Counseling Utilization by Minority Students: Race and Cultural Sensitivity
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Although minority college students exhibit higher levels of distress and need for mental counseling, there is little research on such student’s utilization and benefits of counseling services (Kearney, Draper & Baron, 2005). College students who sought counseling reported an academic improvement and overall improved lifestyle in general (Bentley, 2018). Through a constant comparative approach (Merriam, 2009), the research study investigated if cultural sensitivity and race influence the lack of mental counseling utilization among these racial/ethnic minority students. As anticipated, cultural sensitivity and race influence minority student’s decision to seek help and the cultural stigma attached to mental counseling is extremely high within these cultures. Having a therapist of minority status or same race yielded better outcomes of treatment too, as it created room for a more open discussion and trust (Brummit, 1977; Camacho, 2016; Carlos P. Hipolito-Delgado, Diane Estrada & Marina Garcia, 2017). Recruiting more minority therapists doesn’t necessary guarantee the increase help-seeking among this student population, but as Kim (2006) suggests, having more minority counselors on campus will help reshape the minority perception of counselor and ultimately break that stereotype.