



THE COMPARISON OF DRAWING FEATURES AT CONTENT LEVEL OF DRAWINGS AND PSYCHOANALYTIC INTERPRETATION IN DRAWINGS OF THE CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to compare the drawing features at the content level and psychoanalytic interpretation analysis (deletion, additions, and replacement) in the drawings of children of divorce who lived with their parents at the age range of 7 to 13 years. The population of this study includes elementary school children (7 to 13 years old) of city's second district of education department of Kerman. This research is a causal comparative study and the sampling method is the accessible sampling. In this study, the research group attended primary schools of second district of the city of Kerman to administer family drawing test on the children of divorce who were made known by their teachers, regardless of living with either parent. Despite the restrictions imposed by both schools and families, 76 cases including 44 girls and 32 boys were examined. Among the female participants of this study 29 lived with their mother and 15 of them lived with their father where among the male participants 25 boys lived with their mother and 7 lived with their father. Kremn's family drawing test, observation and interview are the main research tools of this study. Drawings were studied in terms of: discarding others, discarding one, discarding the parent who takes care of the child, additions except the parent, adding a parent who does not live with him. The defense mechanism of displacement was compared between two groups of children living with their paternal and maternal parents, and the results were analyzed using descriptive index (frequency distribution tables) and to test the research hypotheses two-dimensional chi square tests were used. The results indicated that: there was no significant difference in deletion others from the drawing. And in deletion the parent who takes care of the child, there is a significant difference between a girl and a boy living with their mother. Also, there was a significant difference between the group of girls and boys living with their mother in defense mechanisms.

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Introduction

Drawing is a useful tool for eliminating the distance between the child and the interviewer at the first interview session and, on the other hand, due to its interesting and enjoyable nature can reduce the child's fear and anxiety [1]. Drawing is a kind of language for children, and the questioning of children's drawings is a very "natural" way of learning children's perceptions of family members' interactions and their own concepts. Also, according to studies by researchers and scientists regarding the importance of the family in bringing up the children, it is observed that absence of one parent inflicts damages to children. Due to the fact that, drawing is the inner language of the child and considering this inevitable fact that the child personality is constructed during childhood, what comes to mind is: which of the single Parents play a more important role in mental, emotional, and social development in the early ages of the child?

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The content of drawing and analyzing Psychoanalytic Interpretation (deletion, additions, replacement).

Deletions: The most primary defense mechanism is the "negation of reality" that is expressed in the drawing of a family by simple and uncontroversial elimination. So, if the child does not draw his own self, it can be said that he does not feel satisfied and comfortable with his present position in terms of age and sex, and he wants to become someone else. [2]. When a dangerous threat which propitiates anxiety takes place, the child will definitely eliminate it. When a child starts to devalue the parents in drawings or removes them from his/her drawings, it shows that his relationship with the parents is inappropriate [3].

Displacement and Additions: Displacement is the replacement of a "demand fixer" by another. It may replace the Ego of an available object with an unavailable object, or replace the activity of an object which does not provoke anxiety with the activity of an object that brings about anxiety. In replacement, what a person really wants gives way to something else is one of the most important Freudian concepts. In the replacement mechanism, you have a way feeling towards against one person, but you divert it to someone else or another position.

A lot of researches have been conducted worldwide to find out the effects of divorce, its causes and consequences, but, scarce number of studies have been done regarding the difference between children of divorce who live with either father or mother. Also, it was not possible to find any study comparing the features of children of divorces drawings living with either parent, thus, in this study; we have referred to studies close to this research. Children can express their feelings, happiness, sadness, future dreams and past events through drawings. Effective factors can be categorized into two subsets: 1-specific conditions of the child, age, talent, intelligence, physical health and mental conditions, past experiences and individual differences. 2-environmental factors: family, school, teacher status, cultural-economic classes [4]. According to Ippolito, emotional problems is viewed as hostile drawing of the pictures, unidentifiable figures and animal drawings, using dark colors, or absence of color, hanging figures on the paper, instant drawing of the people and generally lack of stability and safety in the drawings of single parent children [5]. Studies on 41 children of divorced households indicate that children who have been under mother's custody have eliminated their father from their paintings [6].

Children of divorce under the custody of mother in the absence of father: divorce has lots of negative impact on the lives of children of divorce. One of the major negative effects of divorce is that because most of the children live with their mother after the divorce choose wrong ways due to their inexperience and ignorance. Children of divorce, in the absence of the father, become sad and nervous, and eventually depressed, and show their rebellion and stinginess in various forms, which results in having unplanned childbirth and leaving school in most girls, and in boys, it leads to addiction and alcoholism and various forms of delinquency [7].

