

JOINT EVENT

3rd International Conference on
Forensic Psychology & Criminology

3rd International Congress on
Addictive Behavior and Dual Diagnosis

August 16-17, 2018 | Stockholm, Sweden

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Dermatoglyphic biomarkers in mothers whose offspring committed suicide: An example of a study in Bio-criminology

Introduction: Bio-criminology is a sub-discipline of criminology that explores biological and hereditary links to antisocial and deviant behavior. Suicide in the general population and specifically in detention facilities and prisons is not a novel topic in criminology and should be an acceptable subject of Bio-criminology as well. For that purpose, the current research has employed dermatoglyphic methods. Dermatoglyphics is the scientific study of the skin configurations on fingers and palms, employed in medicine, genetics and psychobiology. Numerous studies have reported that unusual dermatoglyphics are associated with specific medical and psychological disorders. The current dermatoglyphic study is in line with research searching for biological markers related to suicidal behavior. It has been designed to focus on parents whose offspring performed suicide since skin configurations are hereditary and committed suicide is influenced by genetic factors. Hence, to identify dermatoglyphic biomarkers in these parents means to identify parents whose offspring might have a disposition to commit suicide, before they execute their lethal intent. The current research pertains exclusively to mothers.

Methods: Dermatoglyphic prints were obtained from a sample of bereaved mothers, compared with a control group.

Results: The research group is characterized by a distinctive set of 10 uncommon dermatoglyphic features.

Conclusions: With further investigation, dermatoglyphic biomarkers could lay the groundwork for a non-invasive method of screening out parents whose offspring might be at risk of suicide. Doubtless, searching specifically for dermatoglyphic biomarkers in suicides will enhance the possibility of controlling suicide effectively in general and particularly in custody. It may also affect studies on suicide terrorism. Incidentally, besides the current research few other dermatoglyphic studies have clear-cut relevance to Bio-criminology.

Biography

Israel Oron has completed his PhD degree in Psychology from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem (where his MA studies included a program in psycho-genetics). He was a Post-doctoral Scholar at the Institute of Criminology, Hebrew University. He has joined the Israeli Police HQ as a Psychologist in the Department of Criminal Investigations, conducting personality assessments of potential perpetrators of serious crimes. In addition, he did psychological evaluations in cases of missing persons, and of deaths in unclear circumstances. He also served on the steering committee of the National Program for Suicide Prevention, during its three year pilot phase. Presently, he is working as a private psychologist.

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