

Exploring the Relationship Between Perceived Stigma, Cognitive Distortions, Self-Esteem, and Quality of Life in Patients with Neurotic Disorders

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Abstract

The current research examines how perceived stigma and cognitive distortions and self-esteem impact the quality of life experienced by neurotic disorder patients. The psychological distress and functional impairment that people experience with anxiety disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorder and somatic symptom disorders is typical for these neurotic disorders. The study investigates how psychosocial elements of perceived stigma and maladaptive cognitive patterns affect self-esteem and general life quality within affected individuals. Perceived stigma creates social withdrawal patterns which decrease help-seeking behavior and increase emotional distress. The psychological distress which arises from cognitive distortions including catastrophizing and overgeneralization and negative self-labeling leads to self-worth decline. People with low self-esteem develop ineffective coping methods which result in low life satisfaction. The study predicts that all three variables will show strong connections because higher stigma and cognitive distortions will result in lower self-esteem and reduced quality of life. The research will use a descriptive correlational research design to study the relationships between various variables. The researchers will assess each variable through standardized psychological scales. The research results will demonstrate how neurotic disorders affect psychological functioning while showing which specific cognitive and social treatments lead to better mental health results and better life quality improvement.

Keywords

Perceived stigma, Cognitive distortions, Self-esteem, Quality of life, Neurotic disorders, Psychological distress, Mental health, Anxiety disorders.

1 Introduction

Mental health disorders have become a major global public health concern because they disrupt the emotional and cognitive and social abilities of affected individuals. Neurotic disorders constitute a group of widespread psychological disorders which manifest through excessive anxiety and emotional instability and harmful thought patterns. The people who experience these disorders undergo ongoing distress which prevents them from living normal lives and forming healthy relationships and achieving total wellness. Recent studies have focused on psychosocial elements which determine mental health results through examining three factors: perceived stigma and cognitive distortions and self-esteem and quality of life.

Perceived stigma refers to an individual's internalized sense of shame or discrimination due to their mental health condition. The condition causes people to withdraw from social situations while they avoid seeking medical assistance. Cognitive distortions describe thought patterns that create irrational beliefs which produce negative effects on both emotional states and behavioral responses. Psychological symptoms will become

worse because the distorted thoughts block people from using their coping skills. Self-esteem enables individuals to evaluate themselves whereas quality of life shows their complete contentment with physical and psychological and social aspects of life. The relationship between these variables must be understood because it serves as the foundation for creating successful psychological treatment methods. The study investigates how perceived stigma and cognitive distortions impact self-esteem and quality of life in neurotic disorder patients. The identification of these relationships enables mental health professionals to develop therapeutic methods that will improve patient results while building their psychological strength.

1.1 Background of the Study

The past few decades have increased the prevalence of mental health disorders especially for neurotic disorders which encompass generalized anxiety disorder and phobias and obsessive-compulsive disorder and somatic symptom disorders. These conditions become permanent medical conditions that severely disrupt an individual's ability to control their emotions and perform everyday tasks. Neurotic disorder patients experience ongoing psychosocial difficulties despite improvements in psychological treatment methods.

Perceived stigma represents a major treatment obstacle because it prevents people from accessing necessary medical care and achieving their recovery goals. Patients frequently experience social rejection which leads them to believe that others view them negatively, which results in worse psychological symptoms. The ongoing negative emotions and harmful behavior patterns result from emotional distress which activates cognitive distortion thinking patterns. The distorted thoughts create a cycle of helplessness and inadequacy which leads to uncontrollable mental health problems.

Self-esteem stands as a vital factor that determines mental health results. People with low self-esteem face a higher risk of developing stress symptoms which include anxiety and depression. The patients who endure severe psychological distress experience an extreme decrease in their overall quality of life.

1.2 Concept of Neurotic Disorders

Neurotic disorders represent a collection of mental health conditions which bring about enduring anxiety together with emotional pain and unfounded fears that do not result in psychotic break from reality. Neurotic disorders enable patients to know their condition but they face difficulties in handling their feelings and thoughts. The medical field recognizes these disorders through their classification which includes generalized anxiety disorder together with panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder and various phobias and somatic symptom disorders.

