

A Study on Discrimination Experience of Mental Disabilities

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Summary of Study

- Interview Year and Month : 2017. 3. ~ 10.
- Interview Participant : 33 mentally disabled
- Subject of Analysis : 15 mentally disabled
- Interviewers and Interviewees are all mentally disabled themselves.

연구 참여자 특성

Study Participants	Gender	Age	Principal Diagnosis
P1	F	36	schizophrenia
P2	M	58	major depression
P3	M	32	bipolar disorder
P4	M	45	schizophrenia
P5	F	29	schizophrenia
P6	M	52	Schizophrenia
P7	M	42	Schizophrenia
P8	M	32	major depression
P9	M	31s	schizophrenia
P10	M	28	schizophrenia
P11	M	48	schizophrenia
P12	F	50	schizophrenia
P13	F	48	schizophrenia
P14	M	40	bipolar disorder
P15	F	34	schizophrenia

1. involuntary commitment

- When I was in my room, three people in black clothes were about to come in and grab me. I was barefoot. Then they tied me up and put me in an ambulance, and kick me in the face with army boots.(P7)
- As my illness got worse, my family pushed me into the car. Even my Mom ... It was so painful then. I felt so betrayed that I was forced to come in, and I thought "Why do they make me so painful?"(P1)
- If my condition suddenly gets worse, I'm always forced to go in the hospital. Even if I only needed a sleeping pills. they tried to force me into mental hospital. That makes me worse. I'm more afraid of being forced into a closed ward than getting visual hallucinations.(P13)

- My grandmother died, but they didn't let me go. So I threw a chair and I was tied up for a riot. For the first time, I was tied up my limbs. I shouted them I had to go to the toilet, so someone said "just shit in your clothes. You filled the diapers."(P14)
- From someday, I had to go through the discharge decision once every six months, and from then on they gave me the papers and asked me to sign them. I didn't even hear what the papers were and just signed them. When I signed, They would say, "You're discharged." Then the guards took me on a trip, and they put my things in the trunk. They took me back to the hospital after two days. In this way, I was in a mental hospital for eight or nine years.(P15)

2. Discrimination by Family

- My family doesn't talk about family matters to me, so I don't know who was dead ... My relatives don't know if I'm sick or not. My family would say "Because you are sick."(P15)
- My parents would say, "A person with mental illness is not even human. What human rights? People like you do never have human rights."(P10)
- My sister, four years younger than me, has never called me "brother". she says "Hey " or "hoy" . When I was very sick about 20 years old, she said, "I just want you to go out and die."(P3)

- Someday my family forced me into a mental hospital. From then on, they became more right than I was. Unconditionally, I am strange woman, they are normal ... I never do lie, but they always lie and then blame me. It's a typical "gas lighting", making me suspect myself. "I'm wrong, I'm weird." Then I think, "Am I really normal, am I weird?" It's going to be like that all the time. It's making me shrink.(P13)

3. Discrimination in Love and Marriage

- My dad offered me the terms of my marriage. He said, "If you're dating a man, you have to tell boy friend's family that you have mental illness and use medication. If you marry without telling, you get divorced when you get sick again, and you won't get alimony." I was completely brainwashed at that . So I thought, "I'm not going to get sick. "Oh, I have to date a man who has as much worse conditions than I have. It is the way to meet dad's terms." The people I envy most are those who marry and have babies even though they have mental illness.(P12)

- I had been dating a non-disabled boyfriend for over two years. At the beginning, I told parents they said. "If you want to keep dating, let's break the ties between parents and daughter." At any rate, we registered our marriage, but my parents refused to accept my husband. Right after marriage, I went to my parents' house with my husband, so they called the police.(P15)
- My parents often say that I would not marry but date. "How big is it to get married and have a child?" Actually, my parents are not against marriage, but they would say, "Why don't you do it with a woman without disabilities?"(P14)

4. discrimination in the Community

- When I was living in the group home, I went to the library in the Community Center every day. I read books there. Someday, a librarian called to group home manager and told, "Don't let him come to library." Users are uncomfortable ... After that I couldn't go there.(P2)
- I was a little embarrassed rather than just offended. When a subway staff says, "Show me a welfare card", I feel guilty ... Every time when I use the subway, I used to walk on eggshells. And when I meet a staff, I think "Why am I intimidated, Am I have a bad disease?"(P1)

5. Discrimination by Media

- If media report the terrible incidents by a mentally ill, you can look at the news comments like this. "The psychotics have to be put in." "They have to die." there are all kinds of words from "Don't let them wander outside" to "They must die."(P8)
- I saw a report that someone killed a man with knife. But the news said that he would take a psychotic test and take legal action according to the result. Then why do psychotic test come from here? If something happens, they suspect psychotics. This is a false perception.(P4).

- In my eyes, that criminal is not schizophrenic but he is unconditionally labeled schizophrenia. This is abuse of the disabled. It's a crime that accuses someone unjustly. Doctors, police, journalists, all do it casually. No one says it's wrong. Only our peers are raising questions, so we continue to be stressed out in our daily lives(P13).
- Every time I see a news related psychiatric patients, I feel a sense of self-injury, loss, suicidal impulse, and sometimes I have a shocking idea to leave this country. I feel more sick because it would seem that I can't solve this discrimination, this prejudice, this stigma by myself.(P4)

Conclusions

- **repressive psychiatric system --→ community mental health system or independent living paradigm**
- **regulation of isolation and compulsion that restrict the physical freedom of patients : 'guideline' --→ 'law'**
- **care of the mentally disabled : 'family' --→ 'national and local governments'**
- **change of perception of date and marriage of the mentally disabled**
- **change of media and civil society's attitude**

Thank You.