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CAMPUS RESOURCES

by
Dara Law

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Services and Leadership
College of Education
In partial fulfillment of the requirement
For the degree of
Master of Arts in Higher Education
at
Rowan University
April 15, 2021

Thesis Chair: Andrew Tinnin, Ed.D.

Committee Members:
Andrew Tinnin, Ed.D.
Dianna Dale, Ph.D.
Tyrone McCombs, Ph.D.

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Dedication

I want to dedicate this thesis to my parents. They have always supported me in everything I have done, and I cannot thank them enough for all that they do for me. Being an only child, my parents have always been such a huge part of my life and I look up to them both tremendously. I could not have made it this far without both of them by my side every step of the way. I hope one day to be half the person that they are. I am so very thankful to have such amazing parents.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my seminar professor Drew Tinnin. He has helped me improve my work and my writing throughout this semester. I also wanted to acknowledge my family, friends and my boyfriend. All of their love and support means the world to me. They all have such a huge impact in my life and have shaped me into the person I am today.

Abstract

Dara Law
CAMPUS RESOURCES
2020-2021
Andrew Tinnin, Ed.D.
Master of Arts in Higher Education

This study examined how aware first semester college students are about Rowan Thrive, and if students have utilized any of its well-being resources. The study's goal was to determine if students were using this program on campus. This research's main goal is to bring awareness to first year college students about the Rowan Thrive program. This will help students who are experiencing mental health issues. This study found that more students have not utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources during their first semester. The study found that those who did utilize Rowan Thrive campus resources, the three areas utilized were physical, social and community. This research also found that most people heard about Rowan Thrive from daily mail. Additionally, 88.89% of the study's respondents said that they are more willing to utilize Rowan Thrive campus resources in the future. Further research will need to be conducted to find out why some students have not utilized these resources.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Kapil (2019) found that “5 percent of adults (18 or older) experience a mental illness in any one year, equivalent to 43.8 million people,” (para. 2). These statistics show how serious and relevant mental health is in today’s society. People need helpful resources to make them more capable of coping with this health concern. Without the proper help/resources, it can make it very hard for people to live a happy and healthy lifestyle.

Mental health plays a crucial role in how people think and feel. Abdullah, Elias, and Ping (2011) found that college students are more likely to have mental health issues due to the stressors of college and coursework. The objective of this study is to find out if freshman students, who experience mental health issues, are aware of Rowan Thrive campus resources. The other objective is to find out which resources have freshman used during their first semester at Rowan

Rowan Thrive is a program that helps students with their emotional well-being along with many other dimensions of mental health. Rowan Thrive is a program that helps Rowan students “live according to your values, maximize your potential and find your best self” (Auleta, 2020, para. 3). There are six different dimensions that are focused on throughout the program. The dimensions being: physical, social, emotional, community, purpose, financial and resiliency (Auleta, 2020). Throughout this research, emotional well-being with the Rowan Thrive program will be discussed.

Problem Statement

Finding helpful resources can assist students now, and in the future, with issues that occur in regard to mental health. The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 focuses in more detail on how beneficial resources can be for students who experience mental health problems during their first year of college. Students should not have to deal with their mental health alone when there are resources that can help them. Students can find an outlet to help them with these problems that arise.

A study conducted by Andre, Williams, Schwartz, and Bullard (2017) found that campus outdoor recreation programs had a positive effect on students. The study found that benefits for students consisted of increased academic success, smoother transitions to college, better mental and physical health etc., (Andre et al., 2017). If students were to utilize campus resources, including recreation, this would help in adjusting to campus life and would bring students together and make for a brighter and happier college experience.

There are other resources for students to use that can be very beneficial to partake in. Some events offered on the Rowan Thrive website are Profs for Pups, Outdoor Yoga, Bad Art Night, Destress and Rest, and so much more (Ciaverella, 2020). These events can help students get involved on campus and allow first year college students to meet new people. Rowan hosts both in-person and virtual events for students. Brownell, and Swaner (2009) found that first year students and seniors in multiple campus programs/resources around campus had a greater outcome in personal growth and understanding. This research will examine and offer insight about resources, and gauge first-year students' awareness and utilization of resources.

Significance of this Problem/Research

The importance of this research is to examine students who utilize campus resources and if they have a better college experience. Resources have many beneficial effects as noted and further discussed in Chapter 2. This research can also help faculty and administrators to see how to better help their students live a healthier and happier lifestyle.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study is to discover the resources that first year college students can identify with during their first semester. The reason research is being conducted on this topic is to make faculty and staff more aware of students who do not currently utilize Rowan Thrive campus resources. This may inform faculty and staff how to better serve the students.

