

The Neuropsychiatric Features of Fregoli Syndrome: A Case-Level Meta-Analysis

Maria Teixeira-Dias, Amber Kaur Dadwal & Dr Graham Blackman
King's College London



✉ maria.teixeira-dias@kcl.ac.uk

Introduction

- Fregoli syndrome: Delusion of misidentification characterised by the false belief that people in the environment are other people of closer emotional link in disguise (Langdon et al., 2014).
- There is lack of comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of Fregoli syndrome in both patients with primary or secondary psychosis.
- This has posed challenges to mental health professionals and a lack of efficacy in assessment, diagnoses and treatment of such syndrome (Atta et al., 2016).

Study Aim

- To compile existent evidence and investigate the differences in the neuropsychiatric features of Fregoli syndrome in patients with primary and secondary psychosis.

Methods

- 5 electronic databases were searched.
- Methodological quality of case studies was assessed (Murad et al., 2018).
- Odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) were computed to examine the differences in Fregoli syndrome between primary and secondary psychosis.
- Secondary analyses addressed the contents of delusion, types of cognitive impairment and types of co-occurring delusions, as well as different treatment modalities.
- The location of neuroimaging abnormalities was assessed through the analysis of frequencies and percentages.
- Sensitivity analyses were run to assess robustness of results.

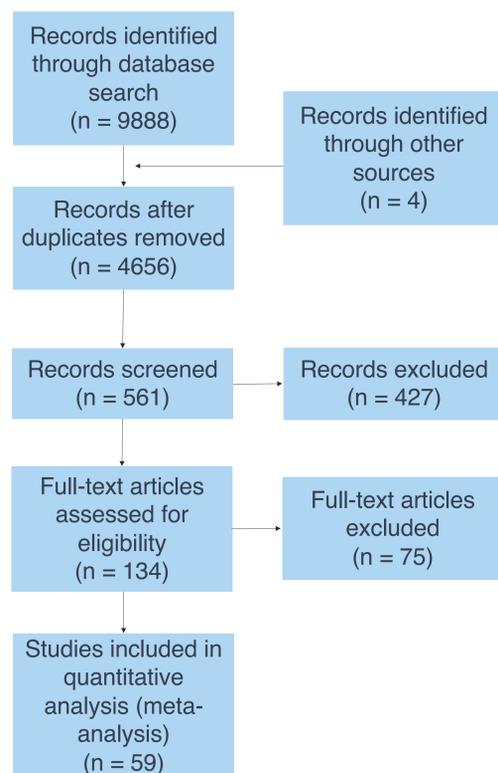


Table 1. PRISMA Study Search Flowchart Diagram

Results

- A sample of 67 patients was obtained from 59 eligible studies.
 - Primary psychosis Fregoli patients: n = 47
 - Secondary psychosis Fregoli patients: n = 20
- First-episode psychosis was significantly more likely in patients with Fregoli syndrome in the secondary psychosis group (OR = 7.04, 95% CI [1.07, 60.49]).
- Neuroimaging abnormalities were also significantly more likely in secondary psychosis patients with Fregoli syndrome (OR = 10.66, 95% CI [1.51, 108.87]).
- Brain lesions were seen predominantly on the right hemisphere (n = 8; 67%)
- The temporal (n = 6; 50%) and frontal (n = 5; 42%) lobes were the most affected areas in patients with Fregoli syndrome (Figure 2).

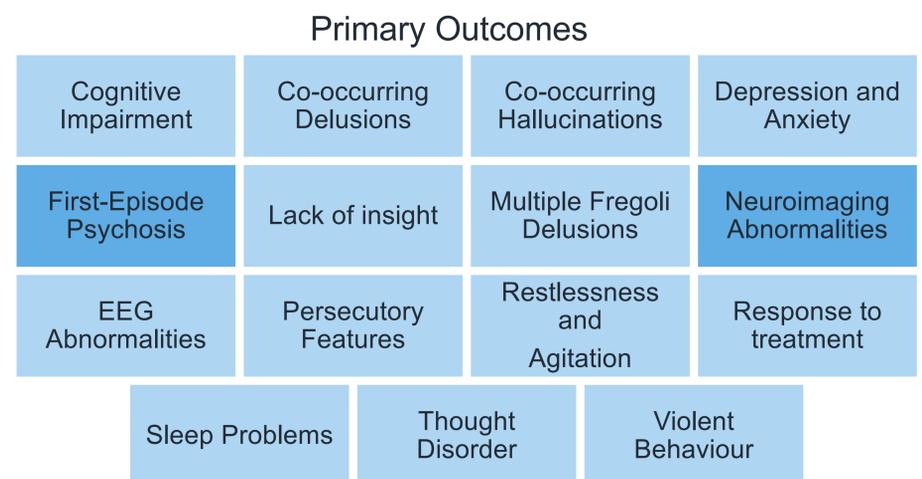


Figure 1. Primary outcomes in this meta-analysis

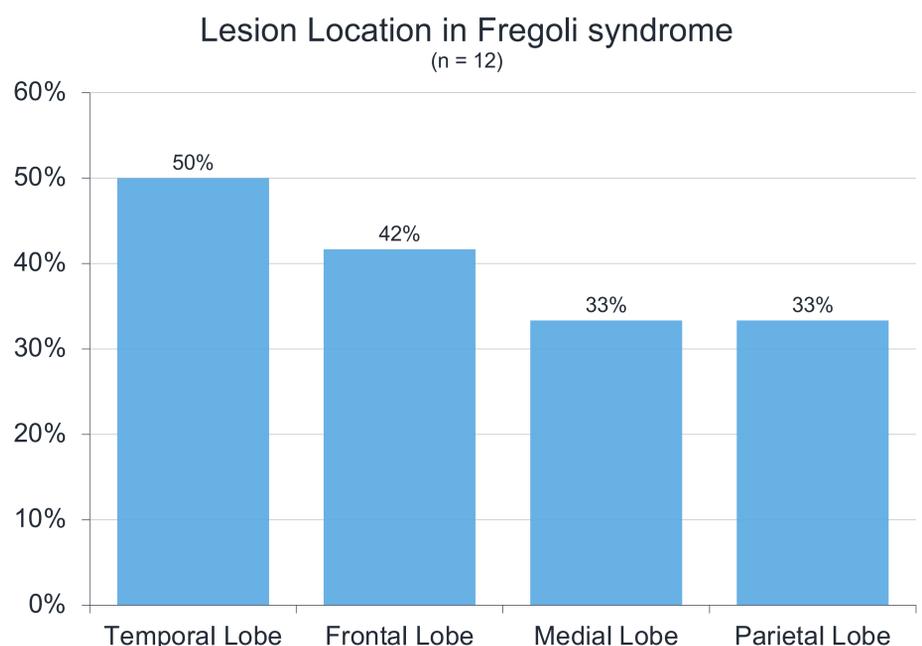


Figure 2. Lesion location in Fregoli syndrome patients with both primary (n = 3) and secondary psychosis (n = 9).

Conclusions

- Fregoli syndrome as a first-episode psychosis may point to a secondary underlying illness.
- Neuroimaging abnormalities are more prevalent in secondary psychosis patients, trending to be on the right hemisphere.

References:

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