

Background

- Latinos in the U.S. are unlikely to seek professional help for mental disorders and psychological distress (e.g., Kearney et al., 2005), despite suffering from disproportionate disability from such disorders due to disparities in care (USDHHS, 2001).
- Considering Latinos are now the largest ethnic minority group in the U.S. (Humes et al., 2011), treatment underutilization in this population warrants further investigation.
- One way to study help-seeking is to examine **Help-Seeking Attitudes**-- one's overall attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help (Fischer & Turner, 1970)
- Previous research has shown gender, past experience of seeking psychological treatment, mental health stigma, and self-concealment to uniquely predict help-seeking attitudes among various non-Latino ethnic groups (Masuda et al., 2012; Masuda et al., 2009a).
- Mental Health Stigmatizing Attitudes** : objectification, and dehumanization of a person known to have or appearing to have a mental disorder (Hayes et al, 2002; Masuda et al, 2011)
- Self-Concealment**: the active concealment from others of consciously accessible private personal information that is perceived by the concealer as negative or distressing (Larson & Chastain, 1990)
- The present study investigated whether mental health stigma and self-concealment would uniquely and separately predict help-seeking attitudes in Latino college students, while controlling for age, gender, and previous treatment-seeking experience.

Methods

Participants

129 Latino/a college students (76% female); *M* age = 20.09 (*SD* = 3.48), ranging from 17 to 38; 38 (*n*_{female} = 32) reported previous treatment experience.

Methods (cont.)

Measures/Procedure

Anonymous web-based survey.

Help-seeking attitudes. *The Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help* (ATSPPH; Fischer & Turner, 1970) scale, Total scale plus four subscales: Recognition of Need (RN), Stigma Tolerance (ST), Interpersonal Openness (IPO), and Confidence.

Mental health stigmatizing attitudes. *The Stigmatizing Attitudes-Believability* (SAB; Masuda et al 2009b) scale.

Self-concealment. *The Self-Concealment Scale* (SCS; Larson & Chastain, 1990).

Analytic Strategy

Five standard multiple regressions were performed using mental health stigma, self-concealment, age, gender, and previous treatment experience as predictor variables of help-seeking attitudes overall and four components of help-seeking attitudes.

Results (cont.)

Table 2

Investigations of Mental Health Stigma, Self-Concealment, Age, Gender, and Past Help-Seeking Experience as Unique Predictors of Help-Seeking Attitudes: Summary of Regression Analysis

Variables	β	B	SEB	t	P
Overall Help-seeking Attitudes (ATSPPH-T), $R^2 = .24^{**}$					
Mental Health Stigma (SAB)	-.22	-.32	.12	-2.73	.007
Self-Concealment (SCS)	-.13	-.17	.11	-1.63	.106
Age	.22	.73	.27	2.75	.007
Gender	.25	6.54	2.13	3.08	.003
Past Experience	-.17	-4.35	2.02	-2.15	.033
Recognition of Need (ATSPPH-RN), $R^2 = .24^{**}$					
Mental Health Stigma (SAB)	-.17	-.09	.04	-2.15	.033
Self-Concealment (SCS)	-.01	-.00	.04	-.08	.937
Age	.22	.26	.09	2.78	.006
Gender	.23	2.21	.75	2.95	.004
Past Experience	-.24	-2.14	.71	-3.01	.003
Stigma Tolerance (ATSPPH-ST), $R^2 = .21^{**}$					
Mental Health Stigma (SAB)	-.25	-.10	.03	-3.07	.003
Self-Concealment (SCS)	-.27	-.09	.03	-3.32	.001
Age	.11	.09	.07	1.28	.205
Gender	.13	.91	.57	1.61	.111
Past Experience	-.17	-1.10	.54	-2.04	.043
Interpersonal Openness (ATSPPH-IPO), $R^2 = .18^{**}$					
Mental Health Stigma (SAB)	-.23	-.11	.04	-2.82	.006
Self-Concealment (SCS)	-.21	-.09	.04	-2.61	.010
Age	.13	.13	.09	1.53	.128
Gender	.14	1.20	.70	1.72	.088
Past Experience	-.16	-1.29	.66	-1.94	.054
Confidence (ATSPPH-C), $R^2 = .11^{*}$					
Mental Health Stigma (SAB)	-.05	-.03	.05	-.58	.562
Self-Concealment (SCS)	.03	.02	.04	.36	.718
Age	.21	.25	.10	2.40	.018
Gender	.23	2.22	.82	2.70	.008
Past Experience	.02	.18	.79	.23	.821

Results

Table 1

Zero-Order Relations of All Study Variables

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	ATSPPH Total	---									
2.	ATSPPH-RN	.81**	---								
3.	ATSPPH-ST	.68**	.33**	---							
4.	ATSPPH-IPO	.81**	.49**	.62**	---						
5.	ATSPPH-C	.79**	.62**	.29**	.44**	---					
6.	SAB	-.22*	-.18*	-.25**	-.23**	-.05	---				
7.	SCS	-.13	-.01	-.27**	-.21*	.03	-.02	---			
8.	Age	.29**	.30**	.17	.19*	.23**	-.05	-.03	---		
9.	Gender	.28**	.28**	.15	.16	.25**	.04	-.00	.09	---	
10.	Past Experience	-.26**	-.32**	-.21*	-.21*	-.05	.04	-.01	-.20*	-.13	---
M		50.73	12.60	9.71	11.47	16.95	24.82	31.05			
SD		11.47	4.04	2.00	3.62	4.10	7.71	8.56			
α		.85	.67	.71	.61	.71	.82	.86			

Note. *n* = 129, **p* < .05, ***p* < .01

Discussion

- This is the first study that investigated the relationship between mental health stigma, self-concealment, and help-seeking attitudes in a Latino/a sample.
- Mental health stigma, age, gender, and previous treatment experience separately and uniquely predicted help-seeking attitudes, with greater stigma, male gender, younger age, and a lack prior treatment experience predicting poorer help-seeking attitudes.
- Self-concealment did **not** predict help-seeking attitudes, contrary to previous findings with non-Latino ethnic groups.
- These findings suggest that targeting mental health stigma among Latino college students may help increase treatment utilization among this population.