

Title: The influence of illicit drug use on prosocial economic behaviors: implications for treatment.

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Background:

Illicit drug use is responsible for an estimated 193 billion dollars in costs to the US economy. Substance dependent individuals represent a diverse group with unique health disparities requiring practitioners to develop novel cultural competencies for clinical effectiveness.

Methods:

Data collected from self-reported drug users, an often marginalized medically underserved group, was analyzed. The current investigation clarifies potential mechanisms for how individual economic behaviors can impact treatment outcomes (i.e., illicit drug use) in this population.

Outcomes:

The present study is particularly salient due to the lessons imparted regarding reaching financially impoverished populations for both empirical investigations as well as clinical interventions.

Specifically, this project capitalized on established scientific literature to demonstrate

- Use of positive reinforcement to increase behavior
- The validity of human motivation theories, particularly Maslow (1943)
- The positive effect of adopting culturally sensitive practices in community samples

Implications for Diversity and Cultural Competence:

Findings from the current investigation have several noteworthy implications. Considering the gender disparity found in rates of adverse economic behaviors in this sample clinicians should be aware of, and where possible address, these disparities to enhance treatment outcomes. In light of the findings regarding the role of substance abuse on adverse economic behaviors in this population, clinicians should attempt to increase financial well-being in order to improve treatment outcomes in this population. Finally, these results add to our understanding of the need for cultural competence by demonstrating that substance abuse disorders are not simply disorders of individuals but rather cultural/societal *and* individual disorders.