

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE 5-HTTLPR GENE, MAJOR AND MINOR LIFE EVENTS AND CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND DEPRESSION, ANXIETY AND SUICIDAL SYMPTOMS: A CLINICAL STUDY AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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Life events (LEs) contribute to the development of psychiatric disorders such as anxiety and depression. Nevertheless, the power of the stress-affective disorders correlation is relatively low, suggesting the existence of moderating and mediating factors (Liu et al., 2000).

Caspi et al. (2003), showed a mediating effect for short allele in the 5-HTTLPR gene to be a vulnerability factor for developing affective reaction towards life events.

The present study aimed to examine the intensity of anxiety, depression and suicidal symptoms within a clinical population as a function of the genetic vulnerability and LEs variables, focusing on adolescents. The sample consisted of 146 adolescents, aged from 11 to 18 years, 54 with main diagnosis of depression, 38 with anxiety disorder and 54 healthy control group. A post-hoc analysis yielded that only for the anxiety group, but not for the depressive group, the correlation between early trauma and the suicidal ideation is dependent on genetic vulnerability. As such, only for those who suffer from anxiety disorder who also have two short alleles (ss), the existence of childhood trauma predicts more suicidality that accompany their affective disorder., while for those with two long alleles, or for those with depression, this linkage does not have significance.