THE PREDICTIVE VALUE OF PREMORBID ADJUSTMENT REGARDING COGNITIVE DYSFUNCTION IN SCHIZOPHRENIA

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: Premorbid adjustment (PA) in academic and social domain is a key-predictor of cognitive performance in schizophrenia. Prior studies provided inconsistent findings regarding the differential relationships of PA domains with post-illness cognition. Multivariate associations of academic and social PA in each developmental stage (childhood, early and late adolescence) with post-onset cognitive variables were explored. Furthermore, possible differential relationships of PA domain deterioration courses with post-onset cognitive dysfunction were investigated.

MATERIAL – METHOD: Seventy-five schizophrenia patients were evaluated with Premorbid Adjustment Scale (PAS). General cognitive ability, verbal IQ, verbal memory and learning, processing speed, working memory, executive function and premorbid IQ were assessed. Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA) was employed to examine the relationship between academic and social PA with post-onset neurocognitive variables.

RESULTS: CCA revealed that poorer academic PA across childhood and early adolescence was related to worse post-onset verbal IQ, working memory, verbal learning and executive function, while academic PA deterioration between early and late adolescence was associated with poorer verbal learning and executive function and, as further analysis indicated, predicts IQ decline.

CONCLUSIONS: Academic PA was exclusively associated with post-onset cognitive impairment. New evidence emerged for the specificity of each developmental period academic malfunctioning in predicting post-illness cognition. Early premorbid academic maladjustment possibly constitutes the onset of a cognitive dysmaturational process which results to post-diagnosis impaired cognition.

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