

Abstract

The adverse impact of self-stigma on the psychological well-being of people with mental illness had been well-documented, which further impeded their recovery process. Although some intervention programs had been designed for reducing self-stigma of mental illness, their efficacy and effectiveness remained inconclusive. A brief intervention program based on cognitive-behavioral approach was designed in the present study to accommodate the needs of the people in the local context. One hundred and two participants from a large local community rehabilitation center were recruited. Among which 51 were in the treatment group and the other half with matched demographic characteristics were in the waitlist control group. Measures were taken at three time points at pre-assessment, post-assessment, and two-month follow-up. Implicit self-stigma measure was also used in the present study to capture the implicit-automatic cognitive process of self-stigma. Repeated measures analyses showed that stigma believability significantly reduced over the pre-assessment and two-month follow-up period, reflecting the advantage of using cognitive-behavioral approach in reducing self-stigma. Although other outcome variables including self-stigma, self-esteem, life satisfaction, recovery, and implicit self-stigma showed no significant results, the small to medium effect size of the changes suggested potential benefits to the participants. Future direction of self-stigma reduction was discussed.

