

## The Impact of COVID-19 Safety Measures on Mental Health Help-Seeking Behaviors in College Students

by Max C. Carey

Depression is prevalent in the United States, especially among college students, and research on health-related help-seeking behavior has shown great potential for improving the quality of their lives. During a global pandemic, college students have struggled with their academics, work and social relationship. Poor mental health management can lead to more severe consequences for them, because young adulthood is a critical stage of socialization in terms of professional career and interpersonal relationships. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on help-seeking behaviors in college students. The study hypothesizes that students with a lower mental health score are less likely to promote the help-seeking behaviors and that COVID-19 safety precautions may have had a significant negative effect on their intentions to seek help. Participants of this study include Alma College students who have been at full-time status since winter 2020. Data on demographics, depression and help-seeking behaviors are collected using the online survey. The study uses the ANOVA analysis with the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) to provisionally grade severity of depression symptoms and the General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (GHSQ) to assess intentions to seek help from different sources and for different problems. The results of this study would identify possible help sources that college students prefer, and therefore, benefits of each help source could be promoted to ensure those sources would be available on campus when college students became distressed. The use of mental health services could be encouraged by educating them about the effective mental health treatments that are available on campus. Addressing the consequences of mental health problems may also lead to an increase in appropriate concern about mental health problems and help-seeking behavior.