Assumptions and Limitations

The researcher assumes that all participants will complete the survey honestly about their experiences with campus resources. However, not all freshmen students will answer the study, and some may be hesitant to answer questions revolving around mental health and if they have utilized campus resources. A limitation in the study will be that the study will only be conducted with Rowan first year students. Therefore, the data will not be broadly generalizable because there is only a certain number of students participating and only one university involved in the study. Another limitation is the COVID 19 pandemic could impact participation in the study, and results should be viewed in light of student experiences during the health crisis.

Operational Definition of Important Terms

1. Mental Health – is the way in which a person feels physically and emotionally.
2. First Year College Students – are undergraduate students who are in their first year of college.
3. Campus Resources – these are places and events on campus that students can go to seek help.
4. Utilization – the way in which a person makes use of a specific resource (in this case).
5. Involvement- the way in which someone interacts and take interests in a specific activity or hobby.
6. Experience – how one perceives an event or circumstance.
7. Awareness – is a person’s perception/knowledge of a situation.

Research Questions

1. What Rowan Thrive campus resources can Rowan University freshman identify?
2. Which resources have they used in their first semester at Rowan University?

Overview of the Study

The first two chapters set the stage on the prior research that has been done. The final chapters give the reader a review of the findings and recommendations. Chapter II reviews research on topics related to campus resources, first year college students and mental health. Chapter III reviews the methodology and tools that will be used to conduct the study. The methodology section will consist of the context of the study, data procedures, data collection and data analysis. Quantitative research will be conducted with surveys using the Likert scale to find the results from the above listed questions.

Chapter IV will focus on what the study found from the data collected. Chapter V provides a synopsis and recommendations for more research that will need to be conducted in the future.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

A literature review acts as a summary of articles relative to a research topic. This review will discuss mental health issues experienced by students, first year college students, and campus resources. The reader will be able to recognize why it is so important that first year college students utilize resources offered on campus.

Mental Health Issues Experienced by Students

Doshi et al. (2015) addressed how first year students felt when entering medical school. Although first year medical students and first year college students are vastly different, they both experience many of the same feelings of anxiousness. The research found that most students experience some form of stress. The research utilized the Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS) and identified what disorder the student was experiencing. The scale consists of a forty-two questionnaire, which students would respond to, enabling the researchers to rate their level of mental health symptoms on a range basis. Anxiety and stress scores were shown to be vastly different between males and females. Females experienced more signs and symptoms of depression than males. Doshi et al. (2015) also found that students would benefit from programs being implemented to help ease their stress while in medical school. The limitation of this study was that the research was only conducted at one medical school. People entering medical school tend to feel anxious which is one of the signs that occur when experiencing mental health issues.

In Ethiopia, Gerensea et al. (2017) researched the risk factors and protective factors for first year students and how the students adjusted to said risk factors, which

consisted of psychiatric medication, fearful avoidant attachment, and anxious preoccupied attachment. The protective factors included resilience, academic self-efficacy, and optimism. These risk factors play a common role with anxiety, depression, and suicide. The results of the study showed that students did not feel the risk factors listed above had an impact on their experience once they adjusted to college life (Gerense et al., 2017). A recommendation from the researchers was that psychologists on campus must become aware of the protective factors in order to make first year college students adapt more effectively. This study is relevant to first year college students because this shows how all first-year students experience some form of mental health issues with a new environment.

Hogan (2018) implemented a study on former and current foster students going from youth to adulthood, and how their growth as a foster child could affect their mental health and academic achievement. Researchers studied students from their last year of high school up until the end of their first year at college. The results showed that there was a small decline in mental health (Hogan, 2018). They also showed that foster youth students who had more mental health problems did not perform well in their first academic year at their college (Hogan, 2018). Mental health plays a large part in the overall well-being of students and how they function both in school and in their daily lives.

Wyatt et al. (2017) examined mental health and academic success among first year college students. The literature discussed how mental health could be impactful for first year students and can go on to affect them throughout their college years. The study focused on the students' academic performance, when they were suffering with mental

health issues. Wyatt et al. (2017) found that first year students experience mental health problems, with thoughts of suicide and thoughts/actions of harming themselves. The recommendation from this research suggested that there needs to be programs to help these students and to prepare students for their transition to college. Programs would help students come together from all different walks of life to share their stories or their stress to make a happy and comfortable environment for all.

All of these articles address mental health disorders and factors that play into how students felt. Doshi et al. (2015) focused on medical school and how both males and females coped during their time at school. This study paid more attention to detailing the symptoms experienced by the students. Gerensea et al. (2017) focused on students' adjustment and the risk and protective factors that go along with it. This study showed that the students did not feel at risk once they adjusted. Hogan (2018) conducted a study for students from foster youth and the relationship between mental health and academic achievement when these students go on to attend a four-year university. Wyatt et al. (2017) focused on mental health and academic success and how mental health can affect a students' academic performance. Although some of these articles discussed medical student's, these articles all shed light on mental health which may be applied for all students.

