Spring 5-31-2021

Comparison Of Patterns Of Sensory Processing Abilities Among Pre-Term Infants And Term Infants Aged 12-18 Months

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Abstract

Background: Every year, 15 million infants are born preterm across the globe. These infants are at risk for developing sensory processing disorders during their first year of life. This may have an adverse effect on infant's development and later lead to difficulty with participation in daily occupations. There is a dearth of literature in Indian context and hence there is a need to study the pattern of sensory processing in preterm infants.

Aim: To compare the patterns of sensory processing abilities between preterm and term infants aged 12-18 months.

Method: A cross sectional study using purposive sampling recruited caregivers of 32 preterm and 36 term infants aged 12-18 months for the study. The written informed consent was obtained from the selected caregivers who visited out-patient department of pediatrics and completed the Infant/toddler Sensory profile (7-36 months) questionnaire.

Results: Independent sample t-test shows statistical significant difference in the mean score of sensory processing abilities between preterm and term infants in low registration, sensory avoidance, low threshold ($p < 0.001$); sensory sensitivity ($p = 0.008$); auditory ($p < 0.001$) and oral sensory processing ($p=0.008$). The Pearson Chi-square test shows statistical significant difference in the frequencies of pattern of sensory processing between preterm and term infants in low registration ($p=0.030$), sensory avoiding ($p=0.002$), low threshold ($p=0.023$); auditory ($p=0.001$) and oral ($p=0.026$) sensory processing systems.

Conclusion: Preterm infants shows significant differences in the performances of sensory processing patterns compared to term infants.