Workability in Cochlear Implantees

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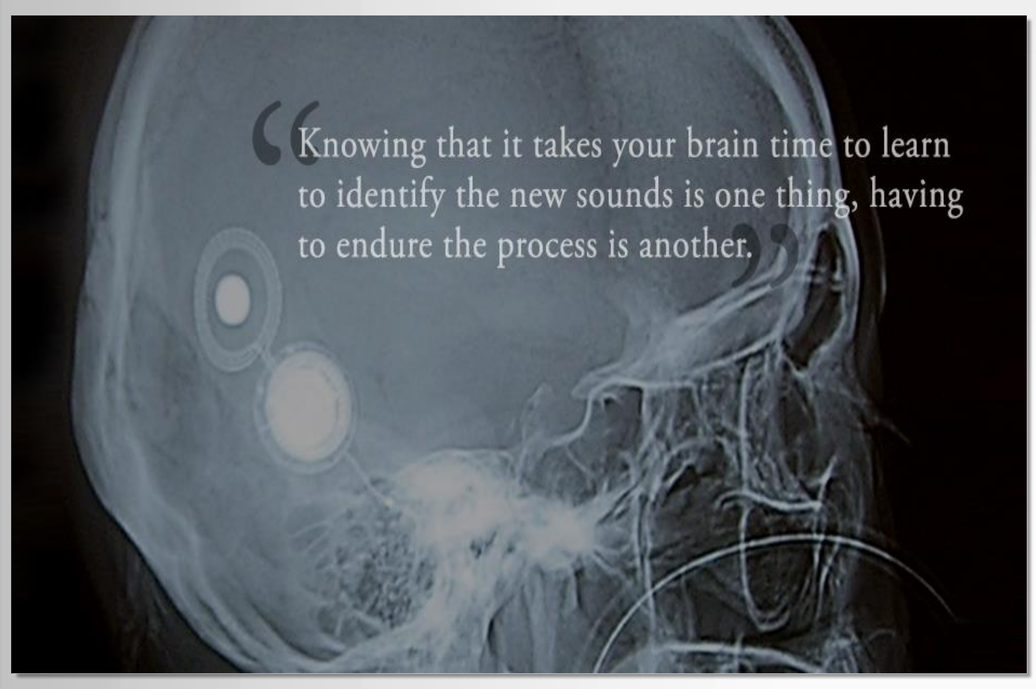
Objective:

Cochlear implantation is an effective tool for providing auditory rehabilitation in patients with severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss and can significantly improve quality of life and communication skills. However, the effects on work capacity, employment options and earning ability are less known**. The aim of this paper is to present current research on work capacity of people with cochlear implant (CI), the effect on socio-economic factors, professional advancement and overall quality of life.**



Methods and participants:

a **retrospective review** of 13 scientific papers based on a patient questionnaire or structured interview of **1324** unilaterally or bilaterally cochlear **implantees** worldwide.

