Neuropsychology of Social Awareness: A Research Study Applied to University Students in Greece

Authors : Argyris Karapetsas, Maria Bampou, Andriani Mitropoulou

Abstract : The aim of the present work is to study the role of brain function in social awareness processing. Mind controls all the psychosomatic functions. Mind's functioning enables individual not only to recognize one's own self and propositional attitudes, but also to assign such attitudes to other individuals, and to consider such observed mental states in the elucidation of behavior. Participants and Methods: Twenty (n=20) undergraduate students (mean age 18 years old) were involved in this study. Students participated in a clinical assessment, being conducted in Laboratory of Neuropsychology, at University of Thessaly, in Volos, Greece. Assessment included both electrophysiological (i.e.Event Related Potentials (ERPs) esp.P300 waveform) and neuropsychological tests (Raven's Progressive Matrices (RPM) and Sally-Anne test). Results: Initial assessment's results confirmed statistically significant differences between the males and females, as well as in score performance to the tests applied. Strong correlations emerged between prefrontal lobe functioning, RPM, Sally-Anne test and P300 latencies. Also, significant dysfunction of mind has been found, regarding its three dimensions (straight, circular and helical). At the end of the assessment, students received consultation and appropriate guidelines in order to improve their intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. Conclusions: Mind and social awareness phenomena play a vital role in human development and may act as determinants of the quality of one's own life. Meanwhile, brain function is highly correlated with social awareness and it seems that different set of brain structures are involved in social behavior.

Keywords : brain activity, emotions, ERP's, social awareness