

Seeking Wellness: International Students' Mental Health Information Behavior

Xue Pan

The University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK, USA

xuepan@ou.edu

ABSTRACT

International students face stress when adapting to new cultural and academic environments, making them more vulnerable to mental health challenges compared to domestic peers (Acquah & Commins, 2018; Glass & Westmont, 2014; Mulyadi et al., 2024; Spanhel et al., 2021). While existing literature has examined general health information behavior and mental health conditions of international students, limited research has focused specifically on how international students seek, evaluate, and use mental health-related information. Moreover, there is a lack of theoretical work connecting international students' mental health needs to their information behavior patterns.

In response to the growing concern for international student wellbeing (Alaklabi et al., 2021; Kivelä et al., 2024), this study will investigate their mental health information behavior. Guided by Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) and social capital theory, this study will employ an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. In the quantitative phase, a survey will be used to measure mental health status and mental health information behavior. Descriptive and inferential statistics will be used to analyze quantitative data by assessing the relationship between mental health conditions and information behavior, identifying influencing factors, and comparing information source preferences. In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews will be conducted to gain deeper insights, and thematic analysis will be used to identify recurring themes. Triangulation will be applied to increase credibility.

This study will enhance the understanding of international students' mental health information behavior and provide implications for universities, libraries, and health providers to deliver inclusive and culturally sensitive mental health support.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Information needs; Information seeking; Information use.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

International students; Health information behavior; Mental health.

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21900/j.alise.2025.2030>

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