

BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS IN SCHIZOPHRENIC PATIENTS WITH FRONTAL ASSESSMENT BATTERY (FAB)

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: Executive functions include the capacity to formulate goals, plan and organize goal-directed behaviour, and carry out goal-directed behaviour. They constitute the core deficit in schizophrenic illness and have been related to structural and functional deficits, and cognitive impairments. The Frontal Assessment Battery (FAB) is a short tool for the assessment of executive functions consisting of six subtests that explore different abilities related to the frontal lobes. The aims of our study, was to evaluate the clinical usefulness of the FAB in identifying executive dysfunction in psychiatric patients, and second to derive values from a sample of schizophrenic patients and provide normative data for them.

METHODS: The study involved 55 schizophrenic patients and 53 controls. We performed FAB and Mini Mental State Examination (MMSE) in both groups and correlated the scores with sex and age. Using Pearson's R, we estimated correlations between the FAB and MMSE scores.

RESULTS: The FAB global score was significantly lower in the schizophrenic patients group, compared to psychiatric patients group. Negative correlation between the FAB scores and the age was also evident. No difference in the MMSE scores between two groups was found.

CONCLUSION: The FAB is giving helpful information for the executive functioning of schizophrenic patients. Furthermore, normative data may improve the accuracy in the use of the FAB both for clinical and research purposes in schizophrenia disease.