Bern Psychopathology Scale (BPS) -

Differentiation of psychotic symptoms along the domains of speech, motor behavior and affect.

Alexander Wopfner1, Nadja Razavi1*, Sebastian Walther1,2, Philipp Koschorke1, Gustav Wirtz, Werner Strik1

1 Universitätsklinik und Poliklinik für Psychiatrie und Universität Bern, Schweiz
2 Dept. für Neurologie, Universität Bern, Inselspital, Bern, Schweiz
3 Klinik an der Lindenhöhe, Erwachsenen Psychiatrie, Offenburg, Deutschland
* presenting author

Psychopathology of schizophrenia is heterogeneous and leads to neurophysiologically inconsistent results if treated as a uniform study group. Therefore, we propose a reformulation of the psychopathology according to neurophysiological knowledge. In particular, we mapped the psychopathological symptoms along the domains of speech, motor behavior and affect.

The scale consisted of 52 descriptively formulated symptoms in the domains speech, motor behavior and affect. Each item could either reflect inhibited, disinhibited or psychopathological relevant or normal behavior in order to match the physiological state of excitation and inhibition. The severity of inhibition or disinhibition in each of the three domains could be rated on a 7-point scale. 175 schizophrenic patients were interviewed with the semi-structured BPS and the PANSS. Interrater-reliability between 3 raters was assessed analyzing 20 video-interviews. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to investigate the construct of the scale. Internal consistency was computed for the resulting subscales.

18 Items were eliminated because of low interrater-reliability or low communalities. The final factor analysis identified within the psychotic symptoms three consistent factors which well matched the dimensions of speech, affect and motor-behavior.

The Bern Psychopathology Scale is a tool to identify groups of schizophrenic patients who are predominantly disabled in speech, affective, or motor behavior. It constitutes a step towards the investigation of more homogeneous psychopathological groups, in order to conduct neurophysiological and pharmacological studies in schizophrenia. Moreover, the scale provides information on the unaffected domains and thus the intact resources of the patients, which proofed to be useful in daily contact.