



Exploring Academic, Financial, and Behavioral Barriers First-Year Students Face

Petey Sanchez

Advisor: Dr. Graham Hunter

Introduction

- The purpose of this study is to assess the barriers first-year college students experience and their mental health effects because of the barriers in play.
- **Research Question:** What barriers are impacting first-year students? How are first-year students navigating these barriers? How are college/universities playing a role into helping these barriers?

Methodology and Methods

- Google Survey with Likert scale questions.
- 85 first-year students
- 76 White Students, 2 Black & White Students, 2 Asian Students, 3 Black Students, and 1 Native American Student
- 89.2% are non-Hispanic/Latino
- 88.1% of students are not first-generation students, 9.5% of the students are.

Literature Review

Academic Barriers (Schneider, 2021)

- Students come to the University at different phases of life.
- Students feel uncomfortable by doing basic introductions because of the feeling of imposter syndrome.

Financial Barriers (Amour, 2020)

- Recognizes that a lot of times students do struggle with financial barriers.
- Those students who are more impacted by not having parents helping pay for college.
- Students who have financial assistance sometimes struggle to meet GPA requirements.

Behavioral Barriers (Stebleton & Soria, n.d.)

- Talk about behavioral barriers that impact students.
- COVID-19, students are beginning to show more bad behaviors because they have been at home.

Results:

Academic Barriers:

Average: 6.6
Median: 7

Financial Barriers:

Average: 6.9
Median: 7

Behavioral Barriers:

Average: 7.9
Median: 10

Discussion

Limitations:

- More time

Future Research:

- Interviews as well as a survey
- More diverse population of students

Future Practices:

- Looking at Mental Health effects as a result of the survey and interviews

References:

- Amour, M. S. (2020, July 15). *Barriers to higher education not just financial, but also emotional*.
- Schneider M. (1 June, 2021). *Cultural Capital and Social Networks*.
- Stebleton M., Soria K. (n/d). *Breaking Down Barriers: Academic Obstacles of First-Generation Students at Research Universities*