

Including Mental Wellness: A more holistic view of student success

Sylvia Washington
Joslynn Brandon
Bridgette Holmes
Allison BrckaLorenz



What brings you here today?

What are you pondering with regards to assessing students' mental wellness?

Who Are We?

- The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
 - Annual survey of first-year and senior student engagement at four-year institutions in the U.S. and Canada
 - Focuses on the amount of time and effort students put forth in their academic work, curricular and co-curricular participation, and perceptions of support from their institution
 - In 2019, over 530 institutions participated
 - Nearly 300,000 student respondents

So why are we talking about mental wellness?




Mental Wellness Set Overview



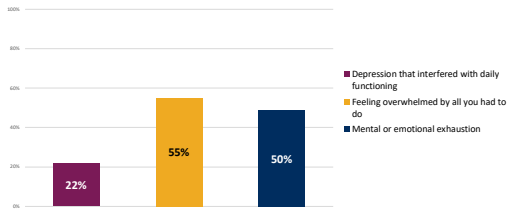
Mental Wellness Set Demographics

- 12,306 bachelor's degree-seeking students
- 57% White
- 11% multiracial
- 8% African American
- 8% Latinx
- 6% Asian
- 59% identified as Women
- 38% identified as Men
- 45% first generation
- 83% identified as straight
- 11% identified as LGBTQ+
- 35% 19 years or younger
- 36% 20-23 years old

During the current school year, about how often have you experienced the following?

- 
 Depression that interfered with daily functioning
- 
 Feeling overwhelmed by all you had to do
- 
 Mental or emotional exhaustion

Percentage of students who answered often/very often?



Overview of Framework



The framework used to guide this study combines sense of belonging and a Cultural Engaging Campus Environments (CECE) model.



Ethnic minorities have indicated, in previous studies, a sense of exclusion or "not belonging" on their campuses (Meeuwisse, Severiens, and Born, 2010) as an important part of mental health.



Current studies have shown how environmental influences impact social interactions with concerns of racial and cultural identity, belief systems, and historical socialization of student's mental wellness in a collegiate environment (Cuyjet and Meriwether, 2015).



We used this data to explore what significance race and gender play in students' ability to succeed, not just in academic ways, on college campuses by placing minority students' mental wellness on college campuses as the focal point.

Framework: Sense of Belonging



Tinto's (1993) found that students' who integrate academically and socially have a positive output for college success.

Several scholars argue that Tinto's theory emphasizes "student, rather than institutional, responsibility for change and adaptation" which "does not value culturally supportive alternatives to collegiate participation" (Johnson, D. R., Soldner, M., Leonard, J. B., Alvarez, P., Imelias, K. K., Rowlin-Kenyon, H. T., & Longersbeam, S. D., 2007, p. 525).



Hurtado and Carter (1997) develop the concept of sense of belonging which focused on exploring the holistic experiences of Latinx students and their integration into college spaces.

Students' argued that being valued and supported by their collegiate environments is reaffirming of their sense of belonging

Framework: Sense of Belonging

- Research shows that sense of belonging is related to academic progress, academic achievement and social acceptance (Morrow & Ackermann, 2012)
- Wolf-Wendel et al. (2009, p.425) consider that for students to develop a 'sense of belonging', they "must learn and adopt the norms of the campus culture."
 - Students of color find it difficult to disclose sensitive information to their faculty members
 - Support services (i.e. counseling) can help with the retention for students of color mental health
 - Wilson et al. (1997), who found that as the number of counselling sessions attended by a student increased, as did the likelihood of student retention (up to six sessions)

Framework: Culturally Engaging Campus Environments (CECE) Model



The CECE model explains "the ways in which campus environments shape the experiences and outcomes of diverse student populations in college".

the CECE model found that "college students' access to culturally engaging campus environments is positively correlated with individual influences" (e.g., sense of belonging, academic self-efficacy, motivation, expectation or intent to persist, and performance).



