

Emotional Dysregulation in Adolescents, a Common Potential Denominator Between Eating Disorders and Bipolar Spectrum

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Introduction:

Emotional dysregulation is a characteristic present in many child & adolescent mental pathologies. It can be found in Eating disorders(ED), and in the bipolar spectrum too. Highlighting similarities between a softer bipolar spectrum in its sub-threshold forms and eating disorders syndromes and sub-syndromes in adolescents.

Objective:

Evaluate the emotional dysregulation (measured by the HCL-32),and eating habits (measured through the BEDS),in a population with:ED.

Materials & Methods:

This is a transversal, observational study in a group of 40 patients between 12 and 19 years of age, all of whom were diagnosed with ED before they turned 18 and receive inpatient treatment. The group was divided into two subgroups: Group-I:Anorexia Nervosa-AN (n=17), and Group-II: Bulimia Nervosa-BN (n=23). They were evaluated with two scales: Hypomanic Checklist (HCL-32) and Barcelona-Bipolar-Eating-Disorder-Scale(BEDS); with different clinical and sociodemographic characteristics.

Results: Group I-AN showed higher scores in HCL-32, which was not correlated with the BEDS total score. Group-II presented high scores in HCL-32,showing a positive correlation with the BEDS total score ($r=0,518;p=0,011$), mainly in the subscale symptoms of hypomania associated with a lack of inhibition, self-control and attentional capacity.($r=0,461;p=0,027$).

Conclusions:

Emotional dysregulation is a factor to be considered in the diagnosis and clinical management of patients with ED, and may imply other comorbid conditions.Furthermore,Bulimia Nervosa,especially in cases with emotional dysregulation could be related to hypomania or a bipolar spectrum.

BEDS Scale may be related to emotional dysregulation in patients diagnosed with Bulimia Nervosa and high score in the scale of hypomania HCL-32, not so for the Anorexia Nervosa.