

EV1029

Stigma and attitudes towards mental illness: Gender differences in a sample of Italian medical students

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Introduction Stigma in mental illness is characterized by discrimination towards people affected by mental disorder. Consequence of the paradigm “stigma-injury-discrimination” is the social exclusion of these patients and the denial of their rights. Medical students, those who should be important reference points for psychiatric patients, are instead one of the categories that contribute to their stigmatization.

Objectives To study the attitudes of medical students towards psychiatric patients.

Aims The present study analyzes gender differences in a sample of Italian medical students towards mental illness.

Methods A total of 339 Italian medical students completed a cross-sectional survey, in Rome and Foggia (Italy). We used the Italian version of Community Attitude towards the Mentally Ill test (CAMI) to analyze the students' attitudes.

Results There is a substantial difference among the attitudes towards mental disorders in female and male students. Female students have obtained less stigmatizing results in 9 of the CAMI test items ($P < 0.05$), in Benevolence ($P = 0.001$) and Social Restrictiveness subscales ($P = 0.043$) and in the total score ($P = 0.013$).

Conclusions These results are in line with those achieved in scientific literature, confirming that women tend to show more humanitarian attitude towards the mentally ill. Even in the original article of the validation of the CAMI test, the authors found better attitudes in women in all subscales, with the exception of Social Restrictiveness subscale (that in our analysis also correlates with the female gender).

Disclosure of interest The authors have not supplied their declaration of competing interest.

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EV1030

Correlations between medical students' specialty choice and different attitudes towards mental illness

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Introduction Discrimination and stigmatization cause an important burden for people suffering from psychiatric disorders. The medical doctors, those who should be important reference points for psychiatric patients, are instead one of the categories that contribute to their stigmatization.

Objectives It is extremely important to study and to know the attitudes of undergraduate medical students towards psychiatric disorders, since these individuals will be involved in the care of these patients throughout their careers.

Aims The present study analyzes the attitudes of a group of Italian medical students towards mental illness, highlighting the differences between the students who would choose surgical specialties from those who prefer medical ones.

Methods A total of 339 medical students of different medical schools, in Rome and Foggia (Italy), completed a cross-sectional survey. The Italian version of community attitude towards the mentally ill test (CAMI) was used to evaluate the students' attitudes.

Results The students that would choose medical specialties reported less stigmatizing responses in 11 CAMI items (including five items with $P < 0.01$), in benevolence and community mental health ideology subscales ($P = 0.003$) and in the total score ($P = 0.003$).

Conclusions It is evident that the students that prefer the surgical specialties have more stigmatizing attitudes towards psychiatric patients. Negative feedbacks on Psychiatry from non-psychiatrist colleagues may have a fundamental role in stigmatizing mental disorders.

Disclosure of interest The authors have not supplied their declaration of competing interest.

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EV1031

Differences in empathy in Italian university students: Are medical students more or less empathetic?

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Introduction Empathy is the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing. It is an important quality in the medical profession, since it is fundamental in interpersonal relationships with patients. Nevertheless, many studies have found that over time medical students (MS) become less empathic and more detached from patients.

Objectives and aims To determine MS loss of empathy and to study the differences in empathy between MS and other university students who are not involved in healthcare.

Methods We enrolled 244 MS (120 of the 1st year and 124 of the last year) and 125 other university students not involved in healthcare, in different universities in Rome and Foggia (Italy). They anonymously and voluntarily completed a socio-demographic questionnaire and Baron Cohen's empathy quotient test (EQ).

Results We found no differences regarding EQ total score between MS and other students, however there are few differences considering individual EQ items. In particular, MS really like taking care of others ($P = 0.005$) and they are sometimes considered to