Title: Changing Implicit and Explicit Attitudes Toward Addiction in Students in a Substance Abuse Counseling Psychology Masters Program: A Longitudinal Academic Review

Tracey Rogovin, Ph.D.
The New School for Social Research, New York 10011, USA

Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) cause significant distress to millions of Americans and considerable impact to society, and are also the most stigmatized category of Mental Illness. Stigma has been identified as the number one barrier to mental healthcare, and research suggests that Mental Health Professionals (MHPs) often share and perpetuate this negative bias. SUD education for MHPs may play a role in reducing SUD treatment stigma. This research is a longitudinal investigation into the effect of SUD education on implicit and explicit attitudes in the New School for Social Research's SUD Counseling/Psychology MA Program. This study assessed students during one academic year: Pre- and Post-SUD courses. Implicit attitudes toward addiction were assessed via the SC-IAT; explicit attitudes were assessed with the SAAS (general attitudes), DDQ (discrimination), and SDS (social distance). Academic progress was assessed via an Addictions Knowledge Test and the DDPPQ (clinical confidence). Explicit attitudes increased significantly positively, correlating negatively at Post with decreasing levels of discrimination and social distance. Knowledge and clinical confidence increased significantly, but were not related. Perceived clinical confidence and competence most strongly predicted positive change in all explicit attitudes. As acquired knowledge was not related to confidence or attitudes, factors responsible for positive change in these latter variables is undetermined. Education may have simply brought awareness to the conflict of stigma; or, perceived confidence about any object may induce positivity toward that object. Further research is needed to clarify the facets of education most effective in stigma reduction as well implicit attitude change.

Biography

Tracey Rogovin recently completed her Ph.D. in Cognitive, Social, and Developmental Psychology at the New School for Social Research in New York, NY. She is currently a full-time faculty member at CUNY Kingsborough Community College where she teaches courses in addiction and prepares students for certification as Substance Abuse Counselors in NY State. Her interest is in training a workforce of medical professionals who are highly effective at reducing the harmful effects of addiction and particularly sensitive to the profound stigma surrounding drug and alcohol use in American society.

Presenting author details:
Full Name: Tracey Rogovin
Contact Number: 516-353-8451
Email Address: tracey.rogovin@kbcc.cuny.edu
Session/Track: "Advanced Therapeutic Aspects for Addiction Recovery"/"Approaches for Addiction Treatment"
Category: Oral Presentation