

Abstract:

Bipolar affective disorder is a very dynamic disease, which is influenced by numerous factors. One of these factors is the age at onset. The age at onset of bipolar affective disorder may play a major role in its course, severity and number of relapses, number of hospitalizations or response to mood stabilizers. Other factors influenced by the age at onset are suicide thoughts or attempted suicide. The aim of this work is to investigate and demonstrate the effect of age of the first symptom on the course of bipolar disorder. In the framework of quantitative research, 116 respondents completed a questionnaire on the course of bipolar affective disorder. Early age at onset (≤ 19 years) correlated significantly with the longer interval between the first symptom and the visit to the doctor, the first symptom and the first diagnosis and the first symptom and the diagnosis of bipolar affective disorder. There were no statistically significant relationships between the age at onset and the number of hospitalizations or the severity of the disease. Although the effect of age at onset on the course and severity of the disease has not been proven, this area should be further explored as it may help to better management the treatment of the disorder.