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Improvement of symptoms during schizophrenia relapse versus patients' beliefs about themselves, the world and the disease

Abstract

The available statistics and research results show that current knowledge about schizophrenia is not sufficient to provide patients with a satisfactory quality of life. For this reason, scientists are constantly looking for clues that would help to better plan the therapeutic process. The present study is consistent with this research trend.

The aim of the study was to assess how participants' persistent beliefs about themselves, the world and the disease are connected with the intensity and improvement of psychopathological symptoms.

The study included 30 patients with aggravated schizophrenia, who were admitted to a closed psychiatric ward . During the six-week study, the clinical condition of the patients was assessed every two weeks using the PANSS scale. During the first two weeks of hospitalization, subjects completed questionnaires to assess their level of clinical and cognitive insight, basic hope, Snyder's hope and locus of control. Additionally, immediately after admission and after the fourth and sixth weeks of hospitalization, serum BDNF level was measured in the participants.

It was found that cognitive insight, unlike clinical insight, is associated with the severity and resolution of symptoms. Locus of control had no effect on the level of patients' psychopathology and was not related to the duration of the disease. Correlations between the levels of both kinds of hope and the clinical condition of participants were observed, mostly opposite to the predicted ones, which requires further detailed research. No relationship was found between serum BDNF levels and symptomatology.