First Year College Students

First year college students' needs are different than most college students, because they are new to college and it is an unfamiliar place at first. Clark (2005) conducted a study about first year college students. The group of students who participated in the study were first year students in an urban setting, commuters and attended a four-year

institution (Clark, 2005). The study consisted of finding out how students reacted to challenges faced, and to influences (Clark, 2005). The results found that the factors of challenges and influences varied from unfavorable to favorable. There were challenges and influences experienced by the students that varied from unfavorable to favorable. There needs to be further research to find out more answers on this topic.

Bojuwoye (2002) conducted a study in South Africa to examine first year college students' stressful experiences from certain universities in South Africa. The study's goal was to find out how students college experience was viewed. Researchers also want to find which events or conditions that are considered to be stressful for the students. A questionnaire was distributed to the students to examine the data. The results found that the most stressful events were financial issues, demands from the university, and the universities' administrative process (Bojuwoye, 2002).

Krumwei- Mancuso et al. (2013) conducted a study about psychosocial factors of first year college student's success rate. 579 first year college students. The results found that academic self-efficacy and organization played a big part in first semester students GPA. Other variables related to psychosocial factors were involvement in activities, contentment with academics and stress/management skills (Krumwei-Mancuso et al., 2013).

Dvořáková et al. (2017) studied the importance of being aware of mindfulness and ways to aid students with mental health issues. For the study, students participated in a mindfulness program, so researchers could see the outcome and effect it had on a students' current mental health state. The type of study that was conducted was a pilot study. The results from the study showed that students who participated in the study had a

positive increase in their overall view of life and a huge decrease in depression and anxiety (Dvořáková et al., 2017). This research helped students see how impactful participating in a club or activity can be to their overall well-being and help them live a happier and healthier life.

A United States article published by Reid et al. (2016) examined first year college students and their association with a history of bullying. The mental health issues experienced by the participants consisted of anxiety and depression. The participants consisted of 1474 first year college students from large universities around the USA. The results found that participants who experienced childhood bullying anxiety and depression in their adult life. Family support for these students showed an overall positive impact on the students' mental health (Reid et al. 2016).

Villate et al. (2017) examined a group of first year college students and depression. The factors that could have an effect on the symptoms of depression are personal, family-related, social, and academic. A questionnaire distributed to first year college students with eight key areas that were anxiety, dysfunctional thoughts regarding success, a lack of emotional adjustment to college, being female, receiving little warmth or autonomy from one's mother or from one's father, and being attracted to members of the same or both sexes. Villate et al. (2017) recommended that in order to resolve mental health problem, one must take a well-rounded look at all the factors. This study suggested that these students would also benefit from seeking out campus resources.

All of these studies were conducted with first year college students. Dvořáková et al. (2017) focused on first year students becoming more aware of ways to be mindful. Reid et al. (2016) examined first year college students with a history of childhood.

bullying. Villate et al. (2017) focused on student's mental health in regard to depression. The results found that there could be numerous factors that could affect student's even before the student arrives on campus. Clark (2005) conducted a study with first year college students examining how students were affected by challenges faced and by influences. Bojuwoye (2002) examined how first year college students' experiences at college and what experiences were considered to be stressful. Krumwei-Mancuso et al (2013) conducted a study to find out first year college students success rate with psychosocial factors. These studies had a different focus but showed different ways first year college students can be negatively affected, whether it be from stress, anxiety, alcohol use, depression, etc.

Campus Resources

Neal and Heppner (1986) conducted a study with 308 undergraduate students. The study's goal was to understand awareness and utilization of resources on their campus. The study found that students who received self-appraisal and were considered not to be problem solvers were not as aware of campus resources (Neal & Heppner, 1986). These students also were not happy with the campus resources and used less resources on their college campus (Neal & Heppner ,1986). Students lack awareness or lack of satisfaction with these resources can lead to students continuing to suffer from mental health problems.

McMahon and Stepleton (2018) examined a campus resource for students who have experienced sexual violence. Sexual violence has become more prevalent across many campuses. The research discussed how there is a high percentage of students who are not aware of resources on campus to help students who experience issues. The article

discussed many different ways to bring awareness to campus resources for sexual violence. More research needs to be conducted to take a deeper look into this problem.

Campus resources serve as a huge asset for students. The knowledge and exposure to resources can also provide valuable information about specific matters. Neal and Heppner (1986) found that exposure can help bring students to available resources on campus. Examples of exposure are having posters displayed or having an event where all campus resources can gather, which allows students to familiarize themselves with the help they need. McMahon and Stepleton (2018) found that the literature did not answer the question about whether multiple exposures to information about resources affects the students awareness. They found that there is a gap in the literature and more research must be conducted.

Banjong (2016) conducted a study about multiple different factors in regard to international students. Those factors consisted of financial challenges, English proficiencies, homesickness, and accessed students use of campus resources. Some of these resources on campus were the international center, counseling center, and the student success center. The results from this showed that students who had difficulty with the language barrier took advantage of the writing and student success centers. The students who were experiencing financial and mental health problems sought help from the counseling center.

