

MOTOR DISTURBANCES IN AUTISTIC CHILDREN: CROSS SECTIONAL, CONTROLLED STUDY

D. Ali^{1,2}, S. Effat², D. El Serafi²

¹Psychiatry, Prince Sultan Humanitarian City, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, ²Psychiatry, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt

Background: Children with autism have developmental motor profile that differ from other healthy children. This is evident since early childhood, sometime noted by parents and neglected by clinicians. These motor deficits are related to other domains of dysfunction in children with autism as social and language skills .Improving motor deficits can help better prognosis for these children.

Aim: To detect motor deficits in a sample of autistic children and correlate them with the severity of autistic symptoms.

Methods: We recruited 20 autistic children ranging from 3 to 6 yrs from the Institute of psychiatry outpatient child psychiatry and rehabilitation clinics of Ain-Shams university hospital .We excluded patients having total intelligence less than 75 or having other developmental disorder. We matched them with healthy controls for age and sex and compared both motor development and self help skills using Brigance scale. We confirmed diagnosis of autism in each patient by applying ICD-10 criteria of autism by a senior psychiatrist and by having a Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS) score above 30. Relation of autism severity and motor deficits was assessed later by Correlation co-efficient test.

Results: Compared to controls, autistic children showed statistically significant low Brigance test scores on; gross movement, fine movement and self-help skills subdomains .Motor delay was significantly correlated with the severity of autism.

Conclusions: Motor deficits were evident in autistic patients and could indicate severity

Keywords: Motor deficits, Essential feature, Autism, Children.