

---

**TRAUMATIC AND DISSOCIATIVE EXPERIENCES IN A SAMPLE OF PORTUGUESE PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA AND BIPOLAR DISORDER**

---

S. Simões<sup>1</sup>, H. Espírito-Santo<sup>1</sup>, M. Jesus<sup>1</sup>, M. Marques<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research & Development Department, Instituto Superior Miguel Torga, Coimbra, Portugal

---

**Background:** Traumatic experiences are a decisive factor for the manifestation of dissociative symptoms and, in turn, dissociative symptoms are often part of severe psychopathology.

**Objectives:** Given the lack of research in Portugal examining dissociation and trauma in patients with Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorders, we intended to determine if these patients dissociate and what kind of traumatic experiences they had, to analyze associations between dissociation and trauma, and check if there are differences by gender and formal education.

**Methods:** We assessed, through Dissociative Experiences Scale and Traumatic Experiences Checklist, 30 patients ( $M \pm SD$  age =  $42.6 \pm 12.38$ ; range 20-65 years) with Schizophrenia ( $n = 22$ ) and Bipolar Disorder ( $n = 8$ ) from a Residence for mentally ill (Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview confirmed diagnoses).

**Results:** Twelve patients (40%) revealed pathological dissociation ( $M \pm SD = 33.52 \pm 17.74$ ), scoring highest in DES absorption factor, and had more traumatic experiences between 7-12 years of age. Dissociation correlated moderately with traumatic experiences ( $r = 0.40$ ). Significantly, women had more dissociation and traumatic experiences ( $M \pm SD = 34.55 \pm 18.60$ ;  $2.14 \pm 2.53$ ) than men ( $M \pm SD = 27.55 \pm 16.48$ ;  $1.51 \pm 1.91$ ). There were no significant differences by education.

**Conclusion:** Many schizophrenic and bipolar Portuguese patients dissociate and had traumatic experiences in childhood, which is supported by the literature, but is necessary to replicate with bigger samples, and compare the two disorders to draw more conclusive interpretations. Nevertheless, therapeutic interventions should consider these aspects.