

“Vulnerable” students: dynamics of problem perception and help-seeking behavior



1. Desolate Isolation



2. Double Role



3. Splendid Isolation

KEY ARGUMENT

Interviews (N = 40) show that students help-seeking behavior depends on the social and cultural context of day-to-day university life. Group behavior and identity questions in university raise expectations and understandings that do not facilitate help-seeking. Contextual dimensions of help-seeking should therefore be explored in addition to individual psychological aspects.

RESULTS

6 student profiles were developed that describe the nature and background of diverse health problems. These profiles focus specifically on contextual dimensions of student help-seeking.

METHODS

A qualitative study was undertaken to explore reported health problems from the student perspective. Interviews with 40 students were held. The focus was on students who did not seek help for problems. Student were located through student counselors, flyers, posters and networking sites (e.g. Hyves)

BACKGROUND

A large group of Dutch university students report mental, physical and social problems. Even though university provides accessible and affordable health care services, this group does not seek professional help for reported health problems.



4. Between Worlds



5. My New Self



6. Learned Behavior

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