

Symposium: Adaptive behavior and functioning

General information

Organized by: Finnish Neuropsychological Society

Chair: Riitta Hannonen, Clinical neuropsychologist, PhD, Hogrefe Psychologien Kustannus and Kymenlaakso Social and Health Services

Adaptive behavior and functioning are closely related concepts from different research traditions. The symposium discusses their application in neuropsychological assessment and rehabilitation. The first two presentations introduce the assessment of adaptive behavior and its use in different patient groups. The third presentation presents rehabilitation of adaptive functioning in traumatic brain injury, and the last presentation discusses adaptive functioning in the ICF framework.

Presentation 1

Title: Adaptive behavior assessment in neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders

Presented by: Riitta Hannonen, Clinical neuropsychologist, PhD, Hogrefe Psychologien Kustannus and Kymenlaakso Social and Health Services

Abstract:

Background: Adaptive behavior and adaptive functioning are related concepts from different research traditions. Adaptive behavior is a key concept in intellectual disability (ID) research. There is also a need to evaluate adaptive functioning in other clinical groups.

Objective: The study assessed the discriminative validity of Adaptive Behavior Assessment System (ABAS-3) in patients with neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders.

Method: Patients with ID, autism, other developmental disorders, and Alzheimer's disease (n=87) were assessed with age-appropriate ABAS-3 forms, and a matched subgroup of the ABAS-3 Finnish standardization sample was used as a comparison group. Group differences were analysed with Anovas.

Results: Adaptive skill scores of the patient groups were significantly lower than those of the comparison group in all age-specific forms.

Conclusion: ABAS-3 is a valid measure for adaptive behavior and functioning in different clinical groups and ages, also in adults. The assessment of adaptive behavior helps to plan intervention and rehabilitation.

Presentation 2

Title: Adaptive skills in pediatric neurodegenerative disease

Presented by: Päivi Helenius, Clinical neuropsychologist, PhD, Division of Child Neurology, Helsinki University Hospital

Abstract:

Information about the adaptive behavior of a child is essential for the diagnosis of intellectual disability. According to a strict criterion, both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior should be 2 standard deviations below the mean. We assessed the adaptive skills of 21 children with aspartylglucosaminuria (AGU), a rare neurodegenerative disease that leads to intellectual disability. The WISC-IV full scale IQ of these 7-15-year-old children was at least in the mild to moderate intellectual disability level. The adaptive skills evaluated with ABAS-3 were also below the average. However, individual variability was high and in 7/21 children none of the three domains of adaptive functioning fell to the extremely low level. While the WISC-IV standard scores of AGU children progressively deviated from the norm with age, the adaptive scores failed to show the same trend. This suggests that the parental evaluation of age-appropriate functioning might be biased in some neurodevelopmental conditions.

Presentation 3

Title: Psychosocial outcomes and their subjective appraisal after a comprehensive-holistic neurorehabilitation program in adults with traumatic brain injury

Presented by: Jaana Sarajuuri, Clinical neuropsychologist, PhD, ProNeuron - Therapy and Medical Center for Neurology and Psychiatry

Abstract:

Many people with traumatic brain injury (TBI) experience long-term, lifelong, and evolving impairments in cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and motor functioning that impact their overall psychosocial functioning. The effectiveness of postacute neuropsychologically oriented multidisciplinary comprehensive-holistic rehabilitation programs (CHRP) in enhancing psychosocial functioning has been supported by several studies, but controlled studies are scarce. Recently, awareness has increased of the need to supplement outcome assessment by subjective measures. We investigated the psychosocial outcomes of an application of CHRP and the relationship between the objective outcomes and their self-appraisals in adults with TBI. The findings showed that at the end of a 2-year follow-up 89% of the 19 patients in the CHRP group were productive compared with 55% of the 20 matched controls. Moreover, the patients after a CHRP were found to be largely satisfied with the areas of wellness after CHRPs. The findings support the presumption that CHRPs facilitate achievement of a successful outcome through establishing a meaningful and satisfactory life after TBI in the face of persisting deficits.

Presentation 4

Title: Assessing functioning in ICF framework

Presented by: Petriina Munck, Clinical neuropsychologist, PhD, Neuropsychological Rehabilitation Center Larmis and University of Helsinki

Abstract:

Background: International Classification of Function (ICF) offers a common language and concepts to describe functioning and participation. ICF aims to speak the same language despite of one's field of expertise, or the nature of patient's diagnosis. It aims to empower patient as a subject in the assessment process, as well as in the identification process of rehabilitation goals. Despite of the importance of describing functioning and adaptive behavior in everyday life, the implementation of ICF language and framework has been slow in the field of psychology in Finland.

Objective: to discuss the advantages and challenges of ICF language and framework in the assessment of functioning and adaptive behavior, as well as in rehabilitation. To discuss the link between neuropsychological assessment and functioning in everyday life.

Conclusion: ICF offers a possibility to promote patient's perspective, multi professional assessment, and common language in the assessment and rehabilitation of adaptive behaviour and functioning.