

COUPLE'S HELP-SEEKING

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Couples Help Seeking: Theory of Planned Behavior and Prototype Willingness Model

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An extant body of literature exists on what factors predict help seeking for specific problems in individuals. However, little research has focused on couples seeking help and none known of college couples seeking help. The purpose of this study was to explore factors contributing to college couples' intentions and willingness to seek couples therapy at their university using the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Prototype Willingness Model through two competing models. To achieve this purpose, undergraduate and graduate college students were surveyed and data were analyzed using structural equation modeling. In the hypothesized mediation model, attitudes towards couples' therapy fully mediated the relationship between past therapy experience and intention to seek couples therapy. In both the hypothesized and alternative model, there was a positive link between subjective norms regarding seeking couples therapy and intentions to seek couples therapy, and a negative relationship between perceived control over seeking couples therapy and intentions to seek couples therapy. Model comparison analyses suggested the hypothesized mediation model fit the data better. Implications, limitations, and directions for future research were discussed.