The absence of father, after divorce, induces sadness and nervousness in children, if exacerbated, may have horrific consequences, like the feeling of insecurity that arises due to the lack of control over the child.

Children of divorce under the custody of father in the absence of mother:

Several studies have demonstrated that being deprived of the mother in the early childhood is a more decisive factor compared to deprivation from the father in general mental illness, especially depression. Hopkinson has found that the deprivation of parents in childhood is not a determining factor in the psychosis, depression and mania. Fewer studies have been conducted on the role of deprivation of the father in the emergence of depression. Monroe states that people with acute depression show a significant increase in childhood disparate relationships with their parents compared to control groups. About the girls, the good father-daughter relationship keeps their child safe from early sex and romantic love activities. About the boys, it seems that this relationship has a comprehensive effect on psychological health. In fact, there are a lot of researches that suggests that when fathers take custody of their children, the effect is better on their boys [8, 9].

History of Family drawing: The first deep-seated study of children's paintings was conducted by Corrado Ricci (1887). In twentieth century, the study of children's drawings had been influenced by Freudian psychoanalytic theory. For example, Freud (1938) used dreams for the discovery of mental imagery and the subconscious concept of patients. Subsequently, Jung (1964, 1965) used Mandala's concept to encourage patients to use design as a means of expressing their inner feelings. Both Freud and Jung emphasized the symbolic notion of consciousness. Their viewpoints influenced the minds of practitioners and psychologists to develop a keen interest in psychology, child psychoanalysis, and child development. They began to explore the relationship between children's personal drawing and psychology to exploit children's drawings as a tool for psychoanalysis and psychological testing [10]. In this research, due to the limited number of studies in this area and the importance of this research for officials and practitioners for planning and the probability of the least harm and disorder in children, the characteristics of drawings in terms of the content of the drawings, eloquent interpretation of children of divorce psychologies who live with their parents, were studied. Thus, we investigated the following questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between deletion others in the family drawings by the divorce child under the custody of father and the divorce child under the custody of mother?
2. Is there a significant difference between the deletion of self from the family drawing by the divorce child under the custody of father and the divorce child under the custody of mother?
3. Is there a significant difference in the deletion of the parent living with the child in family drawing by the divorce child under the custody of father and the children under the custody of the mother?

4. Is there a significant difference in adding others the parent in the family drawing of the divorce child under custody of father and that of mother?
5. Is there a difference between the defense mechanism of displacement and family involvement by the children under the custody of father and the children under the custody of mother?
6. Is there a difference between adding a parent who does not live with the child in family drawing by the divorce child under the custody of father and the child under the custody of mother?

Methodology

the present study is purpose-oriented and in terms of information gathering, it is a comparative study. The population of this study were elementary school children (7-13 years old) selected by available sampling, study in primary schools of district 2 education department of Kerman. In this research, visiting primary schools in the city of Kerman, a family restoration test was administered to children of divorce regardless of being under the custody of father or mother. Due to the imposed restriction 76 students were studied, including 44 girls and 32 boys. From the sample 29 girls and 25 boys were under the custody of mother and 15 girls and 7 boys were under the custody of father. The research tools are the Kremn family drawing test, observation and interview. This test was originally proposed by Apple Woolf, but later more fully developed as the Family Drawing (DAF) by Hals (1951). This test gained fame with the advancement of family therapy in the 1960-1970s. Based on the instruction (drawing a family system), Kremn makes attempt to clarify the way communication issues occur (Prosecutor's Office, 2004). The Draw-a Family Test (DAF) and interviewing are considered as overhanging method with a psycho-analytic interpretation of familial issues and conflicts that have vast application in the diagnostic and psychotherapy activities, since, on the one hand, stable and unstable Metamorphoses distinguishes the child 's personality and on the other hand, the transformation that is the result of the therapeutic process. [11]. No study has been conducted to investigate the validity and reliability of a drawing-a-family test. But the validity of the results of draw –a –family test is subject to the clinical experience of the examiner. Also, Kremn, on the publication of his results relies on a compound sample of 1,200 subjects (800 boys and 400 girls aged 6 to 12 years), which, on this basis, considers their results between normal states and specific or disturbing situations [12]. Despite the fact that some studies questioned the validity and reliability of drawing tests, for example, (Hagod, 1992), the study which carefully investigated the four tests of overhangers of receiving the issue of adult and child, Rorschach and drawing of dummy, highlighted the point that despite the findings of some studies, the use of a diffuser is very useful in both clinical and in researches (Poster, 1989). Many clinicians believe that application of drawing overhanging tests is very useful and even inevitable in diagnosis and treatment. Avoid (West, 1998).