Lafferty (2015) conducted a study to find out if a first-year seminar class will increase student's engagement academically, enhance their attachment to the college and encourage students to utilize campus resources. The results found that students benefited with each category overall. African American students were found to have greater

success than Caucasian students. The older students and full-time students also found greater benefits as oppose to part time and younger students. The recommendation for this study is that a future longitudinal study is needed for further analysis.

Hussain et al. (2013) conducted a study that examined the students' physical and mental health issues and how accessible it is for first year students to find the necessary resources. The students had to participate in a test which was made up of 64 questions. Hussain et al. (2013) found that most students, overall, reported that they were in good shape physically. The students who reported problems with physical health reported feeling tired and had headaches which are symptoms that students can experience when having bad mental health. Mental health can lead people to feel a certain way either physically or mentally and can also lead people to try drugs. (Hussain et al., 2013).

All of these articles addressed campus resources and how students need to become more aware of these resources to have a happier and healthier college experience. Neal and Heppner (1986) focused on students' awareness and utilization of resources on campus. This study took a closer look at students who were considered to be self-appraised and not problem solvers. McMahon and Stepleton (2018) focused on resources for students on campus who experienced sexual assault/violence. This took a closer look at resources that are available for students who have experienced sexual assault. Banjong's (2016) study focused on international students and their awareness of programs that are offered on campus to help them succeed. Lafferty (2015) conducted a study about first year college students and if taking a seminar class their first semester was effective in academic achievement and utilizing resources on campus. Hussain et al. (2013) examined first year college students mental and physical health as it pertains to

the accessibility of first year college students being aware of resources offered. These articles main focus is campus resources and examining students to see if these resources are being utilized.

Conclusion

Campus resources can help first year college students with their mental health and well-being. Sometimes students are not aware of resources offered on campus that can benefit them along with getting them involved on campus. During students first semester of college, many challenges can be going on between achieving good grades, establishing friendships, becoming independent and keeping their mental health in check. These challenges can create a lot of barriers for students since there is so much going on in their new environment. One thing a university can do to help their students is make them aware of the resources offered on campus. The articles discussed in this chapter shed light on first year college students, mental health and campus resources.

Significantly, Villate et al. (2017) found that there was a growing number of first year students who experience mental health problems in different forms, which can lead to students having low grades and not producing their best work. There are other factors that can play into the mental health experienced by students, such students already having mental health problems before attending the university or students that develop these disorders over time while they are at school. Other challenges that can lead to poor mental health are learning how to become independent and finding available resources on campus to help these students. College is much different than high school, and some students cannot handle the stresses of being on their own.

Lafferty (2015) found that students who had to take a seminar class their first semester were more engaged on campus and were aware of campus resources. This makes for a better college experience and campus life. Banjong (2016) also found that international students who were aware of college resources took advantage of many campus resources. There are also many fun things for students to do while in college, in addition to making many friends and memories to last a lifetime. Having all of these positive resources and support, almost makes college the perfect place to start implementing mental health programs. The infrastructure is practically already set up. If colleges were to look at this research on how many students are experiencing mental health problems and take action to make a difference with students utilizing resources on college campuses to better help them.

There are solutions that researchers have recommended for the students that can help them improve their college experience and reduce their mental health issues. Hussain et al. (2013) focused on how students can join clubs, or faculty can take the initiative to create new programs on campus to assure that students are feeling better and living a happier, healthier life. Students need help with finding a way to relax and get in a productive mindset that allows them to reach their maximum potential. College should be a place to grow and become better, not the other way around.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Context of the Study

The goal of this research is to examine how familiar Rowan freshman are with Rowan Thrive campus resources and if they have taken advantage of these resources. This will allow faculty to adapt and make changes that provide for a better environment for students.

Surveys can help all learners, and in particular visual learners once the numbers are broken down; through survey data produced in this study, people will be able to understand how first-year students are, or are not affected by mental health, and be then determine what they believe is the best way to improve the student's overall quality of life during their college experience. Although Rowan University is the only school that will be examined throughout this study, this study can still have a positive impact on the student body at Rowan by allowing them to see they are not alone with experiencing mental health issues and it could allow faculty and staff to determine if their programs as implemented are beneficial to the students.

Rowan University was founded in 1923 and is ranked 166 among national universities as a public coed university (U.S. News, 2020). Rowan University is a mid-size college, located in the southern part of New Jersey with three campuses. The main campus is located in Glassboro, NJ, while the other two campuses are located in Camden and Stratford, New Jersey.

For this study, undergraduate students will be the target audience with a focus on first semester, freshman students. First-year college students have a lot they must adjust

to, whether it be moving on campus and adjusting to having a roommate and being on their own, all the way to having to adapt to the college atmosphere, since it is much different than high school.

