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Politically Correct Labels and Schizophrenia: A Rose
by Any Other Name? FREE

David L. Penn, Ph.D. , Amy Nowlin-Drummond, B.A.

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Abstract

This study investigated the role of politically correct labels in emotional reactions, attributions regarding illness, behavioral intentions, and knowledge of schizophrenia symptoms. Two samples, undergraduate students and community members, were asked to rate a target individual on various scales using one of four labels varying in “political correctness”: consumer of mental health services, person with severe mental illness, person with schizophrenia, and schizophrenic. Results showed that the label “consumer of mental health services” was associated with less negative reactions and was considered to be reflective of a condition more likely to change relative to the other, less politically correct labels. However, this label did not result in greater behavioral intention to interact with persons with a psychiatric disorder. Furthermore, participants receiving this label identified fewer symptoms associated with *DSM-IV* criteria of schizophrenia and were more likely to attribute responsibility for the condition to the target person, relative to the other labels.

Keywords: [Stigma](#), [schizophrenia](#), [politically correct](#), [labeling](#), [severe mental illness](#)

Topic: [emotions](#), [mental disorders](#), [mental health services](#), [schizophrenia](#), [diagnostic and statistical manual](#), [community](#), [weight measurement scales](#), [college students](#)

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