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Catherine Spaccia
Dominican University of California

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Effects of Self-Efficacy and Stigmatization when Managing Patients with Addiction and Substance Use Disorders

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Introduction

- People who suffer with addiction are more likely to be treated as outsiders, which result in social disadvantages and maltreatment in a medical setting. This is because substance abuse can be perceived as deviating from social norms (Henderson & Dressler, 2017).
- Higher post-secondary education on addiction could reduce stigmatization and improve self-efficacy for better healthcare outcomes. Previous research has revealed that appropriate training is important when forming nonjudgmental attitudes towards drug users (Baldwin et al., 2006).
- The purpose of this study is to address the gap between post-secondary education, reducing stigmatization and improving self-efficacy among healthcare professionals.

Measures

- Drug and Drug Users’ Problems Perceptions Questionnaire (DDPPS; Puskar et al., 2013), a 22-item self-report Likert scale measured self-efficacy.
- Drug Use Stigmatization Scale (DUSS; Palamar, 2011), a 7-item self-report Likert scale, measured stigmatization.
- Level of education was measured using a question asking how many courses covering the topic at hand with four responses:
  - None (I have never taken a course that has addressed this topic)
  - Little (I have taken a course that touched on this topic)
  - Fair Amount (I have taken a full course on this topic)
  - Substantial (I have taken multiple courses on this topic)

Method

- 34 college students were recruited from Dominican University of California (DUC). 87% were female; 13% were male; the mean age was 29.77 (SD: 13.11).
- Participants voluntarily completed an online survey, which included a combination of questions from two scales: DDPPS and DUSS. They indicated their level of education, along with demographic questions.
- After completing the survey, students were thanked and provided a link to information about substance use disorders and addiction.
- A Spearman rho and Pearson r was used to calculate correlations between the variables of interest.

Results

- When correlating level of education and stigmatization, there was no significant finding $\rho (30) = .134, p > .05$.
- When correlating level of education and self-efficacy, there was a significant finding $\rho (30) = -.497, p = .004$.
- When correlating stigmatization and self-efficacy, there was no significant finding $r (30) = -.197, p > .05$.
- A supplementary analysis found a significance between marijuana and higher levels of education on addiction $\rho (30) = .389, p = .028$.

Discussion

It is important to note that education on addiction can influence a person’s self-efficacy and stigmatization. This study’s limitations were confined to DUC students in Marin County, leaving little room for a more culturally diverse research basis. Future studies can focus on what strategies are most effective for better healthcare outcomes for people who suffer with addiction, and use samples from other demographic backgrounds.