

Cognitive Rehabilitation in Schizophrenia: A Review of the Indian Scenario

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Abstract : Schizophrenia is a debilitating disorder and is marked by cognitive impairment, which deleteriously impacts the social and professional functioning along with the quality of life of the patients and the caregivers. Often the cognitive symptoms are in their prodromal state and worsen as the illness progresses; they have proven to have a good predictive value for the prognosis of the illness. It has been shown that intensive cognitive rehabilitation (CR) leads to improvements in the healthy as well as cognitively-impaired subjects. As the majority of population in India falls in the lower to middle socio-economic status and have low education levels, using the existing packages, a majority of which are developed in the West, for cognitive rehabilitation becomes difficult. The use of technology is also restricted due to the high costs involved and the limited availability and familiarity with computers and other devices, which pose as an impedance for continued therapy. Cognitive rehabilitation in India uses a plethora of retraining methods for the patients with schizophrenia targeting the functions of attention, information processing, executive functions, learning and memory, and comprehension along with Social Cognition. Psychologists often have to follow an integrative therapy approach involving social skills training, family therapy and psychoeducation in order to maintain the gains from the cognitive rehabilitation in the long run. This paper reviews the methodologies and cognitive retaining programs used in India. It attempts to elucidate the evolution and development of methodologies used, from traditional paper-pencil based retraining to more sophisticated neuroscience-informed techniques in cognitive rehabilitation of deficits in schizophrenia as home-based or supervised and guided programs for cognitive rehabilitation.

Keywords : schizophrenia, cognitive rehabilitation, neuropsychological interventions, integrated approached to rehabilitation

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