Research Questions

The research questions that will be addressed are as follows:

1. What Rowan Thrive campus resources can Rowan University freshman identify with?
2. Which resources have freshman used in their first semester at Rowan University?

Population and Sampling

Undergraduate students at Rowan University make up 16,120 students out of the total student number being 19,465 students. The target population as mentioned earlier will include first-year college students at Rowan University. Random sampling will be conducted to pick 500 freshmen to participate in the online survey. The survey will be conducted in February 2021. This will allow time to evaluate and fully analyze the survey by the end of the spring term.

The survey will be conducted using Qualtrics. The selected survey participants will access the survey through a link that will be sent to their Rowan email account (see Appendix A). This survey will be distributed in the spring 2021 semester and will focus on students' experiences from their first semester (fall 2020). This study will be voluntary, and students' answers will remain anonymous. The survey will take approximately eight minutes to complete. Students will have two weeks to complete this survey with two follow up emails sent as reminders to complete the survey.

Personal Statement

The study's goal is to find out if students are aware of resources offered by Rowan Thrive. This will allow faculty and staff to better serve first-year college students and to find out if faculty and staff can provide more ways to make students aware of programs and counselors on campus. Finding out about students' awareness of resources regarding mental health will also help Rowan Thrive how it can be more engaged with students and bring awareness to Rowan University. As practitioners, we can make a difference in helping first-year college students and students in general by helping them experience a positive college experience both mentally and physically by bringing awareness to campus resources like the Rowan Thrive program.

Research Design and Data Collection

Participants will be asked to read and check the boxes if they are over 18 and wish to participate. This can be found in the Appendix B section. There will be two separate sections. The first section will consist of multiple-choice questions and the second section will consist of questions using the Likert scale. The reliability of the survey has been assessed by retested/pilot testing the survey in an effort to receive the most accurate data. The validity of the survey has been assessed by making sure to ask nonbiased questions and to make sure to address the main research questions.

This study will utilize quantitative research which has an "objective to obtain a single truth, or least reality with known probabilities" (McMillian, 2016 p.11). As mentioned, prior, the research will be conducted through an online survey of students at Rowan University. The survey will include Likert Scale questions and multiple-choice questions. The Likert Scale questions are designed on a seven-point agree or disagree

scale (McMillian, 2016). The multiple-choice questions will allow students to provide a clearer picture of how to improve awareness of programs that can help students who experience mental health problems.

The non-probability sampling fits the best for this particular study (McCombes, 2019). This sampling allows for a more accurate representation of the number of students who have utilized campus resources. Non-probability sampling shows results for the number of students who take advantage of the programs offered, and if they are aware of programs offered to help them (McCombes, 2019). First-year students will also be rated to see how often/ if at all they have utilized these resources. The data will allow people to see how many first-year college students are aware of the Rowan Thrive campus resources. Nonexperimental research will be utilized, and this cannot have a direct effect on changing the results of the study that will be conducted (McMillian, 2016).

Data Analysis

The data will be prepared for analysis by removing any incomplete results and making sure all responses are complete. There will be a software tool, SPSS, utilized to help examine the data. SPSS is a tool used to analyze large samples using various statistical measures (McMillian, 2016). Frequency tables will be used to help visualize and see the results from students' answers. The frequency tables will allow for a more detailed and accuracy focused approach. The numbers from the Likert Scale will show the level of agreeance students have regarding various factors related to utilizing campus resources, allowing students to rate their experience or feelings based on a scale that goes from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This will gauge how much students agree or disagree with the statement/question provided.

Chapter 4

Findings

Profile of the Sample

An email with a link to the survey was sent to 500 first year Rowan students to obtain a random sample of study participants. In the email, it described what the purpose of the study was and why these students were asked to participate in the survey. The survey was sent out three times and was distributed using Qualtrics. The survey yielded a response rate of 4.8%. There were twenty-four students who participated in the study. There were no partial responses recorded.

Table 1 shows the age of each participant along with their gender and ethnicity. For age, twenty-three/95.8% participants reported that they are eighteen to nineteen years of age and one/4.1% of the students reported that they are twenty-four or older. No one reported being ages of twenty to twenty-three. For gender, nine/37.5% participants reported that they are male and fifteen/62.5% reported that they are female. No one chose not to report or chose other or non-binary. For ethnicity, three/12.5% participants reported that they are African American, four/16.67% reported their ethnicity as Asian, fifteen/62.50% reported that they are Caucasian, and two/8.33% reported that they are Hispanic/Latino. No one chose Native American, prefer not to disclose or other.

Table 1*Demographics*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
<i>Age</i>		
18-19	23	95.8
20-21	0	0
22-23	0	0
24 or older	1	4.17
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	9	37.5
Female	15	62.5
Non-Binary	0	0
Other	0	0
I choose not to disclose.	0	0
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
African American	3	12.5
Asian	4	16.67
Caucasian	15	62.50
Hispanic/Latino	2	8.33
Native American	0	0
Other	0	0
I choose not to disclose	0	0

The next question in the survey asked where each student lives. The results found that ten/41.67% lived on campus, eight/33.33% lived off campus and six/23% students commuted. Table 2 goes into greater detail as seen below.

