

Cognitive Ability as a Factor in Engagement in Drug Abuse Treatment

This study examined correlates of high (HCA) and low (LCA) cognitive ability among substance dependent individuals who participated in an ongoing study of early engagement strategies. Participants (55% male; 98% African American), were administered the ASI, Shipley Institute of Living Scale, Beck Hopelessness scale, and TCU Motivation Scales at intake. Analyses were limited to 416 participants whose IQs fell within the upper and lower thirds of the sample. HCA participants reported more prior treatment episodes and longer durations of voluntary abstinence than LCA participants. There were no differences in retention, although HCA participants expressed significantly greater motivation and hopefulness at intake than LCA participants. Results indicate that clients with higher cognitive ability may present with a greater capacity to engage in treatment than individuals with lower cognitive ability.