ANHEDONIA AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION

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BACKGROUND
Anhedonia is the loss of subjective ability to experience pleasure.
It is considered a key symptom of major depressive episode (DSM-IV-TR). Studies have shown
relationship between alexithymia, anhedonia and depression (Prince & al., 1993).
Alexithymia is usually defined as difficulty identifying and verbalizing emotions.

OBJECTIVE & HYPOTHESES
In this research, the objective is to propose a
dynamic model of cognitive-emotional
functioning of anhedonic subjects.

We hypothesize that levels of emotional
awareness (Lane & Schwartz, 1991) and
social sharing of emotions (Rimé, 2005),
emotional components of the concept of
alexithymia, are vulnerability factors of
anhedonia depressive symptom.

METHODOLOGY

- Sample : 60 W/M (7/53)
  - M age 43.21 years, SD=11.32
  - Patients consulting in general practice
- Self-assessment scales:
  - HAD (Zigmond & al., 1983)
  - LEAS (Lane & al., 1990)
  - PSE (Rimé, 1995)
  - AIM (Larsen, 1984)
  - EE (Kring & al., 1994)
- Multivariate analysis of variance

RESULTS

Emotional Awareness (ability to identify emotions and those
of others), Inhibition of Social Sharing (stop talking about
her experiences) and Negative Emotional Intensity have a
significant influence on anhedonia. The effects of these
three variables suggests that they are factors keeping this
symptom. Conversely, Emotional Expressivivity (externalize
their emotions through various channels of expression) and
verbal emotional sharing are protective factors.

CONCLUSION

Most studies describe alexithymia as an emotional déficit, risk factor for psychiatric disorders
(Speranza & al., 2005). In subjects of our study, is the lack of verbalization of emotions, despite the
presence of identification capacity of the subjective experience, which is a vulnerability factor of
anhedonia. Consciousness of own emotions and those of others could be seen as « an excess of
empathy », an inhibitor of a social emotional regulation.
These data are relevant for therapeutic management of these patients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anhedonia</th>
<th>Expl. Var. β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>P=4.154</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEAS</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>2.591</td>
<td>.0123</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>.002</td>
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<td>E Intensity</td>
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<td>1.802</td>
<td>.0771</td>
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<tr>
<td>E Express.</td>
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<td>-1.269</td>
<td>.2132</td>
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<td>Inhibition PSE</td>
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<td>Persistence PSE</td>
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<td>.8706</td>
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</table>

All these variables explain 28% of the total variance of anhedonia.