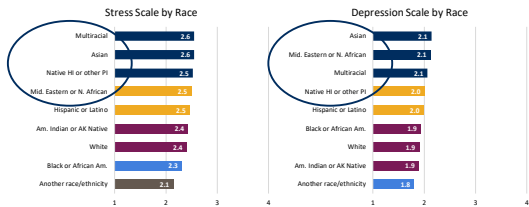
Two CECE framework indicators applicable to this study:

Holistic Support and Proactive Support, which emphasize the need for institutional leaders to be proactive in providing intentional methods of support for minority students' mental wellness. The model focus on how support systems respond to diverse students needs

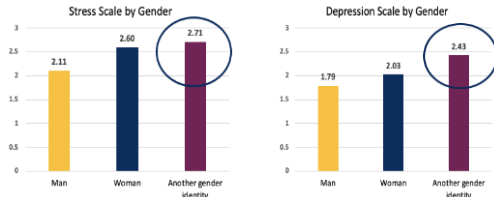
Which race/ethnicity group has the highest stress or depression level?

- BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN
- NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
- MULTIRACIAL
- ASIAN
- HISPANIC OR LANTIX
- AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE
- WHITE
- MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN
- ANOTHER RACE OR ETHNICITY

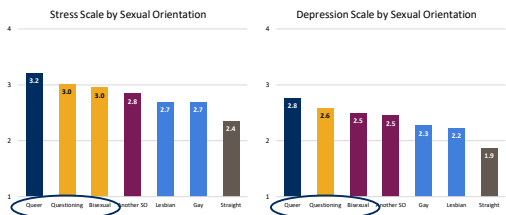
Stress and Depression By Race



Stress and Depression By Gender

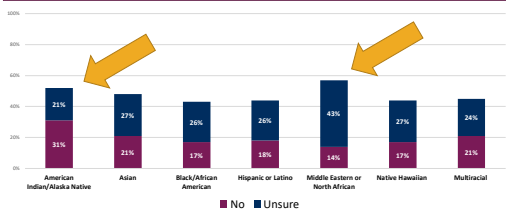


Stress and Depression By Sexual Identity

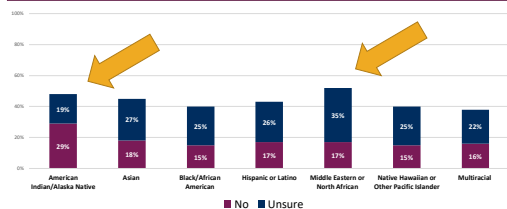


Would you know how to get help at your institution?

Would you know how to get help with stress at your institution?



Would you know how to get help with depression at your institution?

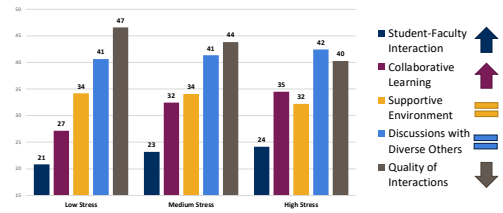


How does this relate to student engagement?

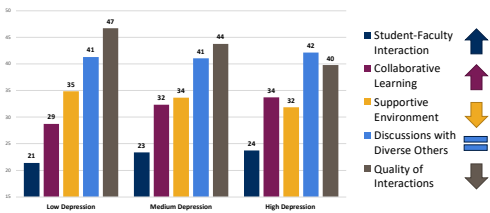
NSSE Engagement Indicators

- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Collaborative Learning
- Supportive Environment
- Discussion with Diverse Others
- Quality of Interactions

Stress and Engagement Level



Depression and Engagement Level



Which of these findings stood out the most to you?

Does your campus already have programs or initiatives in place for the identities that our study show are dealing with stress and depression the most?

How do we change unsure/no to yes?


What situations are you facing that we didn't cover?

What's one thing you can do when you get back to your campus to begin improving the mental wellness of your students?

So... Now What?

- What doesn't get measured, doesn't count!
- Conduct a Mental Wellness Audit/Assessment
- Dig deeper into the why







Final thoughts and questions?

Thanks for joining us!

Website: NSSE.indiana.edu
E-mail: NSSE@indiana.edu
Blog: NSSEsightings.indiana.edu

  @NSSEsurvey