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Psychometric properties of the Assessment of Awareness of Disability (AAD) used on a generic sample with a variety of disabilities

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Introduction: The Assessment of Awareness of Disability (AAD) is a client-centered, occupation-based assessment of awareness of limitations to perform everyday life tasks. A limited awareness is a common consequence of many diagnoses, such as stroke, and could reduce the client's involvement in occupational therapy. The AAD could therefore be an important tool in order to target services and interventions more specifically.

Objectives: The aim of this study was to evaluate some psychometric properties of the AAD based on a generic sample of clients with a variety of diagnoses and disabilities.

Method: The sample consisted of 246 clients admitted to occupational therapy services in Sweden. The AAD evaluation is based on the discrepancy between the observed problems assessed with the Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (AMPS), and the clients experienced limitations reported in the AAD. The psychometric properties of the AAD scores were analyzed using a Rasch rating scale model.

Results: The analysis of the rating scale, raters, tasks and items showed acceptable results indicating evidence of scale validity of the AAD measures based on a generic sample with a variety of diagnoses and disabilities. Furthermore, the psychometric properties of the persons showed that 91 % of the sample met the criteria in the Rasch rating scale model, it is generally recommended that 95 % should meet the criteria. An analysis of the persons not meeting the criteria showed that persons with mental retardation were overrepresented.

Conclusion: The study indicates that the AAD generate valid measures for a broad sample of clients although persons with mental retardation demonstrate too high level of unexpected responses on the AAD scores which needs to be addressed in future application and research with the AAD.

Contribution for practice: There is a need for evidence-based evaluations of aspects of relevance to understand and explain occupational performance and also to serve as a basis for individual intervention planning. The AAD could be valid tool for occupational therapists to use in order to assess the clients awareness of their limitations to perform everyday life tasks, despite the underlying cause to such limitations in awareness.