

STRESSORS & MENTAL HEALTH AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS ON HBCU & PBI CAMPUSES

Lashanda Brumfield¹ and Mickel Sandifer²

¹Dillard University, School of Population & Health Sciences, New Orleans, LA, 70122, USA and

²Emory University Graduate School of Public Health Atlanta, GA, 30322, USA

Corresponding author: Lashanda Brumfield

Email: lbrumfield@dillard.edu

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34107/LWWJ5713120>

ABSTRACT

Introduction: As of 2019, the Annual Report of the Center for Collegiate Mental Health [2] reported that anxiety continues as the most common problem among students who completed the Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms, with 67.7% of 82,685 respondents participating in the report. Clinicians also reported that anxiety continues to be the most common diagnosis among students seeking services at on-campus counseling centers. Mental illness can affect students' motivation, concentration, social interactions, and college success [1]. The effects of the lockdown and stay-at-home orders have brought a negative impact on higher education. It has brought into focus the mental health of various affected populations and the many disparities facing them, as well as the need for more programming aimed to serve students at historically black universities. A recent review of virus outbreaks and pandemics documented stressors such as infection fears, frustration, boredom, inadequate supplies, inadequate information, financial loss, and stigma [5]. Much of the current literature on the psychological impacts of COVID-19 has emerged from the earliest hot spots in China [6,10,11]. Although several studies have assessed mental health issues during epidemics, most have focused on health workers, patients, children, and the general population [6,7]. Review results support a baseline need for future HBCU studies to support anticipated funding by way of applied grants, to better serve the disparities faced by the students on an HBUC & a PBI campus, as a result of Mental Illness.

Keywords: mental health disparities, mental health interventions, college students' health, collegiate mental health, college success, psychological impacts of COVID-19, anxiety in college students, depression in college students, HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges & Universities), studies, PBI (Predominantly Black Institutions), UNCF (United Negro College Fund)

INTRODUCTION

Mental health among students has often been focused on the secondary and high school student, until the recent overwhelming attention to the nation's mental health crisis that paved the way into the lens of the college student. Mental illness affects students' motivation, concentration, social interactions, and college success in many ways in a non-pandemic world. Many studies have revealed the post-pandemic effects to be greatly impactful, especially on the campuses of HBCUs & PBIs [3]. Researchers and campus staff/faculty are aware of the increased prevalence of mental health problems among college students today, but there has been limited access to baseline data and research to begin to combat the problem on HBCU campuses. Such limited access to data leads to an even greater alarming need, as the problems go unaddressed and alarming to untrained and overworked faculty. Messages of mental health wellness on the HBCU & PBI campus are often spoken across unsuccessful channels, resulting in miscommunication of information or just communication; without actually creating interventions needed to meet the many needs. Research on HBCU and PBI campuses is limited, and on many campuses non-existent. Such research should become a priority to directly pave the way for mentally healthier campuses. This highlights obvious disparities faced by the minority population that transfer onto HBCU and PBI campuses. This makes African American students a pivotal landscape of higher education