

P01-24

ALEXITHYMIA AND DISSOCIATIVE EXPERIENCES IN A SAMPLE OF PATIENTS WITH ALCOHOL USE DISORDER

M. Di Nicola, G. Martinotti, D. Tedeschi, A. Rondoni, S. Gaglini, M. Mazza, G. Pozzi, P. Bria, L. Janiri

Department of Psychiatry, Catholic University Medical School, Rome, Italy

Aims: Aims of this study were to investigate alexithymic traits and dissociative experiences in a sample of patients with Alcohol Use Disorders, the significance of this association and the possible correlation with temperamental and character personality traits.

Methods: Eighty patients with diagnosis of Alcohol Use Disorder (DSM-IV) were consecutively recruited and assessed with the *Toronto Alexithymia Scale-20* (TAS-20), to evaluate the alexithymic traits, the *Dissociative Experience Scale II* (DES II), to investigate the possible presence of dissociative experiences, and the *Temperament and Character Inventory - Revised* (TCI-R) in order to define a personality profile.

Results: The mean scores obtained by the experimental group in both the TAS-20 and DES II do not differ from those estimated during the validation procedure. Pearson's linear correlation between scores was found statistically significant ($p < .05$). Significant correlations with some personality dimensions have also been found.

Conclusions: According to some authors substances related disorders could be classified as "disturbs of emotional regulation", an active process in which neurophysiological, motor-behavioural and cognitive-experiential systems are involved. The lack of connection or an inadequate development of these systems would result in the malfunction of the symbolic function and then in the inability for the subject to contain the tensions generated by internal needs and/or by environmental stimulations. Both alexithymia and dissociation may assume the form of defence mechanisms against the unbearable emotions. Finally, some personality factors may be involved both in the rise of dissociative states and in the alexithymic traits.