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Temporal correlates of intuition and cognitive control in moral decision, making in different social contexts

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In the stream of flurry of publications grappling different paradigms to tackle underlying mechanisms of moral decision-making, EVENT RELATED POTENTIAL (ERP) studies is beginning to explore psychophysiological components in the moral domain, focused on observing various moral behaviors in the experimental situations. This research was aimed at providing a new method of study investigating neural correlates of subjective moral decision-making in which we hypothesize that the social congruent or in-congruent context, could emerge a salience brain response in intuitive or cognitive control related responses toward moral dilemmas. Electrophysiological data were recorded from the scalp a 32-channel recording system complying with the international 10–20 system. The average N2 (175–300 ms) and LPP (300–600 ms) amplitude and latency were measured after the onset of putative counterpart response. Repeated measure ANOVA revealed that there was a difference between congruent versus in-congruent social response to high conflict scenarios in LPP amplitude in right lateral and frontal electrodes $F_{(4, 174)} = 5.812, P < 0.001$ (Fig. 1). The findings also, suggest that N2 latency in less conflict moral scenarios may appear earlier compared with high conflict moral scenarios during in congruent social response in frontal electrodes especially left area $F_{(3, 174)} = 3.013, P < 0.05$ (Fig. 2, figures are not available for this abstract). In conclusion, these results were either extend previous neurophysiological findings on classic moral scenarios and consistent with the notion that right hemisphere would be much more representative of cognitive control process during high conflict moral decision-making, while left frontal electrodes engaged in early intuitive process.

Keywords Moral decision-making; Cognitive control; Intuition; Social context; Late positive potential; N2

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Depressive pseudodementia in Greek patients: How differential diagnosis can lead to early diagnosis

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Background The term Pseudodementia, as presented by Kiloh, is being used to describe the clinical image characterized by depression combined with impairment in cognitive functions which reacts positively in treatment with antidepressants.

Aim To explore the aspects that make this condition unique, so that mental health professional will be able to use the proper psychometric tools when they face patients with confusing symptoms.

Method Hundred and thirty-one participants were recruited from the B’ Psychiatric Clinic of G.H.N.P “Agios Panteleimon” and Day Center of Alzheimer’s Disease in Amarousion, with 56 (42.7%)

males and 75 (57.3%) females. All participants were administered the MoCA and the DASS21 questionnaires. Statistical analysis was performed with SPSS21.

Results The findings reported a significant difference in the scores of MoCA done by patients with dementia ($M = 13.9, SD = 5.4$) and patients with depression ($M = 20.5, SD = 4.9$) while both groups scored below the accepted scores indicating cognitive impairment [CI]. However, analysis showed that in the following sectors of MoCA, depressive patients scored significantly higher than demented ones: visuospatial ($MD = 0.651$), clock ($MD = 1.288$), orientation ($MD = 1.212$) and delayed recall ($MD = 1.329$).

Conclusion Findings shows a significant pattern in the difference between depressed and patients with cognitive impairment. These findings suggest that mental health professionals should use neuropsychological measurements like MoCA when evaluating such cases in order to be able to diagnose effectively cases of pseudodementia.

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Do patients with better neuro-cognition have better theory of mind?

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Introduction Theory of mind (ToM) has repeatedly been shown to be compromised in many patients with schizophrenia (SCZ). By contrast, the association between ToM deficits and neuro-cognitive functioning (NF) remains uncertain.

Objectives To investigate the association between ToM functioning and neuro-cognitive functioning in SCZ.

Methods Fifty-eight outpatients with stable SCZ completed the intention-inferencing task (IIT), in which the ability to infer a character’s intentions from 28 short comic strip stories is assessed. They also completed a neuro-cognitive battery comprising the following tests: the Hopkins Verbal Learning Test-Revised (HVLT-R), the Letter Digit Substitution Test (LDST), the Stroop Test (ST), the “Double Barrage” of Zazzo (DBZ), the Modified Card Sorting Test (MCST), Verbal Fluency (VF), the Trail Making Test-Part A (TMT-A) and the Digit Span (DS).

Results The performance in the IIT significantly correlated with performance in some neuro-cognitive tests including efficiency in DBZ, number of uncorrected mistakes in ST, number of correct categories in MCST and the time needed to succeed the TMT-A. No correlations were found between performance in the IIT and in memory tasks (HVLT-R and DS).

Conclusions ToM may rely on some neuro-cognitive functions (mainly attention and executive functioning). Elucidating the exact relationship between ToM and NF may be useful as both are targeted in specific psychotherapeutic interventions.

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Neurocognitive and functional performance in psychotic and non-psychotic bipolar patients and schizophrenia patients

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