

AFFECTIVE TEMPERAMENTS AMONG PATIENTS WITH FAMILIAL BIPOLAR I DISORDER AND THEIR UNAFFECTED FIRST-DEGREE RELATIVES

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Introduction: Given the concept of bipolar spectrum which extends across the family, healthy relatives of bipolar patients, which are a population at high risk for developing mood disorders, may have temperamental deregulations.

Objective: To compare the mean scores of affective temperaments among patients with familial bipolar I disorder and their unaffected first-degree relatives.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study, concerning 50 families of bipolar I disorder which have at least two patients with bipolar I disorder (DSM-IV-TR). We have included 80 clinically recovered patients with bipolar I disorder and 120 unaffected first-degree relatives. The affective temperaments were assessed by Tunisian version of TEMPS-A. Dominant affective temperament is the temperament with score was more than 2 SD of mean scores.

Results: Mean scores of cyclothymic and hyperthymic temperaments were higher in bipolar I patients than in their healthy relatives. The difference was significant for only hyperthymic temperament ($p=0.038$) but it was not significant after adjustment for age, sex and school level. The rate of dominant affective temperament was not differed between bipolar I patients (26.3%) and their healthy relatives (20%). Investigating the role of family, we showed a significant association with depressive ($p < 10^{-3}$), cyclothymic ($p=10^{-3}$), irritable ($p=0.023$) and anxious ($p=0.003$) temperaments.

Conclusions: Our findings suggest that patient with family bipolar I disorder and their unaffected first-degree relatives had a temperamental deregulation which confirms the concept that affective temperaments are a potential phenotype of bipolar condition.