

# 'EFFECT OF MEMORY RETRAINING AMONG ELDERLY DIAGNOSED WITH MILD DEMENTIA'



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## Abstract

Ageing is a major challenge in the century. As longevity increases, the concern for conditions like dementia and Alzheimer's become prominent in the lives of some of the elderly. These diseases are growing fast in India. Therefore, a pre experimental study on effect of memory retraining among elderly diagnosed with mild dementia in selected urban areas of Indore was undertaken. A pre experimental approach using with pre, mid and post therapy assessment was used in this study. Sample size of 7 patients was selected using non probability purposive sampling technique. The independent variable was memory retraining whereas gain in memory score among elderly with mild dementia was dependent variable in the study. The investigator used the standardized (HMSE) Hindi Mental state Examination for the screening and PGI memory scale to assess the memory impairment. PGI scale consisted of 10 subtests covering areas of memory impairment. Assessment was done prior to, in the middle and after the completion of therapy ranging from 12 sessions spread over approximately one month. The data were analyzed using Wilcoxon signed- rank test to assess effectiveness of memory retraining on mild dementia. A significant difference in pre, mid, and post therapy scores indicated the efficacy of the therapy. The computed Wilcoxon signed rank test z value for pre test and mid test ( $z= 2.36$ ), and pre test and post test ( $z= 2.371$ ) was significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  confidence level which revealed the effectiveness of memory retraining in improving memory in elderly diagnosed with mild dementia. Hence, research hypothesis was accepted. It concluded that memory retraining was effective in improving the memory in early stage dementia.

**Key words:** Dementia, Memory Retraining, Elderly, (HMSE) Hindi Mental state Examination, PGI (Memory scale developed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical health and Sciences, Chandigarh).

## Background

Dementia is a brain disorder that affects the ability to remember, think clearly, communicate, and perform daily activities and may cause changes in mood and personality (Cleusa P. Ferri, Prince M, Brayne C, Brodaty H, & Fratiglioni L, 2005)<sup>13</sup>.

Cognitive disturbance is the clinical hallmark of dementia. The most dramatic and consistent cognitive impairment is in memory (Boyd Ann Mary, 2008)<sup>2</sup>.

Memory impairment is the prominent early sign of dementia. Clients have difficulty learning new material and forget previously learned material. Initially recent memory is impaired (Videbeck L. Sheila, 2008)<sup>7</sup>.

Memory retraining is a training programme in which new skills are established or the efficacy of the existing cognitive function (memory) is enhanced by the process of gradual learning.

Brain becomes denser if we memorize more, learn more, think more, solve problem more, etc. Nerve growth factor stimulates and supports growth of myelin sheath and formation of new synapses. Thus helps in memory processing (Prince M. et.al,2004)<sup>9</sup>.

Recent research has shown that people with Alzheimer's disease can benefit from instruction to improve their memory (James E. Birren, 1996)<sup>3</sup>.

The effects of memory training in elderly people are positive. Memory training can be effective in mildly demented elderly persons as well. Interestingly, memory training which combines memory strategies with reattribution training, in order exaggerated achievement levels and change attribution pattern for success and failure, might help elderly most (Alan S. Bellack and Michel Hersen, 1998)<sup>1</sup>.

## Need of the Study

Recent estimates show that dementia is a major cause of burden of disease amongst the elderly in developing countries. As many parts of the developing world witness a demographic transition, dementia is likely to account for

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