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The Stigma Resistance Scale: A multi-sample validation of a new instrument to assess mental illness stigma resistance

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Abstract

Although associated with key recovery outcomes, stigma resistance remains under-studied largely due to limitations of existing measures. This study developed and validated a new measure of stigma resistance. Preliminary items, derived from qualitative interviews of people with lived experience, were pilot tested online with people self-reporting a mental illness diagnosis (*n*=489). Best performing items were selected, and the refined measure was administered to an independent sample of people with mental illness at two state mental health consumer recovery conferences (*n*=202). Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) guided by theory were used to test item fit, correlations between the refined stigma resistance measure and theoretically relevant measures were examined for validity, and test-retest correlations of a subsample were examined for stability. CFA demonstrated strong fit for a 5-factor model. The final 20-item measure demonstrated good internal consistency for each of the 5 subscales, adequate test-retest reliability at 3 weeks, and strong construct validity (i.e., positive associations with quality of life, recovery, and self-efficacy, and negative associations with overall symptoms, defeatist beliefs, and self-stigma). The new measure offers a more reliable and nuanced

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