

P01-93 - SOCIAL, OCCUPATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION IN A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF BIPOLAR PATIENTS COMPARED WITH THE GENERAL POPULATION

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Objective: There is a positive correlation between level of education and working function in the general population. Bipolar disorder (BD) is often associated with disability in social and working function. There is conflicting evidence considering educational achievements in BD patients.

Aims: Our aim was to investigate how education was related to social and occupational function in BD.

Method: Patients with DSM-IV BD (N=257; 69.3% BD I, 25.7% BD II, 5.1% BD NOS, 51.4% females) were consecutively recruited from mental health clinics throughout Norway. The majority of patients were recruited when in-patients. About 1/2 had at least once experienced a psychotic episode. The BD sample was compared with a geographically matched reference sample from the general population (N=56.540) on levels of education, marital status, income, and disability benefits. Further analyses of association were carried out using logistic regression analyses.

Results: A significantly higher proportion of subjects in the BD group than in the reference group was single, had low income, or was disabled. No between-group difference was found in educational level. In the reference group education was inversely correlated with the risk of being disabled, but no such relationship was found in the BD group. In BD patients rapid cycling and recurring depressive episodes were the only clinical characteristics associated with low educational level.

Conclusion: Despite similar levels of education, BD patients had lower socio-economic status than the general population, and no association was found between education and disability for BD patients.