MAJOR RESEARCH DISSERTATION

Quality of life and well-being after acquired brain injury: the role of social identity, use of coping strategies and cognitive functioning

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Quality of life and well-being after acquired brain injury: the role of social identity, use of coping strategies and cognitive functioning

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this study was to examine the impact of social identity, coping style and cognitive impairment, on quality of life and well-being in a group of people with head injury compared to patients with chronic pain.

Design: A correlational design using sixty participants recruited from Devon was employed: thirty adults with acquired brain injuries (ABI) were recruited from a charity and thirty adults with chronic pain difficulties from a NHS pain management service.

Results: Analysis showed that there was little difference between the two groups on the variables measured. The role of social identity was not associated with better psychosocial outcome or coping style. Maladaptive coping strategies were associated with poorer adjustment in the ABI group and support-seeking strategies were correlated with improved outcomes in the chronic pain group. Objective neuropsychological variables were not associated with coping style, however, a relationship was observed between maladaptive coping styles and self-reported executive functioning.

Conclusions: The results add to the literature on social identity, coping and quality of life post-ABI including improved understanding of how cognitive impairment might influence the use of particular coping strategies. The findings are discussed in relation to improved interventions to increase the use of more adaptive coping strategies.