

P01-586

ANALYSIS OF CORRELATIONS AMONG THEORY OF MIND, SYMPTOMS AND PERSONOLOGIC TRAITS IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

P. Zeppegno, A. Gogliani, M. Antona, S. Gili, D. Ponzetti, E. Torre

Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine, Institute of Psychiatry, University of Eastern Piedmont 'A.Avogadro', Novara, Italy

Introduction: Theory of mind represents the ability to attribute mental states to oneself and others and to use these mental representations to decide one's own and predict others' behavior. In our study, ToM is investigated in a non-psychiatric setting: a university students sample.

Objectives: The aim of this study is to evaluate the presence of subthreshold alterations in our sample and, on the other hand, if altered cognitive functioning can worsen study performance. Moreover it investigates a possible correlation between the faculty chosen and cognitive functioning. We considered 228 students attending the Faculty of: Economy (n=26), Dental hygienists (n=7), Law (n=16), Medicine (n=54), Pharmaceutics (n=27), Physiotherapy (n=15), Mathematics, Physics and Biology (n=12), Midwifery (n=14), Chemistry and Pharmaceutical techniques (n=17), Liberal Arts (n=3), Nursing (n=37).

Methods: We administered the following tests to 228 university students: EYSENCK PERSONALITY QUESTIONNAIRE (EPQ-R): evaluating some personality dimensions including psychoticism, neuroticism, introversion, extroversion; SCL-90-R: self-evaluation scale of some symptom dimensions as somatization, obsessive-compulsiveness, depression, anxiety, anger, hostility, sensitivity, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation and psychoticism; TEST OF EMOTION ATTRIBUTION: composed of 58 short scenes concerning seven emotions (sadness, fear, shame, disgust, happiness, anger, envy) that the student must identify.

TEST OF ToM: consists of 13 short stories describing social and family situations; the student must identify why the protagonist behaved in a certain manner.

Results: The statistical analysis is still in progress. Preliminary data suggest that people with subthreshold symptoms belonging to the depression, obsessive-compulsiveness, anxiety and phobic-anxiety clusters show deficits of theory of mind. Data concerning the correlation between cognitive functioning and faculty chosen and between cognitive functioning and poor study performance will be examined in a further work.

Conclusions: Our results together with data from literature suggest the chance to apply this set of tests to screen deficit of Theory of Mind in a non mentally ill population.