

Correlation between Visual Perception and Social Function in Patients with Schizophrenia

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Abstract : Objective: The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between visual perception and social function in patients with schizophrenia. The specific aims are: 1) To explore performances in visual perception and social function in patients with schizophrenia 2) to examine the correlation between visual perceptual skills and social function in patients with schizophrenia The long-term goal is to be able to provide the most adequate intervention program for promoting patients' visual perceptual skills and social function, as well as compensatory techniques. Background: Perceptual deficits in schizophrenia have been well documented in the visual system. Clinically, a considerable portion (up to 60%) of schizophrenia patients report distorted visual experiences such as visual perception of motion, color, size, and facial expression. Visual perception is required for the successful performance of most activities of daily living, such as dressing, making a cup of tea, driving a car and reading. On the other hand, patients with schizophrenia usually exhibit psychotic symptoms such as auditory hallucination and delusions which tend to alter their perception of reality and affect their quality of interpersonal relationship and limit their participation in various social situations. Social function plays an important role in the prognosis of patients with schizophrenia; lower social functioning skills can lead to poorer prognosis. Investigations on the relationship between social functioning and perceptual ability in patients with schizophrenia are relatively new but important as the results could provide information for effective intervention on visual perception and social functioning in patients with schizophrenia. Methods: We recruited 50 participants with schizophrenia in the mental health hospital (Taipei City Hospital, Songde branch, Taipei, Taiwan) acute ward. Participants who have signed consent forms, diagnosis of schizophrenia and having no organic vision deficits were included. Participants were administered the test of visual-perceptual skills (non-motor), third edition (TVPS-3) and the personal and social performance scale (PSP) for assessing visual perceptual skill and social function. The assessments will take about 70-90 minutes to complete. Data Analysis: The IBM SPSS 21.0 will be used to perform the statistical analysis. First, descriptive statistics will be performed to describe the characteristics and performance of the participants. Lastly, Pearson correlation will be computed to examine the correlation between PSP and TVPS-3 scores. Results: Significant differences were found between the means of participants' TVPS-3 raw scores of each subtest with the age equivalent raw score provided by the TVPS-3 manual. Significant correlations were found between all 7 subtests of TVPS-3 and PSP total score. Conclusions: The results showed that patients with schizophrenia do exhibit visual perceptual deficits and is correlated social functions. Understanding these facts of patients with schizophrenia can assist health care professionals in designing and implementing adequate rehabilitative treatment according to patients' needs.

Keywords : occupational therapy, social function, schizophrenia, visual perception

Conference Title : ICOT 2019 : International Conference on Occupational Therapy

Conference Location : Paris, France

Conference Dates : March 28-29, 2019