

The Reasons for the Negative Impact of Bipolar Disorder on a Person's Relationship with Their Partner

Qianying Li

Guangdong Experimental
High School International
Department(AP), Guangzhou,
510375, China
liqianyingwinnie@163.com

Abstract:

Bipolar disorder is a type of mood disorder characterized by alternating episodes of mania and depression, or sometimes mixed states of both. These extreme mood shifts can significantly affect an individual's thoughts, behaviors, and relationships. While the personal struggles of those with bipolar disorder are well-documented, the emotional toll on their romantic partners is often overlooked. Psychological studies have suggested that bipolar disorder can have damaging effects not only on the mental and physical health of the patient but on the partner's emotional health as well. The unpredictable nature of the disorder may provoke Communication disruptions, mistrust, and loss of emotional closeness between the two partners. In the state of mania, impulsivity or hostility may provoke conflict or confusion, and the depressed phase may provoke withdrawal or hopelessness. Such mood shifts take a tremendous strain on the mental health of both partners and render the relationship more challenging to manage. This article will look into the emotional effects of bipolar disease on close relationships and why the effect is often difficult to manage.

Keywords: Bipolar disorder, partner, emotion

1. Introduction

Bipolar disorder is one form of mood disorder where the person experiences alternate attacks of mania and depression, usually as mixed or pure forms. These mood disruptions may have serious implications not just on the mental as well as physical health of the patient, but on the emotional health of the nearest relations as well, especially on the love partner. Research on psychology asserts that bipolar disorder

is susceptible to creating numerous relational issues such as loss of mutual trust, breakdown of communication between the two spouses, as well as emotional distance between the two spouses. As the patient cycles through unstable emotional states, their partner may struggle to keep up, feeling both confused and emotionally drained. In severe cases, this emotional turbulence can lead to separation or divorce. This essay explores the negative emotional impact of bipolar disorder on romantic relationships, examining the

psychological, behavioral, and interpersonal factors that contribute to these difficulties. Through understanding the root causes for the problem, we are better positioned to help the sufferers as well as their partners to manage the emotionality of having bipolar disorder [1][4].

2. Bipolar Disorder's Impact on Romantic Relationships

2.1 Emotional Expression Impairment and Partner Harm

Bipolar disorder has an impact on patients expressing their emotions. This is because patients with bipolar disorder experience periods of depression and mania, which greatly affect their emotional expression. Moreover, when the patient's depressive or manic phase reaches a certain level, they may lose control and engage in behaviors that harm their partner, such as impulsiveness, aggressive behavior, or refusal to communicate with their partner. This will not only increase misunderstandings between partners, but also lead to a gradual decline in trust between the two, which may ultimately result in a breakup, divorce, or even divorce.

2.2 Disproportionate Psychological and Physiological Burdens on Partners

Bipolar disorder patients have various psychological and physiological burdens on both parties. More importantly, after long-term observation, the patient's partner has been more burdened than the patient. This is because they often need to endure the emotional outbursts of patients and take care of and comfort them, which greatly consumes their spirit and patience. Moreover, some patients may resort to self harm during seizures, which can greatly damage the emotional foundation of both parties and lead to a decrease in trust between them [3].

2.3 Personality Changes Inducing Partner Insecurity

The personality changes of patients with bipolar disorder can cause significant insecurity for their partners. This is because patients with bipolar disorder sometimes exhibit unexpected and unconventional behaviors, such as spending too much money, and some even choose to cheat to calm their emotions. This will make the partner feel undesirable and will lessen the sense of security they experience. The method will further leave the couples bemused and they may not know how to respond to the actions and behavior of the patient. It will not be easy for the two to establish an efficient, safe, and long-lasting bridge of

relationship, and can further dismantle their trust on the emotional level as well [5].

2.4 Uncertain Future Prospects and Relationship Doubts

The bipolar is typically unclear about the future and affective prospects. This will often leave the patient feeling anxious, and the anxiety will then take its turn on the seizures and destabilize the emotion further. The grand goals of the mania are directly proportional to the harsh pessimism of the depression far more inversely. The inverse proportion does not permit the partner to feel solid or believe the patient when they are talking, with the consequent chronic state of exhaustion and questioning as to whether the relationship is worth pursuing [2].

3. Conclusion

Bipolar disorder can have many adverse impacts on spouses from mild disagreements to radical breakup. Overall, bipolar disorder not only extremely affects the behavior and mood of the patient themselves, but greatly disrupts the affective interaction with the spouse as well. From misunderstandings caused by emotional fluctuations, communication breakdowns in intimate relationships, to long-term psychological pressure and uncertainty about the future that partners endure, these obstacles pose ongoing challenges for both parties.

References

- [1] Azorin, J.-M., Lefrere, A., & Belzeaux, R. (2021). The Impact of Bipolar Disorder on Couple Functioning: Implications for Care and Treatment. A Systematic Review. *Medicina*, 57(8), 771. <https://doi.org/10.3390/medicina57080771>
- [2] Granek L, Danan D, Bersudsky Y, Osher Y. Living with bipolar disorder: the impact on patients, spouses, and their marital relationship. *Bipolar Disord*. 2016 Mar;18(2):192-9. doi: 10.1111/bdi.12370. Epub 2016 Feb 18. PMID: 26890335.
- [3] Sheets ES, Miller IW. Predictors of relationship functioning for patients with bipolar disorder and their partners. *J Fam Psychol*. 2010 Aug;24(4):371-9. doi: 10.1037/a0020352. PMID: 20731483.
- [4] Bipolar affective disorder and its impact on various aspects of marital relationship Sandeep Grover 1, Ritu Nehra 1, Anita Thakur 1 Affiliations Expand PMID: 30089956, PMCID: PMC6058431, DOI: 10.4103/ipj.ipj_15_16
- [5] Patient and partner correlates of couple relationship functioning in bipolar disorder, Lorelei Simpson Rowe 1, Anne Miller Morris, Affiliations Expand, PMID: 22409161, DOI: 10.1037/a0027589