Craman family drawing test method:

In order to run the Kremn's family drawing test, the children were provided with a white sheet of paper and a fairly soft black pencil, and the children were put against the table, which is quite his/her size, and were asked to draw the family that he/she loves. If a child requested that he wants to use ruler, in a loving manner, they were asked to draw his painting without this tool, when the child was not willing to continue painting without using the ink, a new blank paper was given to the child to draw a picture. In this test, the examiner must be present throughout the test period, and write down the process of drawing: The child is right handed or the left hander, the child starts drawing from the left, or from the right, the order of people, and the order of people drawn and crossed out. After finishing the drawing, the child is interviewed and asked the following questions:

Where are they? What do they do? Who are they? (Order of drawing), how do they feel about each other? Which one of the most is the kindest one? Why? Which one is less gentle? Why? Which is the happiest one? Why? Which one is less fortunate? Why? Which one is the best? Why? They want to drive around in a car, but there is not enough room for everyone in the car. One must stay at home. Which one? Why? Suppose you belong to this family. Which one will you be? Why? one of these kids has done mischievous thing. Which one? How to punish him/her? Who do you think you did not draw? Why? If you want to draw again, do you like to draw this again?

Then, since the adaption of the real family and the graphic family is significant, it does not trust child's speech on the truth of the composition of the family, and in this case we perform with confidence.

Regarding the above items, each child took the draw a family test individually. At the last stage, an interview containing 14 questions related to this test was carried out. The allotted time for the test, clinical observations for a more accurate interpretation of the drawings was done by Researcher. Finally, the child's drawing was investigated using draw a family test at the drawing content and eloquent psycho analytic analyzing level of a) discarding b) additions; c) replacement. In order to analyze the data with the help of SPSS software using descriptive statistics (frequency tables) and Inference statistics (Chi-square test) will be used to examine the significance of differences.

Findings:

Chi-square test indicated that there is a significant difference comparing the groups of the children of divorce living with their maternal or paternal parent in deletion of others in drawings, $P = 0/014$, 54 children lived with their mother (29 girls, 25 boys) and 22 children lived with their father (15 girls, 7 boys).

According to Chi-square, there is not a significant difference on self –deletion in family drawing comparing ($p>0/05$). In terms of deletion of the parent living with the child, due to chi-square test, there was not a significant difference between divorce under the custody of father and mother. There is only a significant difference between the boys living with their father and the boys living with their mother ($P = 0.027$).

Out of the 7 boys living with their father, three cases (43%) and out of 25 boys living with the mother, two boys (8%) have eliminated the parent who has the custody of them in their drawings.

The results of the Chi –square test indicated that there is no significant difference between the children of divorce who live under the custody of their father or mother in terms of addition except the parent ($p> 0.05$). according to the chi-square test, in terms of deletion of the parent living with the child, there was not a significant difference between the children of divorce under the custody of father or mother in family drawings($p> 0.05$). Comparison of the groups does not show a significant difference from the view point of the defense mechanism of replacement in the drawings of the boys and the girls living with their father or mother. And only there was a significant difference in the defense mechanism among girls living with mother and boys who lived with their mother ($p = 0/0329$) out of 29 girls living with the mother, 19 (65.5%), and out of 25 boys living with mother, 9 (36%) had the replacement defense mechanism.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the characteristics of drawings including, deletion of others, deletion of oneself, deletion of a parent who hold the custody of a child, additions other than the parent, the defense mechanism of displacement, adding a parent who does not live with them, has been compared between two groups of the children of divorce who lived with their mother or father. The comparison of the results of deletion of others in family drawings shows that there is a significant difference between boys and girls who live with their mother, and those who live with their father. On the other hand, deleting parent in drawing test by boys who lived with father more frequent because of their anxiety, and this anxiety has been caused by the deleted person. The frequency rate of deleting others in this study, is not consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Fayeze (2005) [13], suggesting that divorced children are more likely to eliminate family members than ordinary children, and the study by Shakirian (2009) [14], which suggests that single-parent children indicate more emotional self reaction towards the family such as deleting one of the parents compared to normal families.

