Screening for Autism in Romanian Population: An Initial Study Investigating the Clinical Utility of the Screening Questionnaire for Autism Spectrum Disorders (Chestionarul de Screening pentru Tulburări de Spectru Autist – CS-TSA)

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Abstract

Autism spectrum disorders are highly disabling conditions having early onset and poor prognosis the later the intervention is initiated. Although dedicated screening tools for autism spectrum disorders have already been reported in the literature, no one has been adapted for use with Romanian population. Therefore, the goal of this study was to preliminary validate a screening questionnaire for autism spectrum disorders. This instrument (i.e., Chestionarul de Screening pentru Tulburari de Spectru Autist, CS-TSA) has been developed specifically to fit the particularities of the Romanian society. More specifically, the CS-TSA was developed by specialists within the Romanian Health Ministry to be use in a context that would maximize its usefulness, i.e., in the offices of the Romanian general practitioners. Our preliminary results indicated that CS-TSA has adequate psychometric properties and can be use successfully for early screening of autism spectrum disorders in general Romanian population. With this study, we hope to provide an initial step towards establishing large scale, affordable, feasible, and efficient screening procedures, in an effort to identify early cases requiring further assessment and specialized assistance.