



DEAFNESS IN SCHIZOPHRENIA A DIAGNOSTIC DILEMMA

Dr. Ankit Halder

Post Graduate Resident, Department of Psychiatry, DY Patil Medical College and Hospital Kolhapur.

Dr. Abhishek Das

Post Graduate Resident, Department of Pathology, DY Patil Medical College and Hospital Kolhapur.

Dr. Navna Panchami Ravindran*

Post Graduate Resident, Department of Psychiatry, DY Patil Medical College and Hospital Kolhapur. *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

Schizophrenia is one of the most common psychotic spectrum disorders encountered in daily practice. Auditory hallucinations is one of the most prominent presenting symptom. There is still dilemma about the intensity and nature of hallucinations mostly auditory and visual ones in deaf patients presenting with psychotic breaks. Further research and sample based study is warranted.

KEYWORDS : Schizophrenia, Auditory Hallucinations, Deaf Patients**INTRODUCTION**

Prelingually deaf is being referred to as from birth or before verbal language is achieved. Deaf individuals mostly uses sign language for communication and expressing themselves. Sign language as well as spoken language are not universal and various types are present [1]. The type is dependent mainly on geography of the individual. Auditory hallucinations is one of the most prominent presenting symptom of schizophrenia [1]. There is still dilemma about the intensity and nature of hallucinations mostly auditory and visual ones in such patients and their presentation.

DISCUSSION

Existence of mental illness in deaf population is at equal rate as the general population [1]. In order to solving the mental and behavioral changes of such people on their presentation with psychiatric comorbidities, the treating doctor must be well versed with the Deaf culture and the diagnostic criteria for psychiatric conditions.

Schizophrenia is diagnosed on the basis of positive psychotic symptoms as well as negative and cognitive symptoms [2]. Auditory hallucinations have long the corner stone in the diagnosis of schizophrenia.

Visual hallucinations is also found in some cases of schizophrenia [1]. So it is vital to recognize such presentations.

Concerning "auditory" hallucinations in Deaf patients, it is proposed that prelingually Deaf patients perceive them as subvisual precepts. It is mostly hidden in the sign language or of lips moving and not an experience of the sound [2,4]. The existence of sound-based auditory hallucinations in Deaf people remains is a curious phenomenon. Regarding visual hallucinations, it is postulated that Deaf patients are more sensitive to visual processing. As a result they are less vulnerable to experiencing such symptoms [5].

CONCLUSION

Deaf population persists to be an under studied and underserved community which is most often misunderstood. Holistic care within psychiatry depends on a mixture of medications, therapy, and self-care which is very much challenging to provide to Deaf patients. New research is needed for diagnostic screenings and delivery of therapies for this population as they require extensive modification. Correct diagnoses are needed as misdiagnosis can lead to lifelong labeling which is a social stigma in developing nations like India where still mental illness keeps on persisting to be a taboo. So, all physicians and healthcare staff should be exposed to an effective training program and treatment protocol of a deaf patient presenting with psychiatric illnesses. Further sample based study is warranted into this.

REFERENCES:

- 1 S. A. Landsberger and D. R. Diaz, "Identifying and assessing psychosis in deaf psychiatric patients," *Current Psychiatry Reports*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 198-202,

2011. View at: Publisher Site | Google Scholar
2. American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, American Psychiatric Publishing, Arlington, TX, USA, 5th edition, 2013.
3. S. A. Landsberger, A. Sajid, L. Schmelkin, D. R. Diaz, and C. Weiler, "Assessment and treatment of deaf adults with psychiatric disorders: a review of the literature for practitioners," *Journal of Psychiatric Practice*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 87-97, 2013. View at: Publisher Site | Google Scholar
4. J. R. Atkinson, "The perceptual characteristics of voice-hallucinations in deaf people: Insights into the nature of subvocal thought and sensory feedback loops," *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 701-708, 2006. View at: Publisher Site | Google Scholar.
5. H. K. Horton and S. M. Silverstein, "Visual context processing deficits in schizophrenia: effects of deafness and disorganization," *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, vol. 37, no. 4, pp. 716-726, 2011. View at: Publisher Site | Google Scholar.