



Letter to Editor

Bipolar spectrum disorders in substance use disorders



Dear Editor,

Bipolar spectrum disorders are a group of chronically recurring disorders of varying and fluctuating intensity, characterized by intermittent or prolonged affective instability, states of inhibition and excitement of various mental functions such as mood, cognition and psychomotor activity (Akiskal, 1996). In our diagnostic systems (ICD-10/DSM-IV) contribution of bipolar spectrum disorders (BPSD) to the addictive process is often clinically missed as attenuated and subclinical expressions of mood disorders are not recognised (Maremmanni et al., 2006). The objective of our study was to study detection of unrecognized bipolar spectrum disorders among patients with a current diagnosis of substance use disorders.

The participants in this non-interventional study were from outpatients from the Drug De-addiction and Treatment Centre (DDTC) at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh, India. The study protocol and the text of informed consent were approved by the Ethics Review Board of the Institute. The inclusion criteria were: a current diagnosis of substance use disorder as per the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision (ICD-10), and age from 18 to 65 years. The exclusion criteria were: not consenting for the study, and not able to read Hindi or English questionnaire.

The Bipolar Spectrum Diagnostic Scale (BSDS) is a descriptive story that captures subtle features of bipolar illness. The scale has

good sensitivity and specificity for bipolar types (Phelps and Ghaemi, 2006). To facilitate self administration the questionnaire was translated and back translated from English into Hindi by bilingual experts (Subodh et al., 2014).

The study was conducted from 20th Sep 2013 to 31st Dec 2013. During this period 663 patients visited as outpatient to our centre. Among them 181 patients were randomly selected by convenient sampling method. Analysis was done by using SPSS-14 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2005, Chicago, IL, USA).

Among 181 patients interviewed 21.5% ($N = 39$) were BSDS positive (scored 13 or more on BSDS). The mean BSDS score of the whole group was 8.88 ± 05.50 , with a range of 0–24. The mean age of the whole group was 32.66 ± 09.89 years with a range of 19–66 years and there was no difference in the BSDS positive and negative group. In BPSD positive group alcohol dependence syndrome (53.8%) is the most common first diagnosis followed by opioid dependence syndrome (41.0%) compared to BPSD negative group where opioid dependence syndrome (48.6%) was the first diagnosis followed by alcohol dependence (38.7%). BPSD positive group had more impairment in occupation related ($r = 9.231$; $p = 0.026$), legal related ($r = 9.422$; $p = 0.024$), family related ($r = 13.432$; $p = 0.001$), and marital related aspects ($r = 9.055$; $p = 0.029$) compared to BPSD negative group.

There was no significant difference in socio-demographic profile, clinical profile of BPSD positive and BPSD negative group in other profile (Table 1)

This is the first study from this region to report the prevalence of bipolar spectrum disorders in substance use disorders patients. The prevalence reported in our study is 21.5% which is similar to

Table 1

BSDS scores, sociodemographic and clinical variable.

BSDS scores				
Variable	Scores			
BSDS score (categorical)				
No risk (0–6)	72 (39.8%)			
Low risk (7–12)	70 (38.7%)			
Moderate risk (13–18)	27 (14.9%)			
High risk (19–25)	12 (06.6%)			
BSDS				
Positive	39 (21.5%)			
Negative	142 (78.5%)			
Variable	Whole group $N = 181$	BSDS positive $N = 39$	BSDS negative $N = 142$	BSDS +ve vs. BS DS –ve groups (p value) Chi square value/ t -test
BSDS score (Mean \pm SD)	8.88 \pm 05.50	17.36 \pm 02.90	6.56 \pm 3.32	0.588 ($p = 0.444$)
Socio-demographic profile				
Age (mean \pm SD)	32.66 \pm 09.89	31.69 \pm 08.69	32.93 \pm 10.20	1.627 ($p = 0.204$)
Gender				

Table 1 (Continued)

