

CLINICAL AND COGNITIVE CORRELATES OF SUICIDE ATTEMPTS IN BIPOLAR DISORDER

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Introduction: Bipolar disorder (BD) is strongly associated with suicidal behaviors. Suicidal behavior is based on a stress/vulnerability model. Several factors have been identified, including clinical features (such as impulsivity) and cognitive deficits (such as impaired decision making or problem solving). Identifying specific factors in BD patients is needed to better prevent suicidal behaviors.

Objectives:

- 1) To identify clinical and cognitive characteristics associated with suicidal behaviors in euthymic BD patients.
- 2) To determine a correlation between neuropsychological variables and the number and characteristics of suicidal attempts.

Methods: 214 euthymic BD patients from the national network of "Centres Experts Bipolaires" were included and divided into two groups based on the personal history of suicide attempts. Socio-demographic and clinical variables were collected and neuropsychological functions were assessed (attention, memory and executive functions).

Results: We found an association between suicidal behavior and gender, employment status. Suicidal attempters had significantly more mixed episodes and hospitalizations. There was no difference between the two groups concerning neuropsychological measures. The number of suicide attempts and verbal fluency scores were negatively correlated.

Conclusions: The lack of significant differences in neuropsychological scores may be due to a common vulnerability between suicidal behaviors and BD. Further studies, especially prospective ones, are needed in order to characterize high risk BD patients in order to develop effective specific preventive strategies.