
THE EVIL INSIDE US: IMPULSIVENESS AND AGGRESSION IN A NON-CLINICAL SAMPLE

P. Velotti¹, C. Garofalo², G.C. Zavattini²

¹Department of Educational Sciences, University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy ; ²Department of Dynamic and Clinical Psychology, Sapienza - University of Rome, Rome, Italy

Introduction: Aggressiveness is not an exclusive issue for justice and mental health systems, but rather a dimension present at different levels among all (Stone, 2009). In Kernberg's (2006) theory, also impulsivity is not conceptualized as pathological in any case, but rather a vulnerability factor for the development of psychopathology. Even if they often merge in the concept of 'impulsive-aggression', they seem to represent two separate, though overlapping, constructs (Garcia-Forero et al., 2009).

Objectives: We focus on four facets of aggressiveness: hostility, anger, verbal and physical aggression; and three kinds of impulsiveness: motor, attention, and non-planning. **Aims:** The present study seeks to examine whether particular types of impulsivity are related with different kinds of aggressiveness, rather than to aggression-proneness in general.

Methods: A mixed sample of 99 individual (age: M=35.85, SD=10.45 for men, n=49; M=26.58, SD=7.08 for women, n=50) was recruited. Impulsiveness was assessed by the Barratt Impulsiveness Scale (BIS-11; Patton et al., 1995), whereas aggressiveness by the Aggression Questionnaire (AQ; Buss & Perry, 1992).

Results: Age shown a moderate, negative, relation with aggression but not with impulsiveness. Gender, on the contrary, correlates only with impulsiveness, with men scoring significantly higher ($t(97)=2.07$; $p<0.05$). Although the two total scores (i.e. AQ and BSI-11) reported a significant relation ($r=0.334$; $p<0.01$), the higher value characterized the association between hostility and the attention component of impulsiveness ($r=0.502$; $p<0.001$). Other relations will be discussed in depth.

Conclusions: Our findings highlight the importance to consider both impulsiveness and aggression pointing out the differences among their distinctive features.