Holmes-Rahe Social Readjustment Scale and life events involving social defeat in first episode psychosis: preliminary results of a Delphi Study

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BACKGROUND

- Stress plays a role in the risk of developing a psychotic disorder [1].
- Previous studies conducted in high-risk populations using the 43-item Holmes-Rahe Social Readjustment Scale (HRSRS) as a measure of stressful life events have demonstrated its validity in relation to psychosis transition [2].
- A social defeat hypothesis of schizophrenia suggests that long-term exposure to the negative experience of being excluded from the majority group is a risk factor of developing the illness [3].

We aimed to conduct a Delphi study to establish a consensus for selecting those HRSRS items that reflect social defeat.

Preliminary results after the first round of this Delphi Study were tested in a sample of healthy subjects (HS) and patients with a first episode of psychosis (FEP).

METHODS

DELPHI STUDY

Delphi panelists: 29 Mental-health workers (psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses and social workers from two institutions:
- Early Intervention Service (Institut Pere Mata, Reus, Spain)
- Department of Mental Health (Corporació Sanitària Parc Taulí, Sabadell, Spain)

All panelists rated each 43 HRSRS life event in two domains with a 5-point likert scale:
- Neutral or positive (score 1-3)
- Negative (score 4-5)

- Comparison of continuous variables was performed with a T-test.
- Categorical variables were compared with a Chi Square test.
- A logistic regression was used to explore the relationship between HRSRS item subscales and FEP diagnosis (dependent variable) while adjusting for covariates (sex, gender, substance use and social adaptation).

HS vs FEP STUDY. CLINICAL ASSESSMENT.

- Schedules for Clinical Assessment in Neuropsychiatry and - OPCRIT v4.0. checklist.
- 43-item HRSRS was used to assess life events [4] in the previous 6 months.
- Social Adjustment Self-evaluation Scale (SASS) was used to assess social adaptation [5].

RESULTS

DELPHI STUDY

Patients reported increased life events of all types when compared to HS in the univariate analysis (p<0.05 for all HRSRS subscales).

Logistic regression analysis showed a significant association with FEP diagnosis only for social defeat items (OR = 2.2, p< 0.023).

CONCLUSION

Although preliminary, our Delphi study suggests that selected social defeat items of the HRSRS show an acceptable internal consistency and are associated with a FEP diagnosis.

REFERENCES


Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest related to this presentation.