

Stigma of mental illness and attitudes toward psychological help seeking in Jordanian University students

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Background: Avoiding seeking professional help for psychological problems may have a devastating impact on the life of university students. Data about stigma toward mental illness and attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help (ATSPPH) in Arab university students are rare. This study aims to examine the correlates of ATSPPH in Jordanian university students.

Method: A cross sectional correlation design was used for this study. Using an online survey, a sample of 519 Jordanian university students completed measures of demographic and clinical variables, stigma toward mental illness and ATSPPH. Stigma toward mental illness was tested as a correlate of ATSPPH using a series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses, controlling for demographic and clinical variables.

Results: The results showed that Jordanian students have relatively less favorable ATSPPH than other study groups. Female gender, medically-related specialties, students with a previous history of receiving mental health counseling services and students who reported low scores on measures of stigma toward mental illness were more likely to have favorable ATSPPH. The stigma toward mental illness was the strongest correlate of ATSPPH in students and accounted for 13% additional variance above and beyond the 3% accounted for by all other independent variables.

Conclusions: Combating stigma toward mental illness in Arab students is an important step toward promoting their ATSPPH. There is a crucial need to provide professional and culturally competent psychological care for this population in particular.

Biography

Ahmad Hussein Rateb Rayan has completed his PhD from the University of Jordan. He is a Lecturer specialized in Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing. He has published more than 10 papers in reputed journals and has been serving as a Reviewer in 3 journals.

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