

Abstract of thesis titled

**Phenomenological characteristics and neurocognitive functions associated  
with obsessive-compulsive features in schizophrenia**

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Background:

Schizophrenia is a severe mental illness and patients' clinical presentation is often heterogeneous. Co-occurrence of symptoms beyond psychosis is common. Co-occurring obsessive-compulsive symptoms (OCS) are observed in almost one-fourth of patients with schizophrenia. This group of patients pose challenges in assessment as a proportion of their symptoms are atypical. They are also commonly observed to be more difficult to treat and have poorer clinical outcomes. Moreover, existing assessment tools are limited in capturing co-occurring OCS in schizophrenia as they are predominantly based on typical themes of obsessive-compulsive disorder.

#### Method:

The present research took a three-step approach to study co-occurring OCS in schizophrenia systematically. Study 1 examined qualitatively the first-hand account of patients in experiencing co-occurring OCS, with an aim to identify key common dimensions of the phenomenon. Study 2 was aimed to develop a scale to measure the phenomenon specifically with items derived from Study 1. It was also aimed to establish the reliability of the scale. Finally, Study 3 was aimed to examine the clinical characteristics of patients with high co-occurring OCS as compared to those with low OCS. It was also aimed to investigate if co-occurring OCS had additive impairments in patients' neurocognitive functions and daily functioning. It was expected that those with high OCS would present poorer performance in different neurocognitive functions and daily functioning.

#### Results:

The present research is the first to study co-occurring OCS in schizophrenia first qualitatively and then quantitatively. Characteristics of the phenomenon were identified, upon which a self-rated scale, The Obsessive-compulsive Symptoms in Schizophrenia Scale (OCSS), was developed with good internal reliability. Symptoms captured by the OCSS were distinct and were not associated with more severe psychotic symptoms. Moreover, the OCSS was able to distinctively identify a subgroup of patients who were more depressed. It was also able to identify a subgroup of patients with more impaired set-shifting, working memory, attention and processing speed abilities.

Discussion:

Overall, the findings of the present research have advanced knowledge and offered a tool to assess and manage co-occurring OCS in schizophrenia. It has also provided insights into future directions of research into application or development of treatments suitable for this group of patients.

(359 words)

## 研究摘要

### 與精神分裂症共發的強迫症狀的現象學特徵和腦認知功能

研究背景：精神分裂症是一種嚴重的精神疾病，而患者的臨床表現通常都是多樣化的。患者同時有精神病以外的症狀也是常見的。近三分之一的精神分裂症患者同時有並發的強迫症狀。這些患者為日常的臨床診斷評估帶來挑戰，因為他們的症狀中有一部分是不典型的。再者，這組患者的治療效果也較差。此外，現有的評估工具在量度與精神分裂症同時發生的強迫症狀方面有限制，因為它們主要的設計基於典型的強迫症主題。

研究目的和設計：本研究項目包括三個相連的研究來有系統地了解與精神分裂症共發的強迫症狀。首先，研究一從病人的第一身經歷去探討共發的強迫症狀的性質，旨在找出該現象的關鍵共同點。研究二的目的是研發一個專門用作量度於研究一所確立的現象的量表，並確定該量表的可靠性。最後，研究三的目的是探討，與有較少共發強迫症狀的患者相比，有較多共發強迫症狀的患者的臨床特徵。研究三還旨於研究共發的強迫症狀會否對精神分裂症患者的腦認知功能和日常生活造成更多的損害。此研究預計有較多共發強迫症狀的患者在不同的腦認知功能和日常生活方面表現較差。

研究結果：本研究是首個先探討與精神分裂症共發的強迫症狀的性質，然後再將它量化分析的研究。本研究確立了該現象的特徵，並據此建立了具有良好內部可靠性的自評量表，即「與精神分裂症共發的強迫症狀量表」。

以「與精神分裂症共發的強迫症狀量表」所量度的症狀與純粹更嚴重的精神病症狀無關。此外，此量表能夠區別性地識別一組情緒比較憂鬱及在思想轉移能力、操作記憶、專注力及運作速度上更受損害的患者。

討論：總括而言，本研究的發現促進了我們對與精神分裂症共發的強迫症狀的認識，並為評估和處理這些症狀提供了一種工具。本研究亦提出了對適用於這類患者的治療應用和未來研究方向的見解。

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