**Views About Treating Depression Across Four Treatment Modalities: Results from a Pilot Experiment**

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**BACKGROUND**

Americans’ views about mental health treatments are influenced by values, beliefs, & ethical concerns not fully understood. Uninformed beliefs & biases may inhibit acceptance of treatments—especially Psychiatric Electroceutical Interventions (PEIs) that treat psychiatric conditions with electrical stimuli.

In the developmental phase of our NIH-funded project, we conducted a pilot experiment to test new measurement instruments we will use in national surveys in later phases of our project.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**

How do views about clinical depression treatment vary across four treatment modalities:
- psychotherapy (Psy),
- selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs),
- transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), &
- deep brain stimulation (DBS)?

**EXPERIMENTAL METHODS**

- 4-condition between-subjects post-test only design
- Administered online via Qualtrics to US adults recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (N=225)
- Subjects randomly assigned to view 1 of 4 video vignettes about a depression treatment modality
- Four novel outcome variables:
  - 7-item Perceived Invasiveness Scale (α=.87)
  - 7-item Perceived Riskiness Scale (α=.87)
  - 6-item Perceived Influence on Self Scale (α=.91)
  - 5-item General Affect Scale (α=.76)
- Scale creation informed by principal components analysis & reliability analysis
- Research question answered with one-way ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey HSD

**MAIN RESULTS**

- Each measurement scale is unidimensional in principal components analysis
- Each measurement scale has a high Cronbach’s α
- Compared to subjects in psychotherapy condition, subjects in DBS condition perceived their respective treatment:
  - to be more invasive,
  - to be riskier,
  - to have a more negative influence on self, &
  - with more negative aeffect

**DISCUSSION**

- Results offer preliminary evidence of reliability & validity of four novel scales measuring views about clinical depression treatment
- DBS is viewed more negatively than is psychotherapy
- No social, demographic, political, or family history characteristic tested is related consistently to views about clinical depression treatments

**NEXT STEPS IN NIH-FUNDED PROJECT**

- Further refine measurement scales & create new ones, informed by results of additional pilot experiments & qualitative interviews
- Analyze qualitative interview data for deep understanding of stakeholders’ views of PEIs
- Conduct vignette experiments in standardized surveys administered to national samples of: psychiatrists, adults with clinically diagnosed depression, & adults (including caregivers) in the general public

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