Variable	Whole group N = 181	BSDS positive N = 39	BSDS negative N = 142	BSDS +ve vs. BSDS –ve groups (<i>p</i> value) Chi square value/ <i>t</i> -test
Male	180 (99.4%)	39 (100.0%)	141 (99.3%)	0.276 (<i>p</i> = 0.599)
Female	001 (00.6%)	00 (00.0%)	001 (00.7%)	
Marital status				1.792 (<i>p</i> = 0.774)
Single	059 (32.6%)	13 (33.3%)	46 (32.4%)	
Married	117 (64.6%)	25 (64.1%)	92 (64.8%)	
Widowed	002 (01.1%)	00 (00.0%)	02 (01.4%)	
Divorced	001 (00.6%)	00 (00.0%)	01 (00.7%)	
Separated	002 (01.1%)	01 (02.6%)	01 (00.7%)	
Education				0.048 (<i>p</i> = 0.826)
Upto matric	91 (50.3%)	19 (48.7%)	72 (50.7%)	
Beyond matric	90 (49.7%)	20 (51.3%)	70 (49.3%)	
Occupation				3.384 (<i>p</i> = 0.336)
Skilled	37 (20.4%)	11 (28.2%)	26 (18.3%)	
Unskilled	89 (49.2%)	18 (46.2%)	71 (50.0%)	
Student	18 (09.9%)	05 (12.8%)	13 (09.2%)	
Unemployed	37 (20.4%)	05 (12.8%)	32 (22.5%)	
Family type				0.059 (<i>p</i> = 0.808)
Nuclear	68 (37.6%)	14 (35.9%)	54 (38.0%)	
Non-nuclear	113 (62.4%)	25 (64.1%)	88 (62.0%)	
Family income				2.158 (<i>p</i> = 0.340)
Nil	53 (29.3%)	10 (25.6%)	43 (30.3%)	
Upto 19,575	70 (38.7%)	19 (48.7%)	51 (35.9%)	
Above 19,575	58 (32.0%)	10 (25.6%)	48 (33.8%)	
Locality				0.000 (<i>p</i> = 0.989)
Urban	88 (48.6%)	19 (48.7%)	69 (48.6%)	
Rural	93 (51.4%)	20 (51.3%)	73 (51.4%)	
Referred by				5.370 (<i>p</i> = 0.251)
Self	61 (33.7%)	11 (28.2%)	50 (35.2%)	
Relative	79 (43.6%)	16 (41.0%)	63 (44.4%)	
Medical professionals	26 (14.4%)	07 (17.9%)	19 (13.4%)	
Others	15 (08.3%)	05 (12.8%)	10 (07.0%)	
Clinical profile				
Duration of use in months (Mean ± SD)	140.91 ± 102.78	139.64 ± 89.14	141.26 ± 106.51	1.212 (<i>p</i> = 0.272)
Duration of dependence in months (Mean ± SD)	97.18 ± 84.61	101.59 ± 72.27	95.97 ± 87.89	0.534 (<i>p</i> = 0.466)
Main substance				4.798 (<i>p</i> = 0.441)
Alcohol	76 (42.0%)	21 (53.8%)	55 (38.7%)	
Opium	85 (47.0%)	16 (41.0%)	69 (48.6%)	
Cannabis	03 (01.7%)	01 (02.6%)	02 (01.4%)	
Benzodiazepine	01 (00.6%)	00 (00.0%)	01 (00.7%)	
Nicotine	15 (08.3%)	01 (02.6%)	14 (09.9%)	
Volatile substances	01 (00.6%)	00 (00.0%)	01 (00.7%)	
Type of substances				4.387 (<i>p</i> = 0.112)
Alcohol				
IMFL	50 (27.6%)	12 (30.8%)	38 (26.8%)	
CML	17 (09.4%)	07 (17.9%)	10 (07.0%)	
Both	34 (18.8%)	05 (12.8%)	29 (20.4%)	
Opioids				
Natural	46 (25.4%)	08 (20.5%)	38 (26.8%)	4.772 (<i>p</i> = 0.189)
Heroin	17 (09.4%)	02 (05.1%)	15 (10.6%)	
Others (Synthetic preparations)	19 (10.5%)	03 (07.7%)	16 (11.3%)	
Mixed	22 (12.2%)	08 (20.5%)	14 (09.9%)	
Tobacco				3.445 (<i>p</i> = 0.179)
Smoking	85 (47.0%)	22 (56.4%)	63 (44.4%)	
Smokeless	42 (23.2%)	06 (15.4%)	36 (25.4%)	
Both	24 (13.3%)	03 (07.7%)	21 (14.8%)	
IV drug use	06 (03.3%)	03 (07.7%)	03 (02.1%)	2.972 (<i>p</i> = 0.085)
1st Diagnosis (main substance)				4.798 (<i>p</i> = 0.441)
Alcohol dependence syndrome	76 (42.0%)	21 (53.8%)	55 (38.7%)	
Opioid dependence syndrome	85 (47.0%)	16 (41.0%)	69 (48.6%)	
Cannabis dependence syndrome	03 (01.7%)	01 (02.6%)	02 (01.4%)	
Benzodiazepine dependence syndrome	01 (00.6%)	00 (00.0%)	01 (00.7%)	
Nicotine substance dependence	15 (08.3%)	01 (02.6%)	14 (09.9%)	
Volatile substance dependence	01 (00.6%)	00 (00.0%)	01 (00.7%)	
2nd Diagnosis				8.554 (<i>p</i> = 0.381)
Alcohol dependence syndrome	12 (06.6%)	01 (02.6%)	11 (07.7%)	
Opioid dependence syndrome	07 (03.9%)	03 (07.7%)	04 (02.8%)	
Cannabis dependence syndrome	04 (02.2%)	02 (05.1%)	02 (01.4%)	
Nicotine substance dependence	112 (61.9%)	25 (61.5%)	88 (62.0%)	
Alcohol harmful use	03 (01.7%)	00 (00.0%)	03 (02.1%)	
Alcohol currently abstinent	04 (02.2%)	00 (00.0%)	04 (02.8%)	
Opioid currently abstinent	02 (01.1%)	00 (00.0%)	02 (01.4%)	
Cannabis currently abstinent	01 (00.6%)	00 (00.0%)	01 (00.7%)	
Nicotine currently abstinent	02 (01.1%)	00 (00.0%)	02 (01.4%)	
3rd Diagnosis				

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