RESILIENCE IN FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

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First-generation college students, or college students whose parents have not attended college or have attended college but have not received a degree, are traditionally approached from a deficit model. The purpose of the current study is to explore the possible mediating effects of psychological resilience on the relationships between protective and risk factors and academic and psychological outcomes among first-generation college students. In the current study, a sample of 101 first-generation college students were recruited at Washington State University. Using a convenience-based sampling approach, participants were recruited from several on-campus programs that serve first-generation college students. Multiple path analyses were performed to test five hypotheses. The results indicated that (1) resilience mediated the relationship between perceived stress and psychological well-being (Hypothesis 1b), but not academic performance (Hypothesis 1a); (2) resilience mediated the relationship between perceived social support and academic performance (Hypothesis 2a) and psychological well-being (Hypothesis 2b); (3) resilience mediated the relationship between certain indicators of socioeconomic status (e.g., household income, mother education) and psychological well-being (Hypothesis 3b), but not academic performance (Hypothesis 3a); (4) resilience did not mediate the relationship between high school GPA and academic performance (Hypothesis 4a) or psychological well-being (Hypothesis 4b); (5) perceived stress and high school GPA had significant direct effects on academic performance (Hypothesis 5); and (6) perceived stress, perceived social support, income status, and high school GPA had significant direct effects on psychological well-being (Hypothesis 5). The implications for future research and practice on resilience and first-generation college students are discussed.