Neurotic disorders main symptom exists through severe and ongoing anxiety which exceeds actual life situations. People usually show symptoms through restlessness together with irritability and sleep problems and they also find it hard to focus. The symptoms of this condition create substantial obstacles which prevent people from completing their daily tasks while their productivity decreases.

Neurotic disorders emerge through the combined impacts of genetic elements together with psychological factors and environmental conditions. The three elements which lead to their emergence include life stressors and inherited traits and harmful cognitive patterns. Cognitive theories indicate that people with neurotic disorders tend to see situations through negative or distorted lenses which increases their anxiety levels.

1.3 Perceived Stigma and Mental Health

Perceived stigma exists when people comprehend and adopt negative societal views about mental health. The mental health experiences of people with psychological disorders show their most significant impact from this phenomenon which includes neurotic disorders. People who perceive high levels of stigma often feel ashamed of their condition and may avoid seeking professional help due to fear of judgment or discrimination.

People who experience stigma develop social isolation which decreases their self-esteem and increases their psychological distress. The situation creates obstacles which prevent people from following their treatment plans because they stop their therapy and medication to escape the mental illness label. People who experience perceived stigma develop increased stress levels which lead to heightened anxiety and emotional distress.

Stigma decreases self-worth which results in people experiencing both mental health issues and decreased life satisfaction. People who accept negative social views about themselves develop feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness. This not only affects their mental health but also their ability to function effectively in personal and professional settings.

1.4 Cognitive Distortions

Cognitive distortions represent irrational thought patterns which create biased mental processes that lead to incorrect perceptions of reality. The distorted thinking patterns which people develop show their existence in most psychological disorders but they appear more distinctly in neurotic disorder cases. The four major cognitive distortion types include catastrophizing, overgeneralization, black-and-white thinking, and personalization.

People use these thought patterns to develop wrong interpretations of situations through their tendency to create excessively negative or impossible assessments. People often do this when they believe every situation will end in the worst outcome or they think a single bad event defines their complete existence. The process of thinking shows how people create emotional disturbance which results in anxiety while it leads to a state of depression.

The cognitive mental health theories state that distorted thinking acts as the main factor which maintains psychological disorders in patients. The negative thoughts people experience create emotional distress that prevents them from handling life emergencies in an effective manner. The negative self-image which they produce throughout time results in a decline of self-worth.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) represents the most effective method for treating cognitive distortions through its various therapeutic approaches. The program enables people to discover their irrational thoughts which they must confront before replacing them with balanced rational thought patterns that will enhance their mental wellbeing and life quality.

1.5 Self-Esteem and Quality of Life

Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall assessment of their worth and value as a person. The emotional state of a person depends on their self-esteem level, while their psychological strength develops through this assessment of self-value. People who possess high self-esteem demonstrate improved coping abilities together

with positive life perspectives, which result in their increased happiness, while people with low self-esteem experience greater anxiety, depression, and stress.

Quality of life constitutes a comprehensive measure that evaluates physical health together with psychological well-being and social connections and general life contentment. Neurotic disorder patients experience both self-esteem and quality of life decline because their emotional distress and negative thought patterns persist. People who experience low self-esteem develop feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness, which results in decreased motivation and social engagement. The process restricts personal development and social contact, which results in negative effects on people's quality of life. People who improve their self-esteem experience better emotional stability and increased life contentment.

1.6 Need and Significance of the Study

- Researchers want to study how perceived stigma affects mental health outcomes which neurotic disorder patients experience.
- The research study will investigate how cognitive distortions affect psychological well-being.
- The research study will investigate how self-esteem affects life quality in people who have been affected.
- The research study will determine which psychological factors cause distress to neurotic patients.
- The research study will present evidence which helps in creating successful treatment methods.
- The research study will help mental health professionals create effective methods to reduce stigma.
- The research study will add new information about how cognitive and social elements affect mental health.
- The research study aims to enhance treatment methods which medical professionals use to treat neurotic disorders.

