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**STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION ASSOCIATED WITH MAJOR DEPRESSION IN A SPANISH SIMPLE. A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY**

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**Introduction:** The study of associated stigma to mental illness has been usually oriented to psychotic disorders. Recently the ASPEN Project has had the objective to study the stigma associated to depressive disorders worldwide. As a part of this study, we present the results of a Spanish sample. We assessed the nature and severity of experienced and anticipated discrimination reported by adults with major depressive disorder. Additionally we investigated whether experienced discrimination is related to severity of depression and level of self-esteem.

**Methods:** In a cross-sectional survey, 100 adult outpatients with a diagnosis of major depressive disorder were interviewed with the discrimination and stigma scale (version 12; DISC-12). Severity of depression and self-esteem were measured by the Hamilton-17 questionnaire and the Rosenberg scale respectively. Socio-demographic variables were included.

**Results:** the life domains where the major proportion of individuals experienced discrimination were: treatment by their family (46%), in marriage or divorce (30%) and been avoided or shunned by people who know their mental health problem (34%). 60% of patients anticipated discrimination avoiding intimate relationships and 67% of them concealed or hid his/her mental health problem from others. Experienced discrimination had a significant association with the severity of depression and with a low level of self-esteem.

**Conclusions:** Discrimination related to depression acts as a barrier in some fields of social life. Non-disclosure of depression could be a barrier to seeking help. It is important to consider effective actions to prevent stigma and discrimination in the field of depressive disorders.  
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