



Determiners of Depression Among Adults with Acquired Brain Injury

Project for 2007-2008

Dr. Bruce Linder, Psychologist, Clinical Director, Brain Injury Services of Hamilton, Haldimand-Norfolk, Niagara

Purpose of Study

The fact that adults with ABI are at higher risk for mental health issues is well-established. Depression is the most common mental health problem. Less is known about the determiners of depression in this special population, despite many theories. Chief among these theories is one that emphasizes **unresolved grief** over the many losses associated with traumatic brain injury. Another popular theory emphasizes **social isolation** and loneliness. The purpose of this study is to explore the relative importance of these two factors in determining ABI depression.

To test these hypotheses, multiple measures of depression, losses, unresolved grief, and social isolation will be administered to a group of adults living in the community and receiving services from Brain Injury Services of Hamilton. Correlations will be calculated between these measures and measures of independent functioning, disability and level of brain injury. It is predicted that high correlations will be obtained between the predicted measures and depression, and lower correlations will be obtain between depression and level of independence, disability and brain injury.

Subjects

Approximately 40 adult volunteers from Brain Injury of Services of Hamilton (BISH) will be recruited, all of whom have well-defined and long-standing brain injuries.

Tests

The following tests will be administered by trained McMaster University students.

1. Beck Depression Inventory – II (BDI-II)

2. Structured interview for depression to measure acute vs. chronic depression and temporal correlation with episode of brain injury.
3. Loss of Quality of Life Inventory (LQOLI) – a 16-item scale adapted from the QOLI (Frisch).
4. Adult Self-Report (ASR) -to measure extent and depth of social network.
5. The Personal Assessment of Intimacy (PAIR-M: Thériault, 1998) is a validated, self-report questionnaire (23 items), to measure how individuals view themselves, in general, in intimate interactions with a romantic partner.
6. Coping Response Inventory (CRI) to measure style of coping with losses
8. Pet Intimacy Questionnaire – to measure use of pets to cope with loneliness; nature of relationship with pet.
9. Religiosity Questionnaire – to measure religious beliefs both as a potential spiritual coping style and as a basis for identifying those with religious delusional beliefs often associated with specific types of brain injuries (e.g. temporal lobe personality syndrome).

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics will be calculated for all tests and subtests.

Test and subtest intercorrelations will be calculated using SPSS.

Predictions

1. It is predicted that high correlations will be obtained between the predicted measures (social isolation, grief, extent of losses) and depression, and lower correlations will be obtain between depression and level of independence, disability and brain injury.
2. Negative correlation between depression and religiosity (possibly due to delusional beliefs and lack of self-awareness).