

What & why?

Bipolar Disorder (BD)

- Severe mental health (MH) issue: extreme + changing mood
- Affects 4.4% of US population (0.1-4.4% worldwide) [1]



Personal recovery (PR)

- **Clinical recovery:** remove symptoms, restore functioning
- **Personal recovery:** living a satisfying, hopeful, contributing life even with limitations caused by symptoms [2]

Peer online support forums

- Source of information, support, social contacts
- PR research so far: interviews, focus groups – retrospective, researcher influenced
- Online posts: direct insights into current lived experience
- Include voices of people not in contact with services

Research question

What can online support forum posts reveal about the processes and experience of PR in BD in relation to the POETIC framework?

Talking about personal recovery in bipolar disorder: Text analysis of public peer online support forum posts

Who?

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Results

P	Purpose & meaning	Meaning of mental illness experiences	Paid/voluntary work or formal education	Quality of life	Meaningful life & social roles	Spirituality	Meaningful life & social goals	Rebuilding of life
O	Optimism & hope	Belief in possibility of recovery	Positive thinking & valuing success		Hope-inspiring relationships		Having dreams and aspirations	
E	Empowerment	Self-management & personal responsibility	Controversial role of medication		Control over life		POETIC: Conceptual framework for PR in BD [4]	
T	Tensions	Balancing acceptance with ambitions	Openness enables support, but also stigmatisation		Ambivalence around (hypo-)mania			
I	Identity	Rebuilding positive sense of self	Over-coming stigma		Dimensions of identity			
C	Connect-edness	Support from others	Relationships		Peer support and support groups		Being part of the community	
X	Not POETIC	Other	Symptoms		Genetics & family history		Diagnosis	
	Frequency	159	350	1000	1300	2000	4000	6500

So what?

Summary

- Innovative text analysis approach to study PR in BD
- POETIC framework captures online experiences well, only 8% of instances coded as "Not POETIC"
- Different frequency/salience of online topics versus interviews/focus groups (see →)
- Users discuss sensitive & contentious topics

Implications

- **Research:** POETIC framework validation
Apply CFA to other research questions
- **Practice:** more awareness of relevant PR issues in BD

Limitations

- PR terms list enabled but biased corpus construction
- Topic-like POETIC categories easier to capture with single terms than theme categories

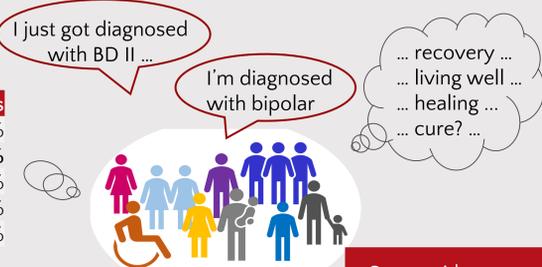
How?

Data

- Reddit user account identification via self-reported BD diagnosis statements
- Selected posts about PR in BD with an information retrieval approach

Subreddits with most posts in the dataset

Rank	Subreddit	users
1	AskReddit	65%
2	bipolar	42%
3	funny	39%
4	pics	39%
5	todayilearned	33%



Self-reported BD Reddit Dataset [3]
Posts: 21,407,595
Users: 19,685

In BD subreddit & mentions BD

Posts about BD

Score with query: PR terms (n=562)
PR score > 0.025
hope, forgive yourself, rebuild life, normalize, wife, marry, wellbeing, well-being, ...

PR-BD corpus:
Posts: 4,462
Users: 1,982
Words: 1,337,080

Reference corpus: Posts about BD but not PR
Posts: 25,197
Users: 6,075
Words: 4,700,834

Analysis approach Corpus framework analysis (CFA)

Corpus linguistics + qualitative framework analysis

- 1) Data familiarisation: read randomly sampled posts in threads
- 2) Generate **keywords**: significantly overused in PR-BD corpus vs. reference corpus of non-PR relevant posts (log likelihood, $p < 0.0001$)
- 3) POETIC framework analysis of 30 randomly sampled concordances per keyword

Left context (up to 20 words)	Key lemma	Right context	POETIC
I have hope for	recovery	for the first time since long ...	2.2
... she cannot be a part of my	recovery	anymore because she ...	1.2

- 4) Consider absences: PR terms that are not key lemmas

References

1. Merikangas KR, Jin R, He J, Kessler RC, Lee S, Sampson N a, et al. Prevalence and correlates of bipolar spectrum disorder in the world mental health survey initiative. Vol. 68, Archives of general psychiatry. 2011;68(3):241–51.
2. Anthony WA. Recovery from mental illness: the guiding vision of the mental health system in the 1990s. Vol. 16, Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal. 1993;16(4):11–23.
3. Jagfeld, G., Lobban, F., Rayson, P., & Jones, S. H. (2021). Understanding who uses Reddit: Profiling individuals with a self-reported bipolar disorder diagnosis. Proceedings of the Seventh Workshop on Computational Linguistics and Clinical Psychology: Improving Access at NAACL 2021.
4. Jagfeld, G., Lobban, F., Marshall, P., & Jones, S. H. (2021). Personal recovery in bipolar disorder: Systematic review and "best fit" framework synthesis of qualitative evidence – a POETIC adaptation of CHIME. Journal of Affective Disorders, 292, 375–385.

Ethical considerations

- Ethical approval by FHM Research Ethics Committee in May 2019
- Remove usernames, paraphrase quotes to protect users' anonymity
- Feedback from people with lived experience throughout project