
BASIC SYMPTOMS, STRESS AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS IN PATIENTS READMITTED TO ACUTE PSYCHIATRIC WARDS: PRELIMINARY RESULTS FROM AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY

G. Parmigiani¹, G. Mandarelli², L. Tarsitani¹, V. Roselli¹, D. Di Cosimo², F. Moscati², E. Fabi¹, I. Gaviano¹, A. Buscajoni², T. Scattolin², M. Biondi¹, S. Ferracuti²

¹Neurology and Psychiatry, Sapienza University of Rome Policlinico Umberto I Hospital, Rome, Italy ; ²Neurosciences Mental Health and Sensory Organs, Sapienza University of Rome Sant'Andrea Hospital, Rome, Italy

Introduction

The vulnerability-stress model assumes that psychotic symptoms emerge from the interaction between stress, basic symptoms and information processing deficits. Despite the large amount of data on first episode psychosis, this particular topic has been investigated to a minor extent in patients readmitted to acute psychiatric wards.

Objectives

To assess the association between basic symptoms and subjective stress, life events, and executive functions.

Aims

To identify the factors associated to basic symptoms during relapses.

Methods

Patients affected by schizophrenia, schizoaffective and bipolar disorder according to DSM-IV TR were recruited from the acute psychiatric wards of two University Hospitals in Rome. They were evaluated through: a) Frankfurt Complaint Questionnaire (FCQ); b) Stress-related Vulnerability Scale (SVS); c) Paykel Interview for Recent Life Events (IRLE); d) Wisconsin Card Sorting Test (WCST).

Results

Forty-nine patients were enrolled (65% women; mean age 42.7 ± 10.5 years; education 12.4 ± 3.2 years; disease duration 17.6 ± 11.4 ; 63% affected by bipolar disorder). Basic symptoms were positively associated to SVS total score ($\rho = 0.66$, $p < 0.01$), IRLE marital subscale ($\rho = 0.3$, $p < 0.05$), while negatively associated to WCST number of completed categories ($\rho = -0.32$, $p < 0.05$).

Conclusions

Preliminary results of this study show that basic symptoms are positively associated to perceived stress and marital life events, while negatively associated to executive functions, during psychotic relapses.