

Research Priorities Set by People with OCD and OCD Researchers: Do the Commonalities Outweigh the Differences?

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For which topic were research priorities identified?

obsessive-compulsive disorder

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

Europe - Germany

Why was it conducted at all?

To our knowledge, there is no PI study specifically on the psychotherapy for obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and respective research priorities to date. Since there is still room for improvement in the psychotherapy for OCD, PI has the potential to contribute to a meaningful research agenda. Further, at least in Germany, PI into psychotherapy research is still in its infancy. Furthermore, current therapy is stretched to its limits as prominent emotions in OCD, such as disgust, tend to habituate more slowly than anxiety, which may impair the efficacy of therapy if not considered sufficiently. As outlined above, OCD differs from other anxiety disorders as it is still considered difficult to treat, due to other susceptibilities to change, through less appropriate care, and thus higher relapse rates and chronic trajectories.

What was the objective?

to spot future goals for research specifically on obsessive-compulsive disorder

What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 10 research questions

How long did the research prioritization take?

November 2017 - January 2019

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

survey

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: literature review: to derive research aims from current literature, top ten aims for future research extracted and rephrased as concise items. Step 2: survey among healthcare professionals: participants were asked to name and rank the five individually most important aims for OCD research in general and research on psychotherapy with OCD patients in particular, participants presented with the ten research aims extracted from literature and asked to rate the priority of each. Step 3: survey among patients: participants were asked to name and rank the five individually most important aims for psychotherapy research on OCD, participants presented with the ten research aims and asked to rate. Step 4: thematic analysis of open answers: six (patients) and five (professionals) relatively comparable categories emerged

Which stakeholders took part?

OCD professionals and patients. Participants: 63 patients, 8 professionals (mainly experienced psychologists and licensed psychotherapists practicing research, teaching and patient care).

How were stakeholders recruited?

National professionals in the field of OCD research and treatment were contacted via e-mail and asked for participation in the online survey, or asked for forwarding the invitation to other experts. Patients were invited online (via the German Society for Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders (DGZ), a self-help website and the department's website). Recruitment proceeded from January 2018 to January 2019. Only adult patients who indicated that their OCD diagnosis had been established by a physician or psychologist were included.

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders were mere participants of the research prioritization process; they were not actively involved in the process.