

Emotion regulation strategies in focal epilepsy

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Statement of the Problem: Epilepsy is a neurological disorder characterized by abnormal brain activity which leads to seizures and periods of unusual behaviors and sensations. It has a significant negative impact on the quality of life of patients even if seizures are well controlled. Emotion regulation is an integral aspect of social behavior. Studies with clinical populations have also shown how certain emotion regulation strategies are associated with emotional disorders. The current study looks at how cognitive deficits associated with epilepsy affect usage of emotion regulation strategies.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: The study employs between-subjects descriptive comparative research design. Data from a total of sixty-six Indian participants was used for the study. Two groups of 33 participants each (33 experimental group and 33 control group) completed three self-report questionnaires which measured emotion regulation strategies.

Findings: Results showed that people with focal epilepsy used significantly lesser adaptive emotion regulation strategies than healthy controls. Although the differences were not significant, people with epilepsy used more maladaptive emotion regulation strategies. The results suggest that cognition deficits which arise due to the seizures cause impaired social cognition and ER strategies.

Conclusion & Significance: The present study provides evidence that PWE use less adaptive ER strategies and engage in more maladaptive ER strategies. This can be explained via the interference hypothesis and based on the origin of the seizure. The findings could stem from impairments in social cognition. PWE may benefit from social skills training and interventions aimed at increasing adaptive ER strategies.