ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Psychological Help-Seeking Among Military Veterans: An Expansion and Test of the Theory of Planned Behavior

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In this study, two models predicting intentions to seek psychological help among 293 male veterans of the United States military were tested. Models were developed to incorporate the components of the theory of planned behavior as well as additional relevant variables, including male gender role norms, symptom severity, and prior experience with psychotherapy. It was hoped that the addition of male gender role norms would add to the model's explanatory power. Results of structural equation modeling indicated that adding male gender role norms to the model of psychological help-seeking intentions did positively impact the fit of the model, but did not significantly add to its predictive power. Male gender role norms and severity of symptoms had a negligible impact on intentions to seek help. Overall, attitudes toward seeking help were the strongest predictor of intentions. These findings highlight the importance of identifying factors that impact veterans' utilization of mental health services and the need to develop theoretically and empirically derived interventions designed to increase rates of help-seeking in this population.