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## Abstract

Mental health affects a majority of college students, and over time, the number of mental health issues in college students has increased. Adequate mental health among college students is crucial as it affects students' academic success, which in turn affects the success and economics of collegiate institutions. This study investigates mental health in college students in the United States to examine how college students' mental health has changed across time and compares to other populations as well as document associations between college student mental health and demographic characteristics. A series of difference in means tests and multiple regression analyses use the 2021, 2020, and 2019 data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) to analyze these questions. Results find that college students experience between 2.8 and 3.2 additional bad mental health days than non-college students on a 30-day basis. The mean number of bad mental health days in a 30-day basis is 7.16 days, female students experience between 2.9 and 4.1 additional bad mental health days than male students, and white students experience between 0.86 and 1.7 additional bad mental health days than non-white students. Finally, I find that mental health levels were worse in 2021 than 2019 at a statistically significant level but were better in 2020 at a non-statistically significant level. These findings highlight the need to increase mental health support on college campuses as well as acquire more detailed data to analyze the impact of mental health on students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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