Table 2

Living Status

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
On Campus	10	41.67
Off Campus	8	33.33
Commute	6	23

Analysis of the Data

Research Question 1

Which Rowan Thrive campus resources can Rowan freshman identify? Results showed that participants who have utilized Rowan Thrive Campus resources can identify with one or more resources. There are six aspects of Rowan Thrive. They are physical, social, emotional, community, purpose and financial. Seven/20.59% of the participants reported that they have utilized and can identify with physical, five/14.71% of the students can identify and utilized social, two/5.88% of the participants can identify and utilized emotional, six/17.65% of the students can identify and have utilized with community, two/5.88% of the students can identify and have utilized purpose and three/8.82% of the participants can identify and have utilized financial. Nine/26.47% of the students reported that they have never utilized these resources and five/14.71% of the students did not respond to this question.

Table 3*Utilization of the 6 Areas of Rowan Thrive*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
If you answered yes, which Rowan Thrive campus resource have you utilized?		
Physical	7	20.59
Social	5	14.71
Emotional	2	5.88
Community	6	17.65
Purpose	2	5.88
Financial	3	8.82
I have never utilized Rowan Thrive Campus Resources	9	26.47

Another research question asked “If yes, how did you hear about Rowan Thrive? Three/18.75% of the participants reported they heard from social media, two/12.50% of the participants said postings on campus, six/37.5% reported they heard from daily mail, and five/31.25% reported they heard from other. Table 4 below gives you a clearer picture of the data. Six of the students answered that they have not utilized Rowan Thrive Campus Resources said they have heard it through either daily mail, social media, or postings on campus. Three of the students said they heard of it through daily mail. Two of the students said that they have heard of it through social media and one student selected postings on campus.

Table 4*How Students Have Heard About Rowan Thrive*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
If yes, how did you hear about Rowan Thrive?		
Social Media	3	18.75
Postings on Campus	2	12.50
Daily Mail	6	37.50
Other	5	31.25

Research Question 2

Which resources have they used during their first semester? Results showed that ten/41.67% of the students have utilized Rowan Thrive well-being resources and fourteen/58.33% students have not utilized Rowan Thrive well-being resources. Table 5 shows in detail the results from the survey.

Table 5*Utilization of Campus Resources*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
Have you utilized any Rowan Thrive well-being Resources?		
Yes	10	41.67
No	14	58.33

Participants were asked to use the Likert Scale for the next two questions. The first Likert Scale question asked, “During my first semester, I have experienced some or all of the following symptoms: depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness, etc.”

Seven/29.17% of the participants strongly agreed with the above statement, nine/37.5% of the participants agreed with the statement, three/12.5% reported to be neutral, four/16.67% of the students disagreed with the statement and one/4.17% strongly disagreed with the statement. Students who answered that they have not utilized campus resources but experience mental health issues was analyzed. Four students answered that the strongly agree with the statement regarding mental health issues. Seven participants agreed with the statement provided, two answered neutral, and one strongly disagreed.

The next statement said “If you have utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources, I have found Rowan Thrives campus resources to be helpful. Zero participants strongly agreed with the statement, six/35.29% agreed with the statement, nine/52.94% reported to be neutral, two/11.76% disagreed, and zero people strongly disagreed with the statement. Seven of the nine participants who answered neutral did not utilize Rowan Thrive campus resources.

Table 6*Likert Scale Questions*

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
During my first semester, I have experienced some or all of the following symptoms: depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness, etc.,	7	29.17	9	37.5	3	12.5	4	16.67	1	4.17
If you have utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources, I have found Rowan Thrives campus resources to be helpful.	0	0	6	35.29	9	52.94	2	11.76	0	0

Participants were asked “how they would like to receive information in the future about Rowan Thrive Campus Resources?”. Six/25% of the participants said through social media, thirteen/54.17% of the participants said through email, two/8.33% said through text messaging, one/4.17% said flyer, zero said webinars and two/8.33% said instructors provide information. Table 7 shows the numbers broken down in detail.

Table 7*Receiving Future Information*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
How would you like to receive information in the future about Rowan Thrive?		
Social Media	6	25.00
Email	13	54.17
Text Messages	2	8.33
Flyer	1	4.17
Webinars	0	0
Instructors Provide Information	2	8.33

The final question asked, “If you have not used Rowan Thrive campus resources prior to this survey are you more willing to utilize these resources?”. Sixteen/88.89% of the participants said yes, and two/11.11% of the students said no. Table 8 gives a clearer view of the results.

