

Poster presentation

Recidivant criminal behaviour and executive dysfunction

Fernado Barbosa*¹ and Monteiro Luis²

Address: ¹Psychology and Education Sciences Faculty- University of Porto, Porto, Portugal and ²Health Sciences Superior Institute- North, Gandra, Portugal

* Corresponding author

from International Society on Brain and Behaviour: 3rd International Congress on Brain and Behaviour Thessaloniki, Greece. 28 November – 2 December 2007

Published: 17 April 2008

Annals of General Psychiatry 2008, **7**(Suppl 1):S170 doi:10.1186/1744-859X-7-S1-S170

This abstract is available from: <http://www.annals-general-psychiatry.com/content/7/S1/S170>

© 2008 Barbosa and Luis; licensee BioMed Central Ltd.

Background

To experimentally test the hypothesis according to which recidivist subjects in non-violent criminal behaviours display an executive deficit, having alterations on prefrontal functioning as neurophysiological substrate.

Materials and methods

We applied the Behavioural Assessment of the Dysexecutive Syndrome (BADS) - a battery of assessment of the executive dysfunctions - to an experimental group of 30 male inmates who were recidivist in crimes against property (age= 39,3; s.d.= 9,98), and to a group of 30 male controls (age=32,7; s.d.=11,8), all Caucasian.

Results

Compared to controls, recidivist inmates performed worse in most of the subscales and showed a lower global score, suggesting defective executive functioning.

Conclusions

Avoiding the idea of a frontal "criminogenesis", and despite the fact that both samples are not very large, the authors seek to present a possible interpretation for certain forms of persistent criminal behaviour, particularly when criminals are resistant to penal measures, in the frame of a defective control over conduct and its consequences.

References

1. Hare R, Frazelle J, Bus J, y Jutai J: **Psychopathy and structure of primary mental abilities.** *Journal of Behavioral Assessment* 1980, **2**:77-88.
2. Marques-Teixeira J: **Comportamento criminal: perspectiva biopsicologica.** *Linda a Velha: Vale & Vale*; 2000.

3. Wilson B, Evans J, Emslie H, Alderman N, y Burgess P: **The Development of an Ecologically Valid Test for Assessing Patients with a Dysexecutive Syndrome.** In *Special number of the Journal of Neuropsychological Rehabilitation Psychology Press*; 1998.
4. Barbosa F: **Psicofisiologia do comportamento criminal recidivante: vndices perifiricos autonomicos.** *Saude-Mental* 2001, **3**(3):19-32.