P-95 - EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS, ANGER AND IMPULSIVITY IN ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE

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There is increasing consensus on the notion of addiction as a brain disorder characterized by longstanding changes in cognitive functioning, especially in so-called executive functions. Recent evidences indicate that specific components of executive functions, considered the domain of the frontal lobes, including dysfunctional impulsivity, could be considered a hallmark of addiction. Aim of the present study was to explore the domain of executive functions in abstinent non comorbid alcohol dependent subjects in comparison with matched non clinical controls. Any relationship with impulsivity and anger was also investigated.
Thirty Alcohol Dependent outpatients with diagnosis of Alcohol Dependence (DSM-IV-TR) and thirty matched control subjects participated to the study. We used a selective battery of neuropsychological tests designed to assess several components of executive functions, including fluency, working memory, analogical reasoning, interference and cognitive flexibility, attention, concentration, problem solving strategy and abstract reasoning (FAS for verbal fluency; Semantic Fluency; Digit span; Spatial span; Similarities; Stroop test; Wisconsin Card Sorting Test; TMT Making Test Parts A & B; Digit Symbol). BIS-11 and STAXI I and II were also administered to explore impulsivity and anger levels.
Significant differences in many of the domains explored between alcohol dependent patients and controls have been founded. Furthermore, a correlation between the performance at neuropsychological tests and the score at the instruments designed to assess impulsivity and anger have been deducted.
Alcohol dependence is associated with a significant impairment on executive domain. Impulsivity and anger levels, both dimensions linked with the executive capacity, seem to be altered as well.

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