

## The Prevalence of Stereotype Self-concurrence and Habitual Self-stigma in a Community Sample of People with Mental Illness

K.K.S. Chan<sup>1</sup>, W.W.S. Mak<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Psychological Studies, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong, Hong Kong China ; <sup>2</sup>Psychology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, Hong Kong China

---

**Introduction:** Although many people with mental illness (PMI) may self-concur with negative stereotypes of mental illness ('stereotype self-concurrence') at some point, they may have different degrees of habitual recurrence of such self-defeating perceptions ('*habitual self-stigma*'), which could further exacerbate the experience of self-stigma and perpetuate its adverse effects on mental well-being. The present study evaluated the prevalence of stereotype self-concurrence and habitual self-stigma in a community sample of 187 PMI in Hong Kong.

**Methods:** Stereotype self-concurrence was assessed using the Self-Stigma Scale—Short Form. The 9-item SSS-SF was rated on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Categories of minimal (<3), mild (3-3.5), moderate (3.5-4), and severe (>4) levels of stereotype self-concurrence were defined based on the mean scores of SSS-SF. Habitual self-stigma was assessed using the Self-stigmatizing Thinking's Automaticity and Repetition (STAR) scale. The 8-item STAR was rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Categories of minimal (<2), mild (2-3), moderate (3-4), and severe (>4) levels of habitual self-stigma were defined based on the mean scores of STAR.

**Results:** Stereotype self-concurrence was minimal in 40.1% of participants, mild in 9.1%, moderate in 16.6%, and severe in 34.2%. Among participants with mild-to-severe stereotype self-concurrence, the prevalence of minimal, mild, moderate, and severe habitual self-stigma was, respectively, 2.7%, 33%, 56.3%, and 8%.

**Conclusions:** Self-stigma appears to be a common experience among PMI. The development of interventions to target stereotype self-concurrence and habitual self-stigma deserves high priority in research efforts.