Depression Stigma*

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Abstract

Throughout history, the mentally ill have been discriminated against and stigmatized. In this paper, we provide a new measure of depression stigma perceptions and examine their consequences for help-seeking. First, we establish that our respondents on average overestimate the extent of stigma associated with depression. Second, we find that lowering perceived social stigma through an information intervention leads to a reduction in the demand for therapy, consistent with a decrease in the perceived need for therapy. Our findings shed light on the nuanced effects of information campaigns combating stigma.

Keywords: Depression, Stigma, Information, Psychotherapy.