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A COMPARISON OF NN-DMT, CHANGA & 5-MEO-DMT AND THE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE: QUALITATIVE ANALYSES AND REVIEWS OF THE NEUROSCIENCE

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Background: The near-death experience (NDE) remains an intriguing phenomenon with various theories attempting to explain it. Psychedelics, with their ability to induce profound alterations in consciousness, have been proposed as potential models for understanding NDEs.

Aims: This doctoral thesis aimed to bridge the gap in research by conducting a systematic comparison of the qualitative content of psychedelics, particularly N,N-DMT and changa, with NDEs. This included analyzing the experiences of individuals who had undergone both psychedelics and NDEs.

Method: The study employed a thematic and content analysis of interviews from a naturalistic field study involving N,N-DMT users. The near-death experience scale (NDES) was also administered to assess the similarity between psychedelic experiences and NDEs. Case studies were conducted on individuals who had experienced 5-MeO-DMT, changa, and NDEs.

Results: The analysis revealed that N,N-DMT consistently induced experiences characterized by entering another realm, meeting entities, and pervasive bodily, sensorial, psychological, and emotional transformations. While there were similarities to NDEs, the sequencing of features and the qualitative nature of content varied. A small subset of DMT experiences closely mirrored NDEs. 5-MeO-DMT experiences generally lacked the diversity of features found in NDEs, except for mystical dimensions. Changa experiences showed varying degrees of similarity to the individuals' own NDEs, with one participant reporting a high similarity and another a lower one. However, none replicated the encounter with deceased individuals seen in some NDEs.

Conclusions: Despite their similarities, the explored drug states only partially replicate certain features of NDEs and fail to generate the same content. Each state holds potential for therapeutic applications and provides insights into the neurobiology of consciousness. The NDE's intersection with psychedelics and the parapsychological components of these states suggest a complex interplay of factors that warrant further investigation. Future research should focus on qualitative comparisons of the after-effects of NDEs and drug states, given their profound impact on individuals' lives.

Keywords: Near-death experience, Psychedelic, DMT, Qualitative analysis, Neuroscience

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