An Exploration of How Multiple Identities Impact Help-Seeking Behaviors for College Students

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Abstract

Researchers have noted disparities in counseling center usage related to gender, socioeconomic status, and race/ethnicity. However, most research has neglected the combined effects of these three variables. How do multiple identities impact the help-seeking behaviors of college students? By studying a subsample of students who participated in the 2010 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) this study tested the proposition that a combination of race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, social support, depression/stress, and wellness factors impact help-seeking behaviors in a manner that differed across multiple identity categories for college students.

Overall, about 27% needed counseling services and 11% used counseling services when needed. This study found that multiple identities mattered when exploring college-student help-seeking behaviors. Within identity groups, there appeared to be more of a need for counseling services for middle-income and lower-income traditionally underrepresented females. In the logistic regression model, there were effects for race/ethnicity, social class, multiple identities and depression/stress on utilizing counseling verses not utilizing counseling when needed. Additionally, across all race/ethnicity by gender by socioeconomic status categories there was a trend of less use of counseling services as income levels dropped.

References


