

A systematic review of the neural bases of emotional intelligence.

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Aims. There has been an undeniable growing interest in Emotional Intelligence (EI) in recent years. Although it has important implications for our social and personal life, little is known about the brain bases that underlie EI. This work aims to review the available literature exploring the neural correlates of EI.

Methods. A systematic search following the Cochrane guidelines was conducted in the main databases (Medline, PsycINFO, Scopus, and Web of Science). The inclusion criteria were empirical articles published in a peer-reviewed journal, written in Spanish or English, and that included an objective EI measurement and a neuroimaging technique.

Results and Conclusions. Twenty-eight articles were finally identified. According to the results of the selected articles, the main brain regions identified were the dlPFC, OFC, vmPFC, amygdala, and insula. The authors, in general, related these areas to a neural network for social cognition, processes of cognitive and affective integration, and the somatic marker circuitry. Differences between emotional and cognitive intelligence at neural level were also considered. Finally, we identified a number of limitations and propose future lines of research.

This research has been funded by the Plan Propio de Investigación, Transferencia y Divulgación Científica of the University of Málaga to Alberto Megías-Robles (B1-2019_08).