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The perceived impact of hearing loss may be more closely linked to depressive symptoms than to hearing acuity itself.

INTRODUCTION

Hearing loss, a potentially modifiable risk factor for dementia, is associated with a higher risk of depression which could be due to social isolation, mental fatigue, and loss of autonomy. This study investigated depressive symptoms correlated with hearing loss and perceived social and emotional handicap.

METHODS

Data was collected from the medical records of patients from a Cognitive Neurology outpatient clinic: age, sex, neurological diagnosis. Depressive symptoms were documented by the treating physician in the patient's medical record. Hearing thresholds were assessed with a portable Echodia audiometer, and social and emotional handicap with the Hearing Handicap Inventory for the Elderly - Screening Version (HHIE-S) questionnaire. Data analysis was performed using Spearman's rho test to explore the correlation between depressive symptoms and hearing thresholds, and Pearson's correlation was used to analyze the relationship between depressive symptoms and HHIE-S scores.

RESULTS

Table 1. Frequencies

		N	%
Type of cognitive decline	AD	13	17.1%
	Other	22	28.9%
	MD	8	10.5%
	PD	2	2.6%
	MCI	12	15.8%
	PPA	3	3.9%
	FTD	4	5.3%
	VaD	5	6.6%
	LBD	3	3.9%
	SCI	4	5.3%
Sex	F	39	51.3%
	M	37	48.7%
Hearing classification, OMS (2021)	Hearing loss	64	84.2%
	Normal hearing	12	15.8%
HHIE-S Classification	No handicap	50	65.8%
	Mild-Moderate_Handicap	19	25.0%
	Severe_Handicap	7	9.2%

Table 2. Depressive symptoms x HHIE-S x Hearing threshold

		n	Mean	Median	SD	p value
Age		76	66.5	68.5	9.6	
HHIE-S Score	Yes	36	10.5	6.0	10.9	* 0.046
	No	40	6.0	2.0	8.1	
Mean hearing thresholds of the better ear	Yes	36	24.9	26.3	9.3	** 0.005
	No	40	31.9	31.9	12.4	

* Significant Student's t-test at the 5% level (p ≤ 0.05); ** Mann-Whitney U test significant at the 5% level (p ≤ 0.05)

CONCLUSIONS

In this sample, individuals with depressive symptoms tend to exhibit better auditory thresholds but poorer self-reported auditory perception.

REFERENCES

CONTACT

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