



## VIEWPOINT: Stigma and Human Rights Violations against Mental Patients

Amir Hossein Goudarzian

**Correspondence:** Amir Hossein Goudarzian

10.32598/tbsrj.v5i1.10523

Department of Psychiatric Nursing, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Tehran University of Medical Science, Tehran, Iran.

**Email:** amir\_sari@yahoo.com

**ORCID:** 0000-0002-3266-101X

**Published:** 01 Jun 2023

Stigma and human rights violations against people with mental disorders have been a persistent problem in our society for centuries. Despite the progress made in the field of mental health, there is still a long way to go in terms of eradicating the negative attitudes and beliefs that surround mental illness (1). Stigma is defined as a mark of disgrace or shame associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person. In the case of mental illness, stigma can manifest itself in many ways. People with mental disorders are often stereotyped as being dangerous, unpredictable, and unable to contribute to society. This stigma can lead to discrimination in employment, housing, and healthcare (2).

One of the most significant consequences of stigma is that it prevents people from seeking help when they need it. Many individuals with mental disorders are afraid to seek treatment because they fear being judged or ostracized by their peers. This fear can lead to delayed diagnosis and treatment, which can have serious consequences for their health and well-being (3).

In addition to stigma, people with mental disorders also face human rights violations on a regular basis (4). These violations can take many forms, including involuntary hospitalization, forced medication, and physical abuse. These practices are often justified under the guise of protecting public safety or promoting the well-being of the individual. However, these justifications do not excuse the violation of basic human rights. People with mental disorders have the right to be treated with dignity and respect,

just like any other member of society. They should not be subjected to involuntary treatment or forced medication without their consent. Furthermore, people with mental disorders should have access to high-quality healthcare services that meet their unique needs. This includes access to medication, therapy, and other forms of treatment that can help them manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life. It is essential that we work together as a society to address these issues and promote greater understanding and acceptance of mental illness (5). We must challenge negative attitudes and beliefs about mental illness wherever we encounter them and advocate for policies that protect the rights of people with mental disorders.

In conclusion, stigma and human rights violations against people with mental disorders are serious problems that require our attention as a society. By working together to promote greater understanding and acceptance of mental illness, we can create a more inclusive world where everyone has access to the care they need to live healthy lives.

## References

1. Lien Y-Y, Lin H-S, Lien Y-J, Tsai C-H, Wu T-T, Li H, et al. Challenging mental illness stigma in healthcare professionals and students: a systematic review and network meta-analysis. *Psychology & Health*. 2021;36(6):669-84.
2. Brower KJ. Professional stigma of mental health issues: physicians are both the cause and solution. *Academic medicine*.

2021;96(5):635.

3. Ring D, Lawn S. Stigma perpetuation at the interface of mental health care: a review to compare patient and clinician perspectives of stigma and borderline personality disorder. *Journal of Mental Health*. 2019:1-21.
4. Yin H, Wardenaar KJ, Xu G, Tian H, Schoevers RA. Mental health stigma and mental health knowledge in Chinese population: a cross-sectional study. *BMC psychiatry*. 2020;20(1):1-10.
5. Organization WH. Advocacy for mental health, disability and human rights: WHO QualityRights guidance module. 2019.