

M. Sasaki¹

¹Health Care Center, Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, Nomi, Japan

Objectives

The present study attempted to examine the barriers and the facilitators to the use of mental health services by Japanese university students in order to enhance early detection of and intervention for mental disorders.

Methods

A total of 138 students from four universities in Japan participated in this study and completed the survey. They were asked to show if they were reluctant to consult a mental health professional and the reasons thereof (barriers). Additionally, they described when they would visit a mental health professional (facilitators).

Results

About half (48.5%) of the students showed reluctance to visit a mental health professional. The barriers (in descending order of frequency) were 'I don't want to consult other people (I feel ashamed),' 'I don't need it (It's enough),' 'I am unsure the consultation will be effective,' and 'I am afraid of what others will think of me'. On the other hand, the facilitators were, 'when my condition is severe,' 'when people close to me recommend me to do so,' 'when the atmosphere around the institution is good,' 'when I can't consult people close to me,' and 'when the professional is someone I know'.

Conclusions

Some barriers and facilitators for consulting mental health professionals were found. Mental health professionals have to consider these factors in their daily clinical practices.