

An update on Collegiate Recovery Students and Programs:

A Systematic Literature Review from 2017-2021

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Introduction

Background

- **Collegiate Recovery Programs (CRPs)** have been established on university campuses to support students who identify as being “*in recovery*.” The Association of Recovery in Higher Education (ARHE) has defined a Collegiate Recovery Program as “*a university provided supportive environment within the campus culture that reinforces the decision to engage in a lifestyle of recovery from substance use.*”
- Previous research suggests that **CRPs are successful in contributing to student’s academic success** and contributing to their **maintained sobriety** through college (Ashford et al., 2018).
- Data from the National College Health Assessment (NCHA, 2021) has shown that ~50% of college students will have met criteria for an alcohol or marijuana substance use disorder at some point in the first three years of higher education.

Research Question

- *We sought to answer whether the field of Collegiate Recovery was expanding, and if so, how? Special attention was given to paradigms of inquiry, intersectionality of topics, journal outlets and their disciplines.*

Methodology

- A **systematic review of the literature** was conducted to synthesize findings and answer a pertinent research question underlying the topic.
- **Search strategy/ Data collection:**
 - Peer-reviewed literature, including dissertations, published from 2017-2022.
 - Databases: PsycInfo/ProQuest; EBSCOhost, Academic Search Complete; ERIC (EBSCO)/Education Research Complete; EBSCOhost/Social Sciences Full Text; ERIC, Education Full Text.
 - Key terms used in search: addiction, recovery, collegiate recovery programs, university support services, substance abuse, alcohol and other drugs, and college or university students or undergraduates.
 - Articles were coded by database, paradigm of inquiry, methodology, specific methods used, and social justice equity and quality inclusion (SJEI) criteria.
- **Quality criteria:** Students must meet at least one criteria
 - (1) Students in SUD recovery participating in a CRP
 - (2) Students in recovery from SUD but not supported by, or participating in, a CRP
 - (3) Studies of university programs/efforts designed to provide SUD recovery support for students
- **Procedure:** A total of 63 articles were collected and sorted using AirTable. The 63 articles were then grouped by certain qualifications like methodology and SJEI.
- The lead author made the final decision for inclusion.

Preliminary Findings

- A total of 63 articles were found with only 25 meeting the criteria for inclusion (N = 25). Articles were omitted because they did not include factors relating to CRPs and/or students in recovery in higher education.
- The dominating databases were PsycInfo (n = 12) and ERIC/Education Research Complete (n = 8).

Quality Criteria Inclusion	Met criteria (1)	Met criteria (2)	Met criteria (3)
# (N = 25)	9	2	14

Methodology: Type	Critical/Theoretical/ Conceptual	Mixed	Quantitative	Qualitative	Literature Review
# (N = 25)	8	5	5	4	3

SJEI/Intersectionality of Topics

	# of times discussed (n = 14)
Gender Identity	8
Race	8
Socioeconomic Status	6
Ethnicity	6
Criminal punishment involvement	4
Sexual Orientation	4
Ability	3
Language, Parental Status, Immigration Status, International Students, Veteran Status, Religious Identity	0

Journal Title	Publications (N = 25)	Discipline	# of articles published
Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly	7	Alcohol/Alcoholism	7
New Directions for Student Services	3	Education	5
Addiction Research and Theory	2	Addiction	4
Social Science & Medicine	2	Higher Ed	3
Addictive Behaviors	2	Interdisciplinary	2
Rehabilitation Research	1	Health	1
Journal of American College Health	1	Psychology	1
Journal of Substance Use	1	Substance Abuse	1
Distance Learning	1	Treatment/Rehabilitation	1
Journal of College Counseling	1		
Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice	1		
American Journal of Health Education	1		
Innovative Higher Education	1		
Journal of Nutrition Education & Behavior	1		

Discussion

- The field of **Collegiate Recovery** is expanding in some ways, but not in others. Much of the literature is coming from journal disciplines in the field of **addiction science**, with a focus on the needs of students in recovery and/or processes for starting and maintaining a successful CRP. There is a **gap** in the current literature from higher education disciplines, with only three articles published from **higher education journals**.
- In regard to **SJEI**, there are a variety of topics being discussed, with race and gender identity being the most common, yet there is a large gap in other areas. For example, **veteran** status has not been discussed at any length, yet veterans are at higher risk than average for developing a **SUD** (NIDA, 2019). Future research that includes discussion on the intersectionality of participants within CRPs could propel the discipline further.
- If Collegiate Recovery is to establish itself as an independent field from traditional **addiction or recovery sciences** then future research should explore the degree to which theoretical perspectives from these fields, and similar fields such as psychology or health, hold ecological validity within higher education institutions. It should also explore the types of substances used and what types of recovery are supported by programs. The latter also relates to standardizing evaluation of these programs and further requires programs disclose whether they promote an abstinence or harm reduction model, including supporting students in recovery from process addictions (i.e. gambling).

References

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