

## Stigma Impact on Psychiatry Patient Management

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### ABSTRACT:

The stigma connected to mental disorders or individuals with mental illnesses extends not just to the general population, but also to specialists. Medical students, without a doubt, constitute a significant portion of the professional health workforce, and their attitudes toward psychiatric illnesses play an important role in determining their future choice of psychiatry as a possible career and in dealing with psychiatric complaints in their clinical practice once they enter their profession. As a result, they play a significant role in shaping the impact of stigma on the quality of life of the mentally ill. In this review we have collected various subjective opinions of different populations and their attitudes towards psychiatry as a branch as well as psychiatric patients and their course of treatment.

**Keywords :** psychiatric disorders, attitude ,stigma, medical graduates, social stigma.

### INTRODUCTION:

Psychiatric disorders are common and burdensome in both the developed and developing worlds. In recent years, the World Health Organization (WHO) has issued alarming statistics about the rising prevalence of mental illnesses around the world, whereas epidemiological studies have estimated lifetime prevalence rates of mental disorders among adults to be 12.2-48.6%. (World Health Organization: Mental Health Gap Action Programme 2008). The stigma associated with mental disorders or people with mental illnesses extends not just to the general public, but also to professionals. Medical students, without a doubt, constitute a significant portion of the professional health workforce, and their attitudes toward psychiatric illnesses play an important role in determining their future career choice of psychiatry and in dealing with psychiatric complaints in their clinical practice.(1)

Attitude is described as a fictitious construct that conveys an individual's liking or disliking of a particular object or item. Attitudes are either negative, good, or neutral feelings toward an object, person, behavior, or event. Attitudes are formed by judgments and include emotive, behavioral, and cognitive components.(2,3) Over the last few decades, the attitudes of medical students toward psychiatry have been studied all over the world, with a negative attitude toward various aspects of psychiatry observed in both developed and developing

countries such as the United States (4,5,6), the United Kingdom (7,8) France (9), Australia (10), Saudi Arabia (11), and Nigeria (12). Other global surveys, on the other hand, reveal that psychiatry medical students in both developing and rich countries have a good opinion of psychiatry.

Low rates of recruitment to psychiatry have been a source of concern around the world, albeit this trend has recently begun to reverse. On average, 2% to 4% of a graduating class pursues a career in psychiatry (13). This situation is significantly more severe in developing nations such as India. (14) Current rates of psychiatric specialty fall short of community needs; also, undergraduate training in psychiatry and behavioral sciences in most medical schools in the country is inadequate. (1) Attitudes evolve as new knowledge is gained. According to studies, as medical students gain experience in psychiatry, their attitudes toward it improve. (2,3,5)

### **STUDIES DONE:**

In one study "The psychiatric Contribution of General Medical Education: Some Problems and Generalization" at Otago University, New Zealand (1982), James and Galletly discovered that despite having as many as 160 hours devoted to the teaching of Psychological Medicine, there was little difference in the quality of psychological data recorded in two samples of General Hospital in case notes written 10 years apart. Despite a large increase in apparently relevant content taught over the same ten-year period, (15) Burroughs A.K. In his study "Medical Students, Medical Records, and Clinical Skills" at the University of Liverpool (1978), he also observed under-recording of psychological and social components in the United Kingdom, as compared to routine parts of physical treatment.

In another study "Teaching psychological diagnosis and management" at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, U.S.A. (1975), Ruff and Mechanik discovered that medical students tend to categorize patients based on the department in which they first visited, so that the same student who demonstrated psychological awareness in psychiatry gave little awareness in Medicine, demonstrating that skills acquired in the psychiatric wards do not generalize to the medical wards. (16)

Another study conducted at CMC Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India (1994) by Mani Rajagopalan and K. Kuruvilla on "Medical Students' Attitudes to Psychiatry: Effects of a Two Week Posting" included 30 students. All students had sufficient attendance and were thus included in the study. They found that on the whole, the attitudes before posting were very positive on all aspects except two: [a] medical students felt that psychiatrists tend to overanalyze human behavior and [b] that psychiatrists made less money than other physicians. In comparison with their post-posting attitudes, it was found that there was a positive trend in several areas. There was a minor drop in opinions of psychiatrists' role definition and functioning, as well as their career and personal benefits.

There was a minor drop in opinions of psychiatrists' role definition and functioning, as well as their career and personal benefits. The change in attitude was primarily due to how non-psychiatric instructors and other medical students perceived psychiatry. Both of the statements (stated above) on which views were initially unfavorable did not show any significant positive change.(17)

Similarly, in another study conducted by P. According to John Alexander and N. Kumaraswamy's study "Impact of medical school experiences on senior medical students' interest in psychiatry" at Manipal University, Manipal, India (1995), approximately one-third (36%) of students perceived non-psychiatry faculty to be critical of psychiatry, and approximately half (44%) agreed with the proposition that students showing interest in psychiatry are often perceived as odd or neurotic by others. More than a third of students said that teachers and fellow students attempted to discourage interested students from pursuing a career in psychiatry.(18)

In a study "Attitudes of tomorrow's doctors towards psychiatry and mental illness" in Tamil Nadu, India (2001), Tharyan P, John T, Tharyan A, and Braganza D discovered that exposure to psychiatric teaching does change attitudes towards some aspects of psychiatry even if the difference in total scores on the Attitude Towards Psychiatry (ATP) questionnaire was not statistically significant. They discovered that exposure to psychiatric training and contact with psychiatric patients dramatically improved medical students' attitudes regarding mental illness (AMI). On numerous questions of the ATP and AMI surveys, female medical students reported more positive sentiments than male medical students. In this group of 247 students, 51 (20.6%) said they wanted to be psychiatrists, whereas 97 (39.3%) said they didn't. Significantly, more female students than male students showed a willingness to pursue a profession in psychiatry. However, there were no significant differences in the decision to pursue a psychiatric career between those who had previously had psychiatric training and those who had not. They concluded that while teaching psychiatry positively improves medical students' perceptions regarding psychiatric disease and some aspects of psychiatry, the number of students choosing psychiatry as a career option does not increase.(19)

In a study named "Impact of differences in psychiatry curriculum of undergraduate medical and physiotherapy students on their attitude towards psychiatry" at MGM's Medical College, Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India (2016), Bhise MC, Marwale AV, Deshmukh AS, and Saoji SG discovered that the mean ATP30 score for medical students was 91.9 and that of physiotherapy students was 105.8, this difference in two groups was highly significant Only 2 (2.1%) of physiotherapy students expressed an unfavorable view toward psychiatry, compared to 36 (41.4%) of all medical students (ATP). Male students were 2.6 times more likely than female pupils to have negative ATP. They concluded that physiotherapy students who received intensive and organized psychiatric instruction as an exam subject had considerably higher positive ATP than medical students.(20)

## CONCLUSION:

Overall students had a positive attitude towards psychiatric illness, etiology of psychiatric disorders, their treatment including knowledge of ECT and psychotherapy and the consequences of psychiatric disorders and their treatment as indicated by individual statements of the Attitude towards Mental Illness (AMI) scale. Although there was a boost in positive views during the psychiatric posting, this trend may not last. The positive attitude shift could be permanent or temporary. This demands additional research in the form of a longitudinal study that may track the medical student from first year through final year and after graduation.

Furthermore, it is not possible to speculate on which aspects of psychiatric training may have contributed to the beneficial change in attitudes; hence, additional research in the form of regression analysis should be conducted to explore the cause and effect relationships between different factors.

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