

The Self-report of Negative Symptoms (SNS): Validity of a Self-assessment of Negative Symptoms in Patients with Schizophrenia

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Introduction: Negative symptoms are a fundamental dimension of schizophrenia despite their limited role in the diagnostic classifications. Eleven instruments assess specifically the negative symptoms. Among them, only one instrument, the Motivation and Pleasure Self-Report, is based on a self-assessment but only focused on 2 dimensions of negative symptoms, the pleasure and the motivation. Consequently, we developed a new scale, the Self-report of Negative Symptoms (SNS), assessing the 5 consensual negative dimensions (emotional blunting, alogia, social withdrawal, anhedonia and avolition).

Objectives: To present the SNS and to test the internal consistency and validity of the SNS.

Methods: The SNS is a self-assessment constituted of 20 sentences and based on 3-point Likert-scale (0-2). Participants (n=49) completed the SNS and the Birchwood Insight Scale (BIS) and were evaluated with negative symptoms interview using Scale for the Assessment of Negative Symptoms (SANS) and with the Negative Clinical Global Impression score (CGI-). Face and content validities were examined. Internal consistency was calculated by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Convergent validity was calculated by the Pearson's correlation coefficient between SNS, SANS and CGI- scores. Divergent validity was calculated by the Pearson's correlation coefficient between SNS and BIS scores.

Results: SNS presents good face and content validities, good internal consistency ($\alpha=0.784$), convergent validity with SANS ($r=0.526$, $p<0.001$) and CGI- ($r=0.599$, $p<0.001$) and good divergent validity with BIS ($r=-0.008$, $p=NS$).

Conclusion: SNS should be more used in daily practice since it might allow the patients with schizophrenia to develop appropriate coping strategies, regardless of their level of insight.