

Self-reported versus Computer task: Impulsivity in young men and women

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October 05, 2022

Abstract

Impulsivity can be displayed by situations that are stressful to the individual, when they expect a reward, but this expectation is frustrated. Although some studies show that men are more impulsive when compared to women, there is no scientific consensus about this fact. To better understand the possible differences between gender and impulsivity, 100 young university students (aged 18 to 24 years old; $M = 21.0$; $SD = 1.9$), of whom 65% were women, participated in this study. Two methods of measuring the construct were utilized: 1) self-reported, using the Barratt Impulsivity Scale; and 2) behavioral, using the Balloon Analogue Risk Task. In addition, the relationship between impulsivity measures and anger and aggression and daily stress were explored. The results reveal small association between self-reported motor impulsivity and behavioral impulsivity in the whole sample. Higher impulsive behavior was observed for men in the behavioral task, but this result was not observed for self-reported impulsivity. Potential explanations for these findings are discussed taking into account differences between measures and limitations of each assessment.

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