

Article: 1744

Topic: EPV31 - e-Poster 31: Schizophrenia

Emotional Recognition of Musical-auditory and Artful-visual Stimuli in Patients with Chronic Schizophrenia

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Objective: This study aimed to explore the difference in emotional recognition of musical auditory stimulation and artful visual stimulation between healthy people and patients with schizophrenia.

Method: 20 songs and 20 paintings that contained sad or cheerful emotions were presented to 123 patients with schizophrenia and 224 healthy people as control group. The subjects were asked to tell about their emotions that they had felt from each musical auditory stimulation and artful visual stimulation. To measure such emotions, the Emotional Empathy Scale was used. The level of psychopathology in patient group were evaluated with the Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale and the Formal Thought Disorder Rating Scale.

Result: The correct answer rate to musical auditory and artful visual stimulation of the patient group was significantly lower than that of the control group. The patient group showed lower emotional empathic ability compared to the control group. In the patient group, the correct answer rate to musical and artful stimulation showed a negative correlation with score with Formal Thought Disorder Rating Scale.

Conclusion: Patients with schizophrenia have difficulties in precise emotional recognition to auditory and visual stimulations, and this is associated with lowered empathic ability and thinking disorder of patients with schizophrenia. If a psychosocial rehabilitation program or psychotherapy is implemented to patients with schizophrenia, it is deemed to be necessary to make a mediation to improve the emotional recognition and expression ability of patients with schizophrenia.