

Intersecting Identities: Personality Disorders and Sexual Orientation Among Incarcerated

Persons

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Background

The U.S. correctional system is the largest mental health institution in the nation, responsible for the care of approximately 2.2 million persons in 2018, approximately half of whom are diagnosed with a mental health condition (Al-Rousan et al., 2017; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2021a)

Rates of personality disorders (PDs) tend to be overrepresented among incarcerated populations (Sansone & Sansone, 2009; Eher et al., 2019).

There is preliminary evidence that sexual minorities may be disproportionately diagnosed with personality disorders (Russell et al., 2017; Rodriguez-Seijas et al., 2021).

Methods

Data: 2016 Survey of Prison Inmates (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2021b), a large, nationally representative sample of adults incarcerated in U.S. state and federal correctional facilities in 2016.

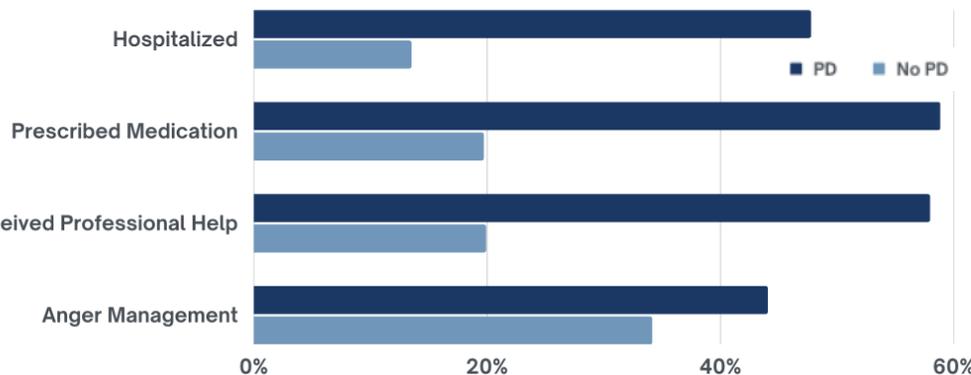
Participants: Total- 23,286; Participants with a PD diagnosis- 2,466.

Measures:

Diagnosed PD- assessed via self-report. Participants were asked, “Have you ever been told by a medical doctor or mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist or psychologist, that you had. . .”

Treatment Utilization+ Sexual Orientation- self report.

Treatment Utilization of Incarcerated Persons With/Without a PD



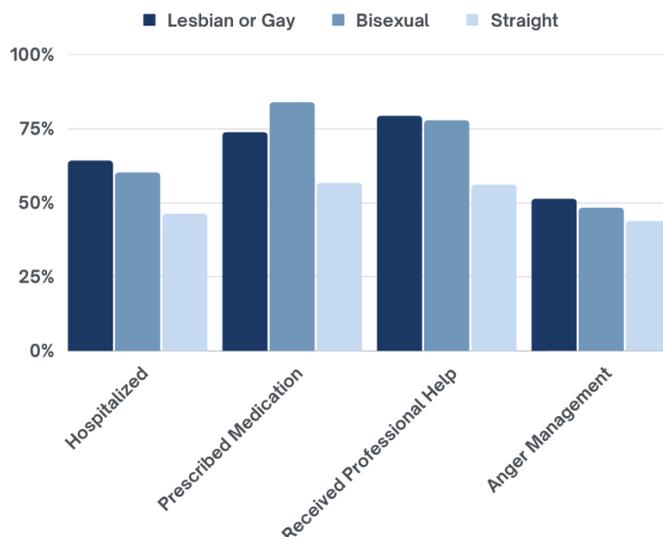
Results

Results indicated that treatment utilization was largely similar among persons with PDs regardless of sexual identity. Among individuals without a PD diagnosis, self-identifying as bisexual was associated elevated rates of treatment utilization.

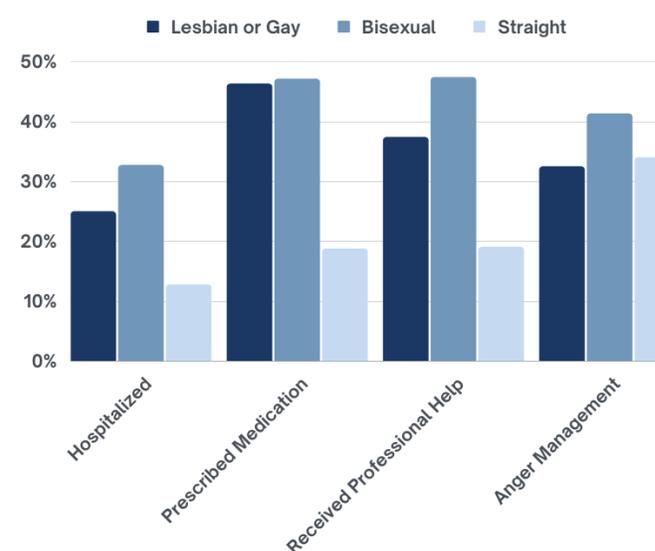
Clinical Implications

Findings highlight the salience of a personality disorder diagnosis and bisexual sexual identity as key correlates of psychiatric treatment utilization. Correctional facilities should therefore ensure availability and cultural appropriateness of interventions for these populations.

Treatment Utilization by Sexuality of Incarcerated Persons with a PD



Treatment Utilization by Sexuality of Incarcerated Persons with No PD



References: Al-Rousan, T., Rubenstein, L., Sieleni, B., Deol, H., & Wallace, R. B. (2017). Inside the nation’s largest mental health institution: A prevalence study in a state prison system. *BMC Public Health*, 17(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-017-4257-0>; Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2021a). *Key statistic data*. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/data/key-statistics>; Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2021b). *Survey of prison inmates, United States, 2016* [distributor]. Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. <https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR37692.v4>; Sansone, R. A., & Sansone, L. A. (2009). Borderline personality and criminality. *Psychiatry (Edgmont)*, 6(10), 16.; Eher, R., Rettenberger, M., & Turner, D. (2019). The prevalence of mental disorders in incarcerated contact sexual offenders. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 139(6), 572-581; Russell, T. D., Pocknell, V., & King, A. R. (2017). Lesbians and bisexual women and men have higher scores on the Personality Inventory for the DSM-5 (PID-5) than heterosexual counterparts. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 110, 119-124; Rodriguez-Seijas, C., Morgan, T. A., & Zimmerman, M. (2021). Is there a bias in the diagnosis of borderline personality disorder among lesbian, gay, and bisexual patients?. *Assessment*, 28(3), 724-738.