
NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL VARIABILITY EMERGING IN THE ASSESSMENT OF 4 CASES OF DISSOCIATIVE AMNESIA

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Functional or dissociative amnesia is defined as an inability to recall information that cannot be explained by manifest organic brain damage and that is usually related to stressful or traumatic events. Apart from dissociative, other terminologies (such hysterical, medically unexplained, psychogenic...) have been employed along years to identify categories of amnesia that lack of an identifiable organic substrate.

With the present poster, we aim to describe the profile of 4 patients (3 males and 1 female) who were admitted in our Centre for an unexpected episode of confusion, disorientation, dissociation with severe amnesia. In all cases information about personal identity was partially or globally lost. Once completed the assessment, no clear organic cause was identified and these cases went considered as episodes of dissociative amnesia. In accordance to DSM-IV-TR, two of them were further classified as cases of dissociative fugue.

At the time of admission they were evaluated with global assessment including cognitive scales (LCF Level of Cognitive Functioning, MMSE Mini Mental State Examination, ENB-2 Esame neuropsicologico breve-2), psychological interviews and psychopathological tests (MMPI Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory).

Assessment showed that performance at cognitive tests was markedly variegated between all patients, in line with literature. Noteworthy, marked impairment was observed in patients who later presented underlying concurrent neurological signs: a probable autoimmune process in one case and a soft hemiparesis in the other. This suggests the importance of an exhaustive assessment and prolonged analyses to understand the complex interaction of the so-called dichotomy functional-biological.