-minded, courageous and confident of what they are doing.

Two Groups of people of nonschizophrenic disorder:

Among this particular group of people, six of them obtained scores more than the average. They conveyed the fact that they did not suffer from the disorder through their scores reveal more of schizophrenic attitude in them. The six persons of 'above normal' category can be split into two groups, Group A and Group B.

Group A comprising of responders R1, R7 and R4

Group B comprising responders R2, R9, and R10

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Both the groups are inclined towards this thinking. On analyzing and discussing in a short span of time I arrived at the following conclusion. A sound mind in a sound body. In this fast-paced world, they do not find time for themselves, for their family leading to poor interpersonal relationships. As a result of their stressful environment, they are prone to various mood disorders, anxiety, and depression. Physical inactivity results in a dull mood unable to concentrate. Doing exercises rejuvenates our mind, increases the levels of neurotransmitters in the brain. Let us all strive for a healthy environment.