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Bipolar Disorder and the Quality of Life

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Introduction: Bipolar disorder affects many psychosocial and functional aspects, leading to real social handicap and an alteration in quality of life.

Aims: Our purpose was to evaluate the bipolar patient's quality of life.

Methods: It is a cross-sectional study which lasted for four months. It included 104 patients with bipolar I disorder according to the DSM-IV-TR criteria and followed at the psychiatry consultation of the university hospital in Mahdia. Quality of life was measured using the SF-36 (Short form) generic scale. A global average score was calculated and we considered that quality of life was altered if the score was less than 66.7, according to the threshold value of Léan.

Results: The assessment of quality of life revealed a global average score of 52.2 and an alteration in 78,8% of patients. The study of the dimensional average scores revealed that all dimensions were affected excepting the one exploring the physical activity (D1) with a score of 75,6. The standardization also revealed deterioration in all the dimensions, with the mental component particularly more affected than the physical component with respectively estimated scores of 31.7 and 40.5.

Conclusion: This clinimetric approach permitted us to consider the whole life of each patient suffering from bipolar disorder, rather than just the angle of their illness