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case



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Introduction

According to Radford, there are numerous therapies that have been reported to be beneficial despite failing to satisfy scientific evaluation criteria. In these reports some of the therapies require dilution of herbs to a degree that leads to the question, how potent are these herbs? Such questions arise owing from the fact that some of these herbs are diluted to an extent that would require the patient to consume huge amounts to generate the effects of any medicinal properties the herb may possess (2203). Such a position suggests the pseudo science as opposed to science. Science would justify the use of a drug through measurements and the measured effect of varied doses whereas in this case the doses are so weak it is unlikely that they provide any tangible benefits to the user. It is notions such as this that this paper seeks to identify within the context of parapsychology.

Parapsychology: Paranormal Behavior may be Useful for Science

Many researchers have over time argued that paranormal beliefs are not related to neuroscience. The position held by neuroscience with regards to paranormal beliefs is that these experiences are based on a sub set of delusional beliefs that bear no correspondence in the healthy mind (Brugger and Mohr 1291). However it has been argued that study of paranormal beliefs may provide the much needed link between abnormal and normal behavior. This study can be useful in providing a bridge between major gaps that exist between neuropsychology and cognitive psychiatry. Proponents of the study of paranormal beliefs suggest a janusian peculiarities associated

with specific beliefs that are useful in understanding the pathology of belief and their clarification of some of the cognitive bases of human behavior.

Based on this it is argued that investigations into the paranormal mind may provide a solution to the persistent ideas surrounding similarities between madness and genius (Brugger and Mohr 1291). Paranormal behavior is defined as anomalies related to behavior and experience that exists outside of known explanatory mechanisms used to account for organism-environment or organism-organism information and influence flow. This would include anomalies such as Extra Sensory Perception (ESP) which includes telepathy, clairvoyance and precognition (Brugger and Mohr 1291). It has been argued that despite the existence of varied scientific positions on the relevance on paranormal behavior, neuropsychology may gain insights into mechanisms of belief formation which can not be discovered through analysis of the normal and abnormal brain alone. The position presented in this paper suggests that parapsychology is science and investigation into this field may be useful to other areas of science.

Parapsychology: Paranormal Behavior and Schizotypy

It has been reported that research in recent years has indicated that there may be a relationship between paranormal behavior and schizotypy (Hergovich, Schott and Arendasy 119). Schizotypy has been defined as the initial stages of schizophrenia and it includes cognitive, perceptive and affective symptoms. The degree to which individuals are prone to schizophrenia can be measured by assessing various traits that characterize the schizotypal personality.

Among the symptoms of schizophrenia that are evident in schizotypy include delusional thoughts and or unusual experiences. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence of the existence of a link between schizophrenia and paranormal behavior. Evidence of this is also seen in statistics that indicate a higher degree of belief in paranormal events is often associated with higher incidence of schizophrenia.

Evidence of this is seen in high schizotypy scores as witnessed in members of occult sects (Hergovich et al. 119). The results of a recent study by Hergovich et al indicated that a link does in fact exist between schizotypy and paranormal behavior (Hergovich et al. 124). This is further supported by the presence of reputable data that points to the underlying cognitive and neurological basis of the relationship.

However, despite of this it was still not possible to confirm whether schizotypy and paranormal behavior were different concepts. It is still unclear whether paranormal behavior is one facet of schizotypy. This scenario arises due to the fact that one popular measure of schizotypy, the Magical Ideation Scale is also used to measure paranormal beliefs. An analysis of the points presented in this paper posits that paranormal behavior may indeed be a neurological disorder or a facet of the disorder.

Conclusion

In this paper two positions have been presented on the issue of paranormal behavior with a view to considering parapsychology as a science or pseudo science. Based on the evidence in the reports it would appear that parapsychology is indeed a science.

The first reason behind this conclusion lies in the fact that it is still unclear whether paranormal behavior forms one of the manifestations a neurological disorder or is a concept on its own (Hergovich et al. 124). It is clear that inability to accurately measure has led researchers to this conclusion.

That being the case, paranormal behavior may indeed be a rational phenomena and parapsychology a rational science. Further it has been indicated that the study of the healthy brain and abnormal brain alone are not adequate to provide solutions on similarities between genius and madness (Brugger and Mohr 1291). It has been suggested that paranormal behavior appears a promising solution owing to the fact that neuroscience already recognizes paranormal behavior as bearing similarities with known cognitive bases of human behavior.

Works Cited

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