

IMPULSIVITY IN BIPOLAR DISORDER: A STATE OR A TRAIT



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Background and aims:

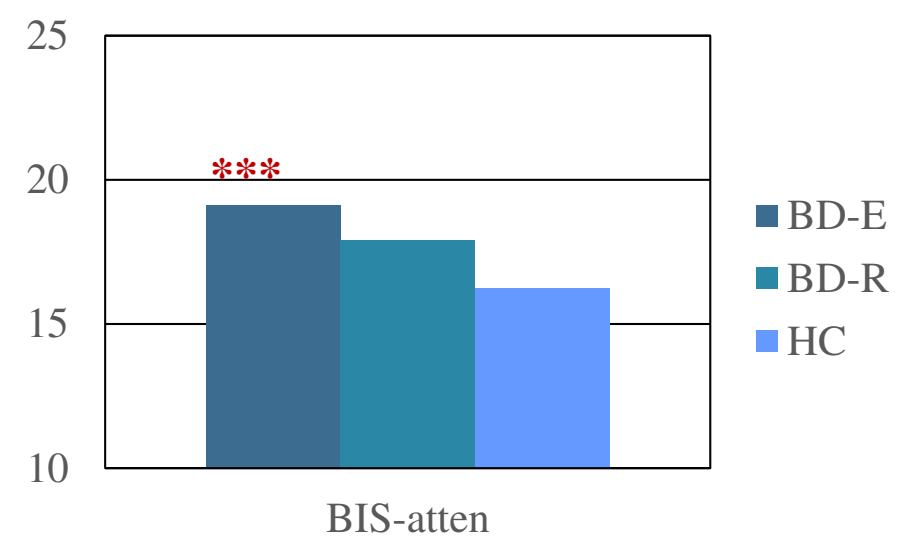
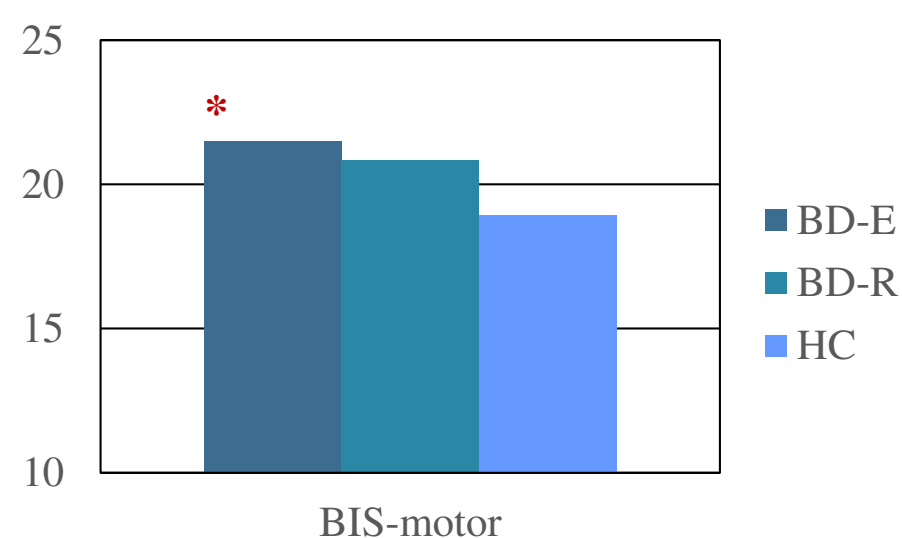
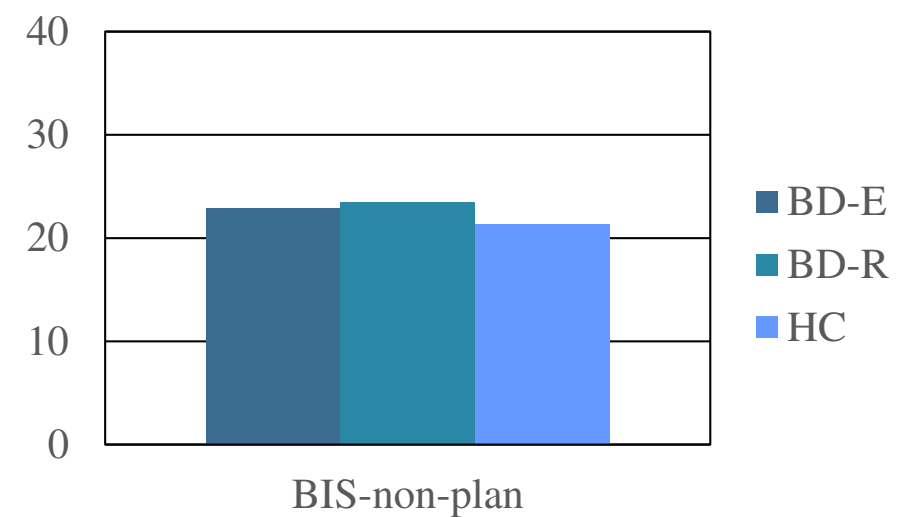
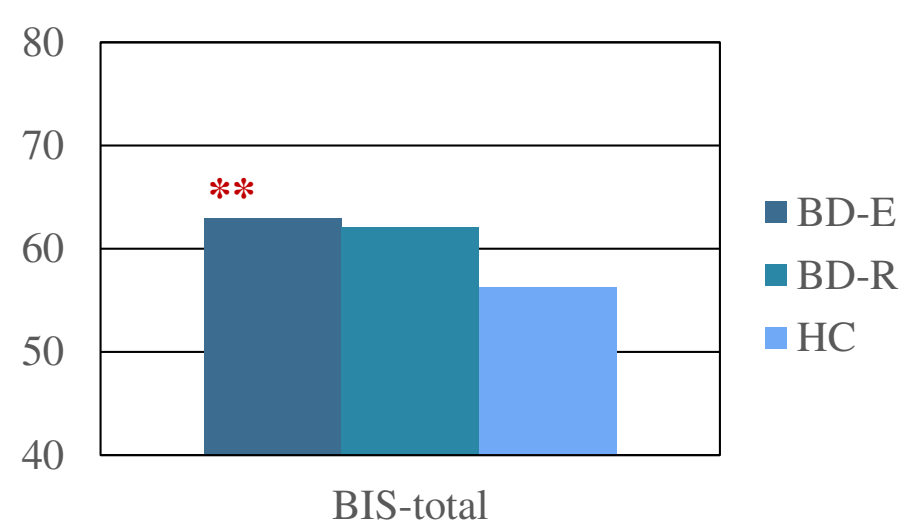
Impulsivity is a multifaceted concept and is a prominent feature of bipolar disorder (BD) (1). Whether impulsivity is state or a trait marker of BD is still controversial (2,3). The aim of the present study was to find out: 1) whether patients with BD having a current episode (BD-E) and BD patients in remission (BD-R) are more impulsive in comparison to healthy controls (HC) and 2) whether the impulsivity level depends on the severity of affective symptoms.