The results of self- deletion of the children of divorce under the custody of father or mother show that there are no significant differences between the boys and girls living with the mother and the boys and girls living with the father in family drawing. Self-deletion is self-denial and feeling of humiliation and poor self-concept, feeling guilty or over self intervene or severe stress. Depression must be in severe condition, so as to delete himself from the drawing we encounter less with “self –deletion” in the drawings of the children. In this study 27.6 % of the children have deleted themselves in their drawings. The results showed that the children of divorce living with their father delete more and the children of divorce living with their mother delete less.

The results for the study by Ippolito and Borkit and Shakerian on the single parent children indicated that, in the drawings of single parent children, self deletion is seen more which is consistent with the the children of divorce. But there was no research on the comparison of drawings of children of divorce living with mother or father to confirm or reject the results.

The results of comparison of the groups in deletion of the parent who has the custody of the child shows that there is no significant difference between boys and girls living with their parents in this regard, and there was no significant difference between the boys who live with the father and the boys who live their mother, such that the boys had higher frequency than the girls in this domain, and this indicates the defensive mechanism “T” against the threat caused by external anxiety and this anxiety is created by the parent who takes care of the child. In this study, the frequency of deletion of a parent is consistent with a research by Ippolito which is conducted using Cerman’s draw-a family test on two single parent and ordinary Italians children and shows indicate deletion of a one of the parents. And it is consistent with the study by Shaker an (2010) and many other studies in the country or abroad about the children of divorce. But, it is not consistent with the findings of Spiegelman in 1992 that showed that each group of children of divorced or not divorced families usually the children draw father and draw him bigger than mother.

The results of comparison between the children of divorce under the custody of mother and those under the custody of father, in “extras except parent”, shows that there is not a significant difference between boys and girls living with mother and boys and girls who live with their father in family drawing.

The Results of comparison between the children of divorce under the custody of mother and the those under the custody of father in “adding the parent who does not take care of the children” indicate that there is not a significant difference between boys and girls living with mother and boys and girls who live with their father in family drawing. This study did not find the result in order to validate or reject the results.

the Results of comparison between children of divorce under the custody of mother and the children under the custody of father in "replacement defensive mechanism " indicate that there is not a significant difference between boys and girls living with mother and boys and girls who live with their father in family drawing. But there is significant difference between the girl and the boy who live with their mother. Such that, the girls living with their mother has the highest frequency and the boys who live with their mother has the lowest frequency in replacement. The replacement of defensive mechanism against anxiety is caused by inner drives. It means that, the child attributes a censored inherent drive that brings about guiltiness. As much as the suppressed drive creates anxiety, the replacement is more considerable that some of the children draw the drive manifested in animal incarnations.

In this study, replacement of nearly 14% of the girls under the custody of mother and 14% of boys under the custody of father is manifested as animals, this mechanism has been further enhanced by the addition of the mate to the drawing, which reveals that adding a mate in the children of divorce living with fathers is more than children living with mother.

In this study, with a statistical comparison of family drawing by children of divorce living with mother or children of divorce living with father, an interesting statistic have been obtained that boys living with father in comparison to the boys living with mother, have shown less tendency towards adding the parent whom he doesn't live with, and higher tendency towards deleting the parent whom they live with, which must be explored further thoroughly. The obtained results indicated that self stem and psychological health of the boys from ordinary families is higher than that of the children of divorce (boys under the custody of father or mother). No significant results have been observed between the boys under the custody of either parent, but the boys under the custody of mother are of higher mental health as compared to the boys under the custody of father [15]. Thus, the result indicates that behavioral disorder in the boys whose custody has been confiscated from the mothers is higher than those who are under the custody of their mother. These findings are consistent with the findings of the previous studies on the danger of threatening mental health of the children of divorce and confiscating the custodian of the mothers. [16].

Casting a glance at the results it can be argued that Characteristics of Family drawings for all participants of this study (children of divorce in this study) is consistent with the abovementioned studies. But according to some of the studies, that the presence of father plays an important role in the children's life is not consistent with the features of family drawings in this study. According to the studies of [4], it can be concluded that it is the result of effective factors on drawing such as: age, talent, intelligence, physical and mental health condition, past experiences, individual differences, also family, school, teacher, cultural- economical social class conditions.

Suggestions for further researches:

- To carry out the above research by randomly selecting a test sample throughout Iran in order to generalize the results.
- Carrying out the above study, taking into consideration the length of time the child will live with father or mother.
- Conducting comparative studies of family drawing by the children of divorce living with father and those living with mother in the age range of 13-7 years, taking into account the variables of educational status and cultural conditions of the parents.
- Conducting a comparative research of psychological analysis of family drawings of the children of divorce living with father, and those living with mother, considering family's economic conditions and accessibility of appropriate welfare facilities for the children.

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