Microaggressions Experienced by Emerging Adults (16-25 years old) with Tourette Syndrome

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Background

Microaggressions
- Brief, mostly unintentional, commonplace daily indignities that communicate discriminatory slights and insults to marginalized groups
- Levels of microaggressions → Quality of life (QoL)

Emerging adults (16-25 years old)
- Emerging adults experience multiple changes → affect their QoL
- Emerging adults with Tourette Syndrome (TS):
  - Manifest motor/vocal tics → greater risk of experiencing discrimination
  - Experience additional challenges as a result of their tics
- Social stigma → Social acceptance

Methods

Participants
- 43 emerging adults with TS
- Ages ranged from 16 to 25 years old (M = 18.9; SD = 2.9)
- Gender: 20 female; 14 male; 6 non-binary; 3 other

Instruments
- Sociodemographic questionnaire
- Adult Tic Questionnaire
- Adapted version of Ableist Microaggressions Scale
- Subscales: Helplessness, Minimization, Denial of personhood, Otherization
- Pediatric QoL Inventory 4.0 – Young Adult Version

Discussion

- They experience microaggressions
  - Comparable to people living with visible disabilities (M = 1.7)
  - Minimization: fluctuating, perceived as being in control?
  - Vocal tic severity: harder to conceal or hide?
  - Visibility of the disability plays a critical role
- Consistent with literature: Discrimination against adults with TS → QoL
- Perceived microaggressions → QoL: Emotions, Social Relations and Health/Activities
  - Microaggressions are associated with Internalizing problems (anxiety, depression)
  - Social stigma is pervasive among adolescents with TS
  - Microaggressions can be detrimental to physical and psychological health
- Future directions: TS severity as a mediator between perceived microaggressions and QoL

References