

P-442 - EDUCATIONAL LEVEL IN THE DIAGNOSTIC OF DEMENTIAS: A RESEARCH WITH ELDERLY PATIENTS

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A major problem in the early diagnosis of dementia is the absence, in most cases, the lack of previous objective information before the current expression of the symptoms. The analysis of the discrepancies is the only reference that can guide the diagnosis. Based on neuropsychological assessment of dementia in elderly patients, the present study analyzed the relationship between gender and educational level in the verbal and performance dimension results in dementia neuropsychological assessment among elderly patients. Twenty patients (10 males and 10 females), with more than 60 years old, participated in the study. The WAIS-III, the Rey auditory verbal learning, the Folstein and the Zülliger tests were employed. Results indicated that male subjects with higher education presented lower scores in the WAIS performance subtest when compared to verbal subtest.

Although the educational status and the intellectual activity had a tendency to mask the loss of performance in the beginning of dementia disorder, the objective evaluation of the discrepancies indicated the presence of a reduction in efficiency. The female sample, with lower level of scholarship, although the results indicated a general tendency to cognitive impairment, no differences between verbal and performance subtests were detected. Without objective and reliable information regarding the antecedent performance, the mnemonic test resources were crucial to reach a diagnosis in this group. The male sample presented higher scores in the verbal subtest as compared to the female sample. A covariance analysis indicated that education level and not gender was the responsible variable for this difference.