

# Generational Status, Sexual Behavior, and Alcohol Use among College Students

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## Abstract

*The study examined the differences between first-generation college students and non-first-generation college students in sexual behavior and alcohol use. Examinations between how first-generation and non-first-generation college students have focused primarily on how they differ academically in college, while sexual behaviors and alcohol use has not been the focus in past literature. A total of 441 college students who enrolled in a general psychology course at a northwestern university took an online questionnaire comprised of various questions referring to sexual behavior and alcohol use. The sample for the study had an even fifty percent split between first-generation and non-first-generation college students. Results showed that there were a few differences in sexual behavior and risky sexual behavior between the generational status. There were some differences between white and non-white students and within each gender when referring to sexual behavior and alcohol use. These findings suggest that generational status does not have a strong influence on whether college students engage in sexual behaviors and that other factors should be examined when looking at both sexual and alcohol behaviors.*

## Generational Status, Sexual Behavior and Alcohol Use among College

Engaging in risky behaviors has been related to college students performing poorly in their academics (Cyder, Flory, Rainer, & Smith, 2009). An example of this is when college students drink alcohol in excess, especially during their first year in college (Cyders et al., 2009). An argument can be made that college students will either succeed or fail in college based on how disciplined they are outside of the classroom. For example, college students who know how to balance their academic lives with their social lives are known for performing very well in college (Ramos-Sanchez & Nichols, 2007). Sadly, first-generation college students are known for struggling the most when it comes to college adaptation (Ishitani, 2003; McCarron & Inkelas, 2006). Given this, it is likely that there is a connection between first-generation college students drinking more alcohol, having premarital sex, and engaging in more risky sexual behaviors compared to non-first-generation students. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine if there were any differences between generational statuses and their engagement in drinking alcohol or sexual behavior.

First-generation college students are classified as individuals who do not have a parent with at least a bachelor's degree in college, while a non-first-generation college student has at least one parent with a bachelor's degree or beyond (Ramos-Sanchez & Nichols, 2007). Research suggests that first-generation college students are low on self-efficacy compared to non-first-generation students since first-generation college students lack the resource of parental guidance at the collegiate level (Alessandria & Nelson, 2005; Majer, 2009; Ramos-Sanchez & Nichols, 2007). Students who have good communication with their parents tend to perform better academically (McCarron & Inkelas, 2006; Strage & Brandt, 1999; Wintre & Yaffe, 2000).

The majority of first-generation college students come from minority families who have come to the United States in search of a more prosperous life than that of their country of origin (Ojeda, Navarro, & Flores, 2011). Also, Ojeda et al. (2011) found that, overall, only 6% of Mexican Americans graduate college. This statistic shows a high rate of college drop-outs based on ethnicity, specifically Latinos in this case, and how that could possibly mean that first-generation college students are at a disadvantage when attending college. In another study, Ishitani (2006) found that first-generation college students drop-out more often than non-first-generation college students. Reasons for higher dropout rates among these groups potentially include a lack support from family and friends and a lack of monetary resources at their disposal, which could lead to great pressures while attending college (Ishitani, 2003).

Interestingly, research analyzing the differences between first-generation and non-first-generation college students has exclusively focused on academic life and has not examined behaviors outside of the classroom such as alcohol consumption or sexual practices that may also influence college adaptation and completion. One study done by Sher and Rutledge (2007) examined factors that could be used to predict first-semester drinking in college students. In their study, they asked whether students were first-generation college students as a demographic question. However, this variable was not used in a statistical analysis since only 23% responded to being first-generation college students (Sher & Rutledge, 2007).

Looking for differences between first-generation and non-first-generation college students is important to analyze since this has not been a primary topic in past research. Also, examining gender differences and the influence of ethnic backgrounds in conjunction with generational statuses could give us a more well-rounded view of the sexual and alcohol behavioral differences. It is very common to see different results when it comes to sexual behavior between different ethnic backgrounds (Buhi, Marhefka, & Hoban, 2010; Bourdeau, Saltz, Bersamin, & Grube, 2007).

