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Visuospatial attention deficit in people with Mild Cognitive Impairment

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Objective: Dementia of Alzheimer's type is characterized as a progressive deterioration in decline in cognitive functions starting from Mild Cognitive impairment to severe impairment at later course of disease. The cognitive impairment in MCI begins with deterioration in attentional functioning, the first non-memory impairment of dementia of Alzheimer's type. Studies in the past revealed that parietal lobe is , responsible for visuospatial attention and is affected at early stage of DAT. The visuospatial dysfunction affects 20-45 percent of MCI patients and appears approximately 5 years before the onset of memory impairment in DAT patients. Specifically, the aim of the study was to examine the prognostic and diagnostic value of attention network task in conversion of patients with MCI to DAT.

Methods: The present study explored the visuospatial attentional deficit in 11 patients diagnosed with MCI. The visuospatial attentional deficit was assessed using orienting network of attentional network task (ANT). Results: Results revealed a case wise differences in performance of attentional network. In sum, the present study have suggested that patients with high orienting deficit would have the higher probability to convert into DAT in later life.

Conclusions: The ANT task can be used as a tool for both effective prognostic and early interventions to MCI patients with visuospatial attentional deficit which could delay the progression of DAT.

Biography

Pooja Rai is the Project Scientist & Post-Doctoral Fellow, Centre for Brain Research, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. Assistant Professor, Centre for Brain Research, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India.