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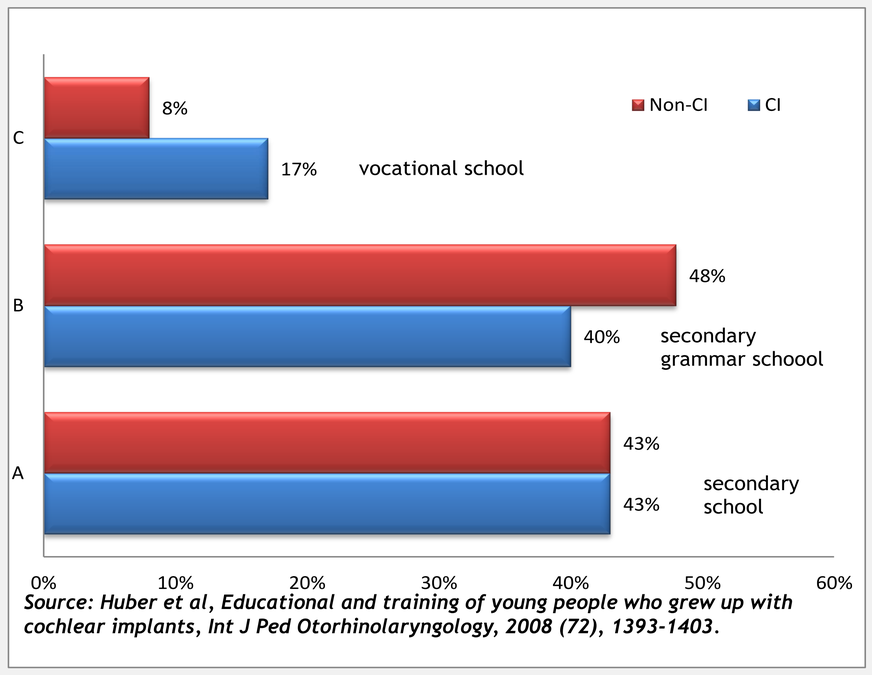
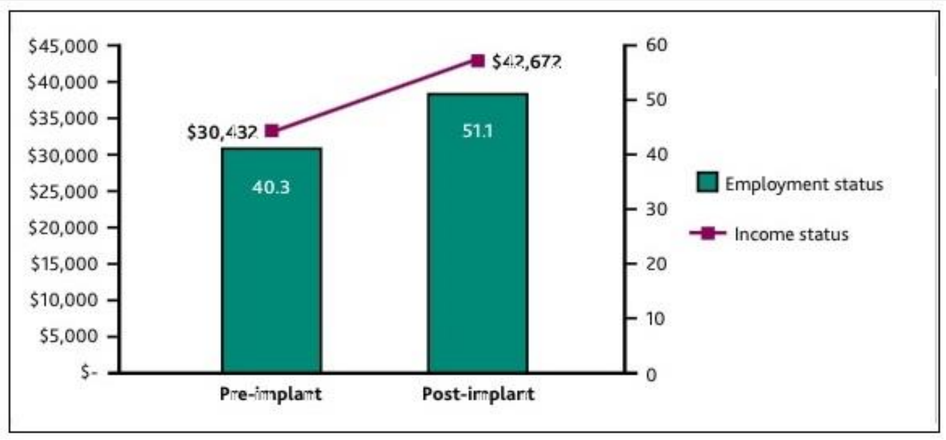
Fig. 1: School type attended by pupils. Presents the comparison study of school integration between the group of CI implantees (51 subjects) and normal-hearing peers (155 subjects).



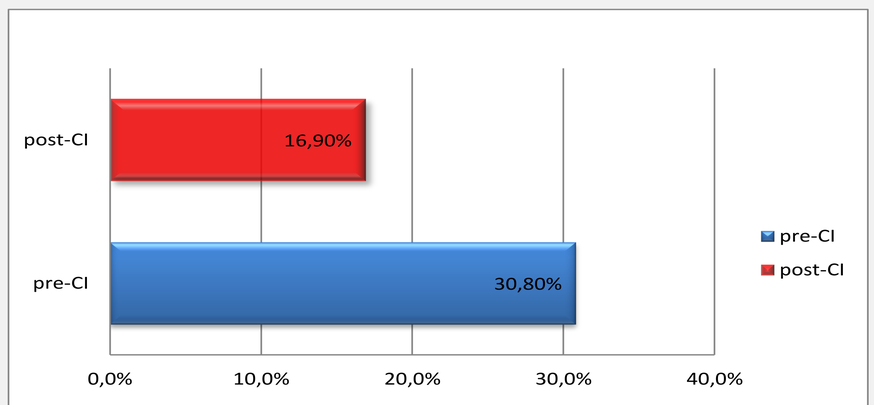
Source: Huber et al, Educational and training of young people who grew up with cochlear implants, Int J Ped Otorhinolaryngology, 2008 (72), 1393-1403.

Fig. 3: Percentage change in employment status and salary changes in income status (637 patients).



Source: Monteiro et al., Cochlear Implantation: A Personal and Societal Economic Perspective Examining the Effects of Cochlear Implantation on Personal Income, J Otol-Head Neck Surg, Vol 41 (April) S43-S48

Fig. 2: Percentage change in unemployed status. Presents the study with percentage change in unemployed status after the cochlear implantation (65 subjects).



Source: Fazel et al., Patient employment status and satisfaction following cochlear implantation, Cochlear Implants Int., 2007 (8), 87-91.

Conclusion:

People with hearing disability are on the margins of society, they struggle to keep their jobs and they often work on workplaces below their capabilities. Through the available literature it was found that people with cochlear implants obtain greater academic achievement, and they can find employment appropriate to their cognitive abilities. Early deafened adult users of cochlear implants have a significant benefit of implantation, so early implantation is recommended in order to exploit the potential of brain neuroplasticity and to reduce the difficulties of integration in the hearing world. Nevertheless, the positive effects of the cochlear implantation in the elderly and rehabilitation in order to improve the working capacity and quality of life should not be ignored.

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