## Alcohol use

It is really no surprise that college students who engage in alcohol consumption at a regular basis suffer academically during the first years of college (Cyder, Flory, Rainer, & Smith, 2008). Scott-Sheldon, Carey, and Carey (2008) report that college students who drink heavily during parties or other social events will have a high probability of engaging in risky sexual behavior while intoxicated. It is important to keep examining why college students continue to drink, despite knowing that heavily drinking alcohol can lead to hazardous behaviors. An example of risky behaviors while drinking alcohol is a less likelihood of condom use while being sexually active and intoxicated at the same time (Scott-Sheldon, Carey, & Carey, 2008). This risky behavior is starting to become very prevalent among college students (Scott-Sheldon, Carey & Carey, 2008). Many students seek out ways to have fun by experimenting with alcohol and other risky behaviors (Cail & LaBrie, 2010). Furthermore, a relationship has been found between college students who drink a lot of alcohol and pursuing high sensation-seeking activities that could be dangerous to their health (Cail & LaBrie, 2010; Cyder, Flory, Rainer, & Smith, 2008).

Though past research has shown a relationship between alcohol use and risky behaviors, it is important to further the research and examine other factors such as gender differences. Furthermore, intoxicated male college students have a tendency to feel invincible which could lead them to participate in high sensation-seeking activities (Cyder, Flory, Rainer, & Smith, 2008). It is very common for male college students to experiment with alcohol and consume more than females (Johnson & Glassman, 1998). Teevan (1972) reports that young males, specifically adolescents, will very likely consume alcohol if they have friends doing it. Females, however, tend to consume alcohol more when dealing with problems (Johnson & Glassman, 1998). The difference between males and females seems to be one consumes more alcohol for pleasure and fun, while the other consumes more alcohol when in an emotional situation.

Looking into ethnicity is important in order to have a better view of alcohol use within the college student population. Research has shown differences in alcohol use between different ethnicities. For example, Latinos are known for drinking more alcohol than Caucasian students in most occasions, yet African-Americans have a tendency to be even heavier drinkers, and may surpass how much Latinos and Caucasians drink (Bourdeu, et al., 2007; Fife, Sayles, Adegoke, McCoy, Stovall, & Verdant, 2011). However, other researchers claim that Caucasian students have a higher tendency to consume alcohol compared to other college students of different ethnic backgrounds (Bourdeu, et al., 2007). These different results show inconsistency when examining ethnicity and alcohol use. It is still vital to examine ethnicity in order to get a better understanding of alcohol use among college students.

## Sexual behavior

Premarital sexual activity among college students is very common (Grossbard, Lee, Neibors, Hendershot, & Larimer, 2007; Meston, Trapnell, & Gorzalka, 1996; Seal & Agostinelli, 1996; von Sadovszky, Keller, & McKinny, 2002). However, males are viewed as being more active sexually than women (Bourdeu et al., 2007; Seal & Agnostinelli, 1996; von Sadovszky, et al., 2002). Bourdeu et al., (2007) found gender differences among their Latino sample, where women were expected to conform to the socially accepted behavior and not engage in sexual activity, yet men have more leniencies in their sexual behavior; this resulted in males being more sexually active. A study done by Scott-Sheldon, Carey, and Carey (2008) examined whether alcohol consumption and risky sexual

behavior are related among college students. They found that college students reported engaging more in sex without a condom if they were intoxicated. Heavy drinking in college students usually leads to risky sexual behavior such as having many partners and the non-use of condoms during sexual practice (Grossbard, et al., 2007; Scott-Sheldon, Cary, & Cary, 2008). Females are more aware of the risks of risky sexual activity than men, and tend to take more precautions (Seal & Agostinelli, 1996). Interestingly, though females are more cautious in their sexual activities, they have a tendency to engage in sexual activity without a condom if they are with a steady partner and they have been drinking heavily (Scott-Sheldon, et al., 2008).

In examining associations between ethnicity and sexual behaviors, Meston, et al., (1996) found that Asians were more conservative in their sexual attitudes compared to Europeans and North Americans. In another study, Buhi, Markfka, and Hoban (2010) looked for ethnic differences between many ethnic groups and their results showed that Caucasians participate in oral and anal sex more than other ethnic groups. Interestingly, African-Americans are more likely to have more sexual partners and have unintentional pregnancies (Buhi, et al., 2010). However, Latinos and African-Americans that are close to their religious beliefs are less likely to engage in risky sexual behavior such as having multiple sexual partners (Bourdeau, et al., 2007; Fife, et al., 