1.7 Objectives of the Study

- To assess the level of perceived stigma among patients with neurotic disorders
- To identify the presence and extent of cognitive distortions in patients
- To measure self-esteem levels among individuals with neurotic disorders
- To evaluate the quality of life of patients suffering from neurotic disorders
- To examine the relationship between perceived stigma and self-esteem
- To analyze the relationship between cognitive distortions and quality of life

2 Review of Literature

1. **Z. Ociskova and J. Prasko and D. Kamaradova and A. Grambal and K. Latalova and Z. Sigmundova conducted in 2014** investigates how people with neurotic spectrum disorders perceive themselves while showing their quality of life and their ability to handle stress. The study discovered

that people who experience higher self-stigmatization develop both dimensionality of life quality and their ability to manage stress which results in worse outcomes. People who used negative coping methods showed more psychological suffering. The study demonstrates that self-stigma functions as a major obstacle which prevents neurotic patients from reaching their full treatment potential and maintaining life satisfaction.

2. **K. Latalova and J. Prasko and D. Kamaradova and their colleagues conducted in 2014** investigates self-stigmatization and its psychological effects on people who have neurotic spectrum disorders. The study demonstrates that people who internalize social stigma which leads to decreased self-worth experience more emotional suffering and become less likely to seek medical help. The study found that self-stigma which people develop about themselves leads to worse mental health results which make recovery more difficult.
3. **Sharma, Akanksha; Sawant, Neena; Shah, Nalini (2018)** The research examined self-esteem and psychological disorders which affect psychiatric patients in India. The study found that low self-esteem leads to emotional instability and ineffective coping strategies which result in decreased life quality. The researchers demonstrated that self-esteem improvement serves as a fundamental requirement for mental health patients to achieve psychological recovery and complete well-being.
4. **Bandelow, Borwin & Michaelis, Sophie (2015)** The researchers studied how anxiety-related neurotic disorders affect people's ability to function and their overall life satisfaction. The study found that neurotic disorder patients experience ongoing psychological difficulties which decrease their ability to socialize and cause them significant emotional distress. The study showed that early psychological treatments can lead to better cognitive development and higher life satisfaction.
5. **Indian Study on Stigma and Quality of Life in Neurological Disorders (2014)** The research demonstrated that stigma negatively affects quality of life for patients who have neurological and psychiatric disorders in India. People who experienced higher stigma showed lower self-esteem and greater disability while their quality of life decreased. The study determined that mental health outcomes and psychosocial functioning improvements depend on reducing stigma.

3 Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The current research study uses descriptive and correlational research methods to establish its research framework. The research design enables researchers to assess how different psychological factors including perceived stigma and cognitive distortions and self-esteem and quality of life interact with each other without conducting experimental tests.

3.2. Population of the Study

The study population consists of patients who have received neurotic disorder diagnoses which include anxiety disorders and OCD and somatic symptom disorders and who visit psychiatric clinics or hospitals for treatment.

3.3. Sample and Sample Size

- Sample Size: 105 respondents
- Sampling Technique: Purposive sampling
- Inclusion criteria:
 - Patients who have been diagnosed with neurotic disorders
 - The age range for participants is between 18 and 50 years
 - The study includes both male and female participants.

3.4. Data Collection Method

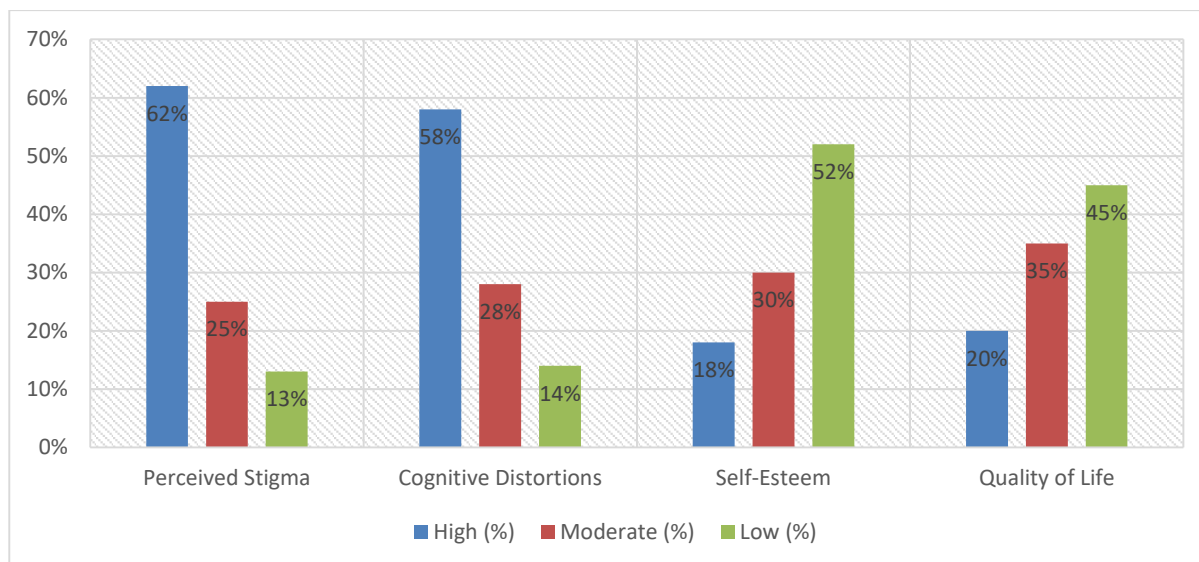
Researchers collected primary data through a structured questionnaire which included standardized psychological scales:

- Perceived Stigma Scale
- Cognitive Distortions Scale
- Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale)
- Quality of Life Scale (WHOQOL-BREF)

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Level of Psychological Variables among Patients (n = 105)

Variables	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)
Perceived Stigma	62%	25%	13%
Cognitive Distortions	58%	28%	14%
Self-Esteem	18%	30%	52%
Quality of Life	20%	35%	45%



Interpretation

The table shows that 62 of the patients experience high perceived stigma which indicates that neurotic disorder patients face both social and internalized stigma. The data shows that 58 of respondents exhibit cognitive distortions which indicate that they maintain persistent negative thinking patterns. The first group of patients shows low self-esteem because 52 of its members display both poor self-worth and self-image. The study found that 45 of participants displayed low quality of life which indicated their reduced psychological and social well-being. The evidence demonstrates that stigma together with cognitive distortions creates negative effects on both self-esteem and quality of life.

Table 2: Relationship Pattern between Variables

Relationship	Observed Trend (%)	Interpretation
High Stigma → Low Self-Esteem	68% association	Strong negative relationship
High Cognitive Distortion → Low QoL	64% association	Strong negative relationship
Low Self-Esteem → Poor Quality of Life	70% association	Very strong impact
High Stigma → High Cognitive Distortion	60% association	Moderate positive relationship

The table shows that all variables in the study exhibit strong connections to each other. The research shows that when people perceive stigma at high levels their self-esteem decreases by 68%. The research shows that cognitive distortions have a major impact on life quality which decreases by 64%. The study establishes that low self-esteem creates the strongest connection which leads to reduced life quality at a 70% rate. The study shows that people with mental health problems experience worse outcomes because of stigma and cognitive distortions.

5. Discussion

The study results demonstrate that patients with neurotic disorders experience high levels of perceived stigma together with cognitive distortions which hinder their self-esteem and quality of life. The results align with cognitive theories which state that negative thought patterns produce greater emotional distress.

Stigma functions as a social barrier which stops people from getting assistance while it makes them develop self-destructive thoughts. Cognitive distortions will make mental health conditions worse because they make people believe in false ideas. The combination of these elements causes self-esteem to decrease which results in people developing weak coping skills that lead to lower life satisfaction.

The research shows that neurotic patients achieve psychological well-being through their symptoms as well as their social and cognitive factors.

6 Conclusion

The research establishes a strong connection between perceived stigma and cognitive distortions and self-esteem and quality of life measurement among neurotic disorder patients. People with higher stigma and distorted thinking patterns experience diminished self-esteem and their quality of life decreases. The development of better mental health outcomes requires dedicated efforts to improve existing psychological support systems.

7. Suggestions

- Society should support the implementation of anti-stigma awareness programs.
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) serves as an effective method to diminish cognitive distortions.
- Clinical environments need to implement self-esteem enhancement programs as new treatment options.
- Family counseling should be provided to improve support systems.
- Healthcare professionals should promote early psychological intervention for neurotic patients.
- Community health programs should include mental health education as a fundamental component.
- Patients should receive their needed psychotherapy sessions on a regular basis.

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