Methods:

We report data on 62 demographically matched DSM-IV-TR BD I patients having a current episode, 22 patients with BD-R and 37 HC. All groups were assessed by HAM-D and YMRS. Impulsivity was measured by BIS-11A and a DDT.

Results:

In comparison to HC, BD-E patients had significantly higher BIS-total ($p=0,01$), BIS-motor ($p=0,031$) and BIS-atten ($p=0,001$) subscores. BD-R patients also had higher BIS-total, BIS-motor and BIS-atten subscores in comparison to HC but these differences did not reach significance. BD-E and BD-R groups did not differ significantly from each other in respect to their BIS scores. Neither the HAM-D score, nor the YMRS score had a significant effect on the BIS scores. BD-patients did not differ from HC in respect to their k-value.



Conclusions:

Our results suggest that: 1) BD patients regardless of their affective state have higher levels of impulsivity in comparison to HC, as revealed by BIS; 2) different aspects of impulsivity could contribute to the impulsive behavior in BD patients. Our results support the notion that impulsivity could be regarded as a stable trait of BD.

References:

[1] Dalley, J.W., Roiser, J.P., 2012. Dopamine, serotonin and impulsivity. *Neuroscience* 215, 42-58.

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[3] Ibanez, A., Cetkovich, M., Petroni, A. et al., 2012. The neural basis of decision-making and reward processing in adults with euthymic bipolar disorder or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). *PLoS One* 7(5), e37306.