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Psychological Disorders, Employment, and Discrimination

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Poster Presentation P32

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS, EMPLOYMENT, AND DISCRIMINATION

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People with psychological disorders experience stigma and discrimination, which can impact their ability to gain and maintain employment (Goldberg, Killeen, & O'Day, 2005). The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of disclosure of a severe mental disorder (bipolar disorder) on employability and person perception. In addition, the study assessed the impact of diversity education on hiring persons with severe mental disabilities. Participants listened to an interview of a student job applicant in one of three conditions (no disclosure, implicit disclosure, or explicit disclosure.) They rated the applicant on personal characteristics and likeability, as well as made employment recommendations. Next, participants read information about either mental disorders in the workplace (i.e. diversity education) or about work-study (i.e. control.) Finally, they re-evaluated the applicant on a variety of measures. We hypothesize that the level of disclosure will significantly affect impression formation, affective reactions, and employability. Further, we hypothesize that participants in the diversity education condition will display more tolerant attitudes than those in the control condition.