



THE ISSUE

The mystery of identity formation remains the hot topic of many fields, including biology, psychology and philosophy. Schizophrenia is a neurological disorder with psychological manifestation that are yet to be comprehended by the scientific or theoretical community. Identity formation for those with schizophrenia becomes more challenging with the increased stigmatization they receive from the public and healthcare providers. The research demonstrated that stigmatization against persons with schizophrenia decreases their confidence levels further complicating their recovery.

BACKGROUND

- 1% of the population is affected with schizophrenia
- Biological theories: Changing dopamine levels, reduced hippocampal size, reduced N-acetyl aspartate, increased glutamate levels post-shock
- Psychological theories: Trait Theory, which is heavily dependent on the persons brain structure.
- René Descartes: Cogito Ergo Sum - A person would have only one identity comprised of multiple selves
- David Hume: The self and identity are ever changing because there is nothing that is everlasting
- Jean-Paul Sartre believed that Identity formation is a mixture of how the person sees themselves and how others view them
- Stigma is the result of implicit biases that exist within ourselves and it heavily influences how the stigmatized persons views themselves

FINDINGS

- Stigmatization of persons with schizophrenia is not unique to one country and it is much worse than expected
- Healthcare providers and social workers, despite their education, seem to dismiss the pain of their schizophrenia patients as something “in their head.”
- This treatment puts patients with schizophrenia in a spot where they view themselves as a burden to society, worsening their negative symptoms.
- The hallucinations become another person affecting one’s identity formation. Both the disorder and society allow for the confusion of self perception
- Patients start blaming themselves for having the disorder as they stop recognizing who they are becoming
- “If a society sincerely wishes to help the mentally ill live worthwhile lives, it needs to make such space for them.” -Sandy Jeffs

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Unfortunately the resources are very limited to help with the stigmatization against persons with schizophrenia.
- Blogs have been the place in which patients share their story and increase awareness
- Patients also write their memoirs in hopes of sharing what life with the disorder is like



<http://www.tpr.org/post/san-antonio-man-working-erase-stigma-schizophrenia>

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

- Providing a raw depiction of the disorder through outlets like Netflix and HBO
- Changing the ways schizophrenia is talked about: it is a neurological disorder and should be treated as such.
- Providing outlets for persons with schizophrenia to tell their story in their own words
- Helping with the increase of confidence levels for patients so they can have the determination to fight their symptoms

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