Table 8*Using Rowan Thrive Campus Resources in the Future*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
If you have not used Rowan Thrive campus resources prior to this survey are you more willing to utilize these resources?		
Yes	16	88.89
No	2	11.1

Chapter 5

Summary, Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary of the Study

The study was about Rowan Thrive campus resources and Rowan's first year students' awareness/use of these resources during their first semester at Rowan. The survey was sent to 500 first year students to obtain a random sample. A total of twenty-four participants responded yielding 4.8% response rate.

The survey was sent via email with the link to the survey. In the email, the purpose of the study was discussed. The survey consisted of thirteen questions. The first two were consent questions and then eleven were questions asking about their awareness, use and how they would like to be notified in the future about Rowan Thrive. The remaining two were statements that used the Likert Scale. Frequencies and percentages were used throughout to break down the numbers and results of the study.

Discussion of the Findings

Research Question 1

What Rowan Thrive campus resources can Rowan University freshman identify? The participants who were aware of Rowan Thrive were able to identify at least one or more areas. Participants who answered yes to if they have utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources were most aware of physical and community resources. Six students who reported that they have not utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources marked that they have heard of Rowan Thrive through daily mail, social media, or postings on campus.

Research Question 2

Which resources have they used in their first semester at Rowan University?

There was a total of ten students that responded to the survey saying how they have utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources. The number of students who have not utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources was fourteen students or 58.33%. The survey found that more students did not utilize these resources during their first semester. Of those who did utilize Rowan Thrive Campus Resources, the top three most used resources were physical, social, and community. In this study, there ten students who were aware of campus resources, and six/35.29% of the students agreed that Rowan Thrive campus resources have been helpful. Nine/52.94% of the students answered neutral to this question and two/11.76% students disagreed that Rowan Thrive campus resources are helpful. Five of the six students who agreed that Rowan Thrive campus resources are helpful utilized more than one area of Rowan Thrive. The more students are involved with campus resources, the more they are satisfied with this area at Rowan University.

The study also found that six out of the fifteen (40%) females who participated in this study utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources. Four out of nine (44%) males have utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources during their first semester. Research showed that more females have used campus resources over males. A recommendation for faculty and staff at Rowan would be to host events that would lead to more male participation or hosting different events for different genders.

The other statement requiring a Likert Scale response was “During my first semester, I have experienced some or all of the following symptoms: depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness, etc.,”. In response to this statement nine/37.50% agreed. Seven/29.17%

answered strongly agree. Three/12.50% answered neutral, four/16.67% disagreed and one/4.17% strongly disagreed. This study suggests that students are experiencing mental health problems and need to utilize campus resources to help them.

The final question asked was “If you have not used Rowan Thrive campus resources prior to this survey are you more willing to utilize these resources?”. The highest answer was yes which was sixteen/88.89% of the participants who answered this question. Participants who answered no landed at two/11.11%. This result showed that students will utilize Rowan Thrive campus resources in the future because of the awareness, which could potentially lead to more students utilizing Rowan Thrive campus resources in the future which would lead to more involvement and would assist students to live a happier, healthier life while making the most out of their college experience.

Neal and Heppner (1986) found that students who were not aware of campus resources continued to experience mental health problems. This study about Rowan Thrive campus resources confirmed that more students did not utilize campus resources and also found that many students are experiencing mental health problems. If students became more aware of Rowan Thrive campus resources they would have a better overall satisfaction in life.

Dvořáková et al. (2017) discussed mindfulness and having a program implemented for this. The study found that this helped in students’ overall satisfaction. If implemented at Rowan, this would help students to find a way to relax and be more mindful and to live in the present moment.

McMahon and Stepleton (2018) conducted a study about a campus resource that was for students who have experienced sexual violence. The research on this topic

mentioned this percentage as being high for students who are not aware of the resources to help them. The study also discussed ways in which faculty and staff can make these resources more known to students. This study relates to this current study by seeing a common thread of needing to bring awareness to campus resources. Although these studies focused on different areas, the overall message of awareness is the same.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the results of this study, some recommendations for practice are:

1. Reach out to students through email and social media.
2. Have a mandatory class that first year students need to attend during their first semester that gives them all the information they need to make them aware of Rowan Thrive campus resources.
3. Host events just for first year college students
4. Implement a mindfulness program or class for students to participate in.
5. Host events for men so they can become more aware and more willing to utilize Rowan Thrive campus resources.
6. Create videos on social media geared toward first year college students and issues that they could be having during their first year. For example, home sickness, how to get involved and so on.
7. Work with faculty members to find ways to make freshman more aware of Rowan Thrive campus resources.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendations for further research include:

1. Interviews should be conducted for further research and to gain more information from each student.
2. Future studies should research specific offices and departments that offer resources that freshman can identify that would contribute to their well-being.
3. More research needs to be conducted on what well-being resources first year college students can identify with even if they have not utilized Rowan Thrive Campus Resources
4. A study should be conducted to see if students who are not utilizing Rowan Thrive campus resources what is the reason they are not doing so.

