

## P02-207

### AFFECTIVE NEUROSCIENCE: A CRUCIAL ROLE IN PSYCHIATRY

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**Background:** Neuroscience has been a growing revolutionary field of scientific knowledge. The increasing recognition of the importance of emotional processes and subjective experience in several aspects of human behaviour parallel the growing amount of research in the field of affective neuroscience. Affective neuroscience studies the brain mechanisms subjacent to emotional behaviour.

**Aim:** To discuss the relevance of affective neuroscience research in social and biological sciences, namely within psychiatric and psychological researches.

**Methods:** Review of the literature. MEDLINE and PubMed databases searches for peer-reviewed studies, published between 1994 and 2008, using combinations of the Medline Subject Heading terms affective neuroscience, emotions, affective sciences and psychiatry, psychology, biological sciences, social sciences.

**Results:** Several studies addresses brain functions and how emotions relate to genetics, learning, primary motivations, stress response and human behaviour. Some actual areas of research within affective neuroscience include: emotional learning, affective behaviour, emotional empathy, psychosomatic medicine, functional and structural biomarkers, emotional disorders and stress response, among others.

**Discussion:** In Psychiatry, affective neurosciences find application in understanding the neurobiology of mood disorders, the neural control of interpersonal and social behaviour and the emotional systems that underlie psychopathology. Affective neuroscience reflects the integration of knowledge across disciplines allowing a broader understanding of human functioning. The field of affective neuroscience is an exciting field of future psychiatric research and it provides an investigational framework for studying psychiatric morbidity.