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STIGMATIZATION, PERSONALITY DISORDERS AND ADOLESCENCE

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The presence of comorbid personality pathology with other psychiatric disorders, imposes a worse prognosis in the development of therapeutic intervention. Additionally, this construct is usually related to stigma effect in clinical settings. Information about this effect, associated with psychiatric disorders in adolescence, is limited and little recognized.
Hypothesis: The clinical diagnosis of personality disorder in adolescence tends to be conservative and unspecific.
Objective: To examine the prevalence of personality disorder, and the involvement of stigma effect in adolescents with Axis I psychiatric disorders.
Method: A sample of 100 patients with psychiatric disorders (M = 15.8, SD = 0.9 years, range 15-17, 70% women), were assessed and diagnosed for personality disorders in a mental health public centre.
Results: The prevalence of PD identified by clinicians (12%), differs from the prevalence identified by the semi-structured interview (34-37%) showing a greater number ($p < .001$) of people affected. In the present sample most of the cases identified by clinicians are related to personality disorders (PD) not otherwise specified, while with the implementation of semi-structured interviews, most of the sample met criteria for Cluster B PDs. Additionally, 11% of the sample has dimensional pathological features (probable PD) without complying categorically the criteria for a full PD.
Conclusions: In clinical settings, a considerable proportion of adolescents with psychopathology meet features for PD, although few of them have a confirmed clinical diagnosis. Considerations about impact of the stigma are discussed.

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