Conclusion

The participants in this study reported that more students have not utilized Rowan Thrive campus resources during their first semester but are experiencing mental health problems. More than half of the study's participants experienced mental health issues which has also been confirmed in previous studies. This research found that those who did utilize these resources, the top three resources that students utilized during their first semester were physical, social and community. The results from the study also showed that many participants became aware of Rowan Thrive by daily mail and as a result of the research study, sixteen/88.89% of the participants said that they are more willing to utilize this service in the future.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Email

Examining First Year College Students Awareness of Campus Resources

Are you interested in participating in a research study about campus resources? This study is completely voluntarily your information will be kept confidential.

The purpose of this study is to discover the Rowan Thrive campus resources that first year college students identify with in their first semester. The reason research is being conducted on this topic is to make faculty and administration aware of student identification and utilization of resources. This may inform faculty and staff how to better serve the students, or to see if the faculty and staff are meeting their goals of awareness of the Rowan Thrive program

You have been asked to participate in this study because you are a freshman enrolled at Rowan University. The survey will take roughly 8 minutes and will include an online survey via Qualtrics.

https://qfreeaccountssjc1.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d0xpwOfwczdLqzI

This study has been approved by Rowan University's IRB (Study #PRO-2020-221)

If you have any questions and concerns please contact the Co-Investigator, Dara Law, at lawdar24@students.rowan.edu or Principal Investigator: Drew Tinnin, Ed.D. at tinnin@rowan.edu.

Appendix B

Online Survey (Alternate Consent)



ONLINE SURVEY (ALTERNATE CONSENT)

You are invited to participate in this online research survey entitled Examining First Year College Students awareness/use with Rowan Thrive campus resources. You are included in this survey because you are a first-year college student who is enrolled as an undergraduate student. The number of subjects to be enrolled in the study will be 500.

The survey may take approximately 8 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this survey, do not respond to this online survey. Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey.

The purpose of this research study The purpose of this study is to discover the Rowan Thrive campus resources that first year college students identify with in their first semester. The reason research is being conducted on this topic is to make faculty and administration aware of student identification and utilization of resources. This may inform faculty and staff how to better serve the students, or to see if the faculty and staff are meeting their goals of awareness of the Rowan Thrive program

There are no risks or discomforts associated with this survey. There may be no direct benefit to you, however, by participating in this study, you may help us understand why and how many students in their first year take advantage of the Rowan Thrive campus resources to better themselves.

Your response will be kept confidential. We will store the data in a secure computer file and the file will be destroyed once the data has been published. Any part of the research that is published as part of this study will not include your individual information. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact the researcher at the address provided below, but you do not have to give your personal identification.

Drew Tinnin, Ed.D.

Tinnin@rowan.edu

856-256-4909

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at (856) 256-4078– Glassboro/CMSRU.

This study has been approved by the Rowan IRB, Pro.... [.....].

Please complete the checkbox below.

To participate in this survey, you must be 18 years or older and be enrolled in an undergraduate program as a first-year student. Place a check box here

Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey

1

Version #: 1 11-30-2020
Version Date:11-30-2020

Creation/Revision Date: 11-30-2020

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Rowan University
PRO-2020-221
Approved on 1-11-2021

Appendix C

Survey Questions

What is your age?

- A. 18-19
- B. 20-21
- C. 22-23
- D. 24 or Older

What is your gender?

- A. Male
- B. Female
- C. Non-Binary
- D. Other
- E. I choose not to disclose

Which of these best describes your ethnic group?

- A. African American
- B. Asian
- C. Caucasian
- D. Hispanic/Latino
- E. Native American
- F. Other
- G. Prefer not to answer

Do you live on campus, off campus or commute?

- A. On Campus
- B. Commute
- C. Off Campus Housing

Have you utilized the Rowan Thrive Initiative?

- A. Yes
- B. No

If yes, How did you hear about the Rowan Thrive Campus Initiative?

- A. Social Media
- B. Postings on Campus
- C. Daily Mail
- D. Other

If you answered yes, which Rowan Thrive Campus resource have you utilized?

- A. Physical
- B. Social
- C. Emotional

- D. Community
- E. Purpose
- F. Financial
- G. I have never utilized Rowan Thrive Campus Resources

****Please provide the answer you most agree with these statements****

During my first semester, I have experienced some or all of the following symptoms: depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness. Etc.,

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly Disagree

If you have utilized Rowan Thrive Campus Resources, I have found Rowan's campus resources to be helpful.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly Disagree

How would you like to receive information in the future regarding Rowan Thrive campus resources?

- A. Social Media
- B. Email
- C. Text Message
- D. Flyers
- E. Webinars
- F. Instructors provide information

If you have not used Rowan Thrive campus resources prior to this survey are you more willing to utilize these resources?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Not Applicable