



I35 Shame Among Forensic Patients and the Potential Moderating Roles of the Social Determinants of Health

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Learning Overview: After attending this presentation, attendees will have gained insight into the levels of shame among forensic psychiatry patients diagnosed with a psychotic disorder compared to psychiatry patients who are not involved in the forensic system. Additionally, attendees will understand the potential of various social determinants of health in moderating the levels of shame among these populations.

Impact on the Forensic Science Community: This presentation will impact the forensic science community by allowing attendees to gain a deeper understanding of the complex social factors that contribute to feelings of shame among forensic psychiatry patients. By acknowledging the prominence of shame, as well as the socioeconomic factors that may contribute to shame, researchers and practitioners within the forensic community will be able to consider certain issues that they encounter with forensic psychiatry patients through a more holistic perspective. Considering shame and socioeconomic factors as part of treatment programs may help reduce levels of shame and, in turn, improve clinical outcomes by allowing patients to advocate for themselves and maintain a sense of hope throughout treatment.¹

Shame is a painful feeling and experience of believing one is fundamentally flawed and involves a desire to hide the perceived damaged self from others.^{2,3} Having a mental health diagnosis can increase the levels of shame a person feels, in part due to stigma surrounding mental illness, and more specifically stigma around psychosis.^{4,5} Among individuals with schizophrenia, shame has been associated with negative clinical consequences, including increased paranoia and decreased adherence to treatment.^{6,7}

Forensic psychiatry patients comprise a subgroup of individuals with psychotic illnesses who have been less studied with regard to shame. Due to possible further stigma related to contact with the criminal justice system, it was hypothesized that forensic patients diagnosed with a psychotic disorder would have higher levels of shame than patients diagnosed with a psychotic disorder without criminal involvement.

A multitude of socioeconomic factors can impact a person's life and health. These factors are known as social determinants of health, and negative experiences with a number of these factors, such as poverty, have been associated with increased levels of shame.^{6,7} It is hypothesized that positive experiences with these factors will lower the levels of shame a patient feels, and negative experiences will increase levels of shame.

This presentation will present findings on levels of shame among patients with schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, measured using the Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA-3S). Levels of shame will be compared between patients with a diagnosis of a psychotic disorder who are in the forensic system versus those who are not. Results from moderating analyses will present the impact of the social determinants of health on levels of shame. These results will help clinicians in forensic psychiatry to better tailor treatment programs to their forensic psychiatry patient populations.

Reference(s):

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