



Mental Health Literacy in HBCU Students

Ashley Porchea

Department of Biology, Clafin University, Orangeburg, SC

Purpose of the Study

❑ This study aims to examine mental health knowledge and perceptions among college students attending HBCU's. Mental health issues have become a growing problem among college students. Mental health problems involve anxiety, depression, drug addiction, and stress. This method will help college students to continue to advance their knowledge and understandings of mental health.

Research Question

What is the knowledge of mental health among HBCU students?

Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that 1) Female students will have better mental health literacy than male students, 2) Older students will possess greater mental health literacy than younger students, and 3) Students who know someone diagnosed with a mental health issue will possess greater mental health literacy than students who do not know someone with a mental health issue.

Significance of the Study

❑ The significance of this study will benefit those working on mental health issues on college campuses.

Review of the Literature

❑ Armstrong and Young (2015) investigated person-centered delivery of mental health information to post-secondary students. The research focuses on any ongoing experience from mental well-being through severe and enduring mental illness affecting a person's overall emotional and psychological condition.

❑ Lauber *et al.* (2005) investigated mental health literacy in an educational elite and online survey among university students. The research focuses on the concept to determine whether a sample of university students to evaluate and address any symptoms of mental disorders such as depression or schizophrenia to reveal factors influencing correct recognition.

❑ Marcus and Westra (2012) investigated the mental health literacy in Canadian young adults and results of a National Survey. The research focuses on young adults in comparison to older adults groups demonstrated in mental health literacy.

❑ Mehrotra and others (2013) investigated lay meaning of mental health in urban Indian college youth insights for mental health. The research focuses on the understanding of lay in mental health using open and ended questions within the Indian setting or environment.

Methodology

❑ A pilot study was conducted on mental health literacy in HBCU students. The survey was distributed to 25 interns at Clafin University during the Summer of 2016. The data collected from the survey was coded in excel and was sent to IRB for approval. This approach allows me to conduct an opening investigation before committing to a complete study which can be very helpful if changes need to be made to the questionnaire. The final study of the mental health survey was completed by 88 participants ranges from ages of 18-60 in Fall of 2016.

❑ This study used an anonymous internet based survey that consists of three sections: A demographic section, perceptions of mental illness, and mental health questionnaire.

❑ The survey was distributed by email and social media and open to students attending HBCUs who are 18 years or older. The survey does not collect any identifying information. I will distribute via a secure survey website, Survey Monkey, by student email and social media inviting students attending HBCUs to complete a mental health survey.

Results

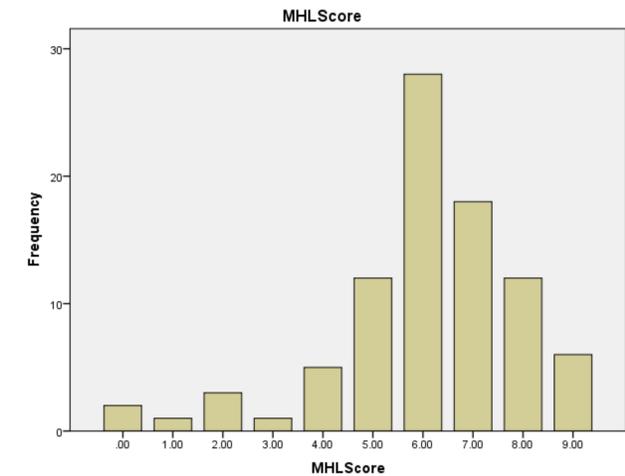
Table 1: Perceptions of Causation of Mental Illness

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
"Mental Illness is a Disease"	6%	19%	35%	35%	-
"Stress caused by religious persecution, harassment, or discrimination can cause a person to develop a mental illness."	3%	22%	46%	29%	-
"Mental Illness is usually inherited"	18%	36%	32%	8%	-
"Frequent Drug Use can Lead to Mental Illness"	5%	16%	53%	-	-
"Mental illness is caused by Chemical Imbalances in the brain"	1%	16%	56%	25%	-

Table 2: Mental Health Literacy Questions

	Yes	No	I don't Know
"Do you know anyone who has been diagnosed with a mental health issue?"	84%	8%	8%
"Do you think that you could recognize the early warning signs of mental health problem?"	49%	10%	41%
"People with mental illnesses are unpredictable and dangerous."	29%	40%	31%
"Mental health problems "and" Mental illness" mean the same thing."	22%	64%	15%

Results



Mental Health Literacy Score

Discussion

For further research, the research would design a mental health literacy program at HBCU's to promote mental health awareness, explore signs and symptoms of mental health conditions and highlight how and where to find more information on mental health. Colleges have the responsibility to educate their student population on the importance of mental health while also providing and informing students about the effective mental health services available to them. Mental health services on college campuses offer individual professional psychological counseling, peer-to-peer counseling, programs to educate students and bring awareness to mental health, and a multitude of other services. Well-rounded and effective mental health services can have a lifelong impact on students as well as benefits that reach far beyond the universities or college campus. A larger sample size may yield a clear relationship between age, gender, and mental health literacy.

References

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