Selves Impairments in Bipolar Disorder through Self-Concept Clarity, Self-Defining Memories and Self-Esteem

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BACKGROUND

Identity is an autobiographical reconstruction which includes past and future events ;it is marked out by chapters, key scenes, main characters, and plots.

Self-defining memories (SDMs) are vivid, affectively intense and well-rehearsed autobiographical memories (AMs) that reflect the central themes of the individual's life. They are integrated memories related to a meaning-making, i.e. a learned lesson about oneself, others or the world.

They embody the relevant memories in individual 'slife story

Leads to individual to high self-understanding from that adolescence and adulthood period

Bipolar Disorder : onset of illness during adolescence ➤ impact on development of the self and identity
→ showed an AM disturbance.
→ present a poorly developed sense of self and an instability of self-esteem.
What is about SDMs in bipolar patients?

This study investigated SDMs in bipolar patients and its relationships with self-esteem and self-concept clarity.

HYPOTHESES

Compared to healthy subjects, bipolar patients will:
- Recall less specific events and meaning making SDMs, more negative SDMs.
- Report more negative redemption than positive redemption, a less clear and less stable self-concept, a lower self-esteem.

METHOD

Sample

Table 1. Sociodemographic data.

	Bipolar subjects N = 16	Healthy subjects N = 18
Sex (♀/♂)	7/9	10/8
	$\bar{x}$ (SD)	$\bar{x}$ (SD)
Age	55,10 (10)	47,39 (13,11)
Depressive episode	5,2 (5,9)	/
Maniac episode	5,2 (5,9)	/

Experimental design

Bipolar patients are compared to healthy subjects. Each participant is asked to recall six SDMs according to these instructions:
(a) SDMs should date from last than a year and be clear and familiar
(b) SDMs help to understand who you are
(c) SDMs can be positive, neutral or negative
(d) You have thought about these SDMSs several times
(e) SDMs are as familiar as a picture

Mood assessment
- **Depression's severity:** Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-II)
- **Mania:** Young Mania Rating Scale (YMRS)

SDMs assessment

Scales
- **Recalled and current emotions ratings:** a positive, neutral or negative valence is attributed to events when it happened and when it is recalled.

Variables
- Specificity, meaning making, contain, redemption

Identity assessment
- **Self-concept clarity:** Self-concept clarity scale (SCCS)
- **Self-concept stability:** Label
- **Self-esteem:** Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSE)

Statistical analyses

Descriptive analyses, student t test, repeated ANOVA measures and correlational analyses were conducted.
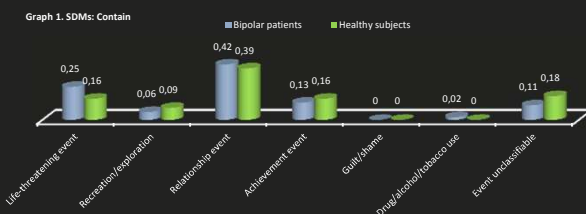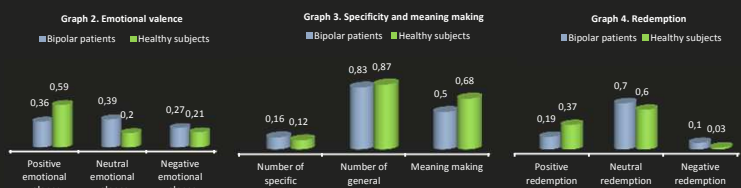
RESULTS

GROUP COMPARISON

1) MOOD & IDENTITY

Bipolar patients showed a significant higher score of depression severity than healthy subjects (t(32 = 3,45, p < 0.01). Bipolar patients showed significant lower scores of the clarity of the self-concept and of its stability and and of self-esteem than healthy subjects (t(32) = - 4,74, p < 0,01; t(32) = - 6,87, p < 0,01 and t(32) = - 2,72, p = 0,01, respectively).

2) SDMs & CONTAIN

Graph 1. SDMs: Contain
■ Bipolar patients ■ Healthy subjects

Life-threatening event: 0,25 / 0,16
Recreation/exploration: 0,06 / 0,09
Relationship event: 0,42 / 0,39
Achievement event: 0,13 / 0,16
Guilt/shame: 0 / 0
Drug/alcohol/tobacco use: 0,02 / 0
Event unclassifiable: 0,11 / 0,18

Inspection of scores showed that memories mainly concerned relationship events in both groups. The second leading theme is also similar: life-threatening events.

3) SDMs: CHARACTERISTICS

Graph 2. Emotional valence
■ Bipolar patients ■ Healthy subjects

Positive emotional valence: 0,36 / 0,59
Neutral emotional valence: 0,39 / 0,2
Negative emotional valence: 0,27 / 0,21

Graph 3. Specificity and meaning making
■ Bipolar patients ■ Healthy subjects

Number of specific memories: 0,16 / 0,12
Number of general memories: 0,83 / 0,87
Meaning making: 0,5 / 0,68

Graph 4. Redemption
■ Bipolar patients ■ Healthy subjects

Positive redemption: 0,19 / 0,37
Neutral redemption: 0,7 / 0,6
Negative redemption: 0,1 / 0,03

According to our hypotheses, bipolar patients recalled significantly less meaning making SDMs than healthy subjects (F = 7,47, p < 0,01).

Contrary to our hypotheses,
- Concerning specificity, bipolar patients didn't recall more specific SDMs (t (32) = 0,85, p = 0,4).
- Concerning emotional valence, bipolar patients didn't recall more negative SDMs than healthy subjects.
- Concerning redemption, bipolar patients didn't present more negative redemption than healthy subjects.

Correlational analyses were conducted on the whole sample.

1) CLARITY and STABILITY OF THE SELF-CONCEPT & SELF-ESTEEM

SCCS scores were
- Positively correlated with LABEL (r (34) = 0,48, p < 0,01)
- Positively correlated with RSE (r (34) = 0,79, p < 0,01)

DISCUSSION

As predicted, bipolar disorder presented a diminution of their sense of selves throughout SDMs and self-concept clarity. Further, there was a contradiction between results from both self-esteem tasks.

This poster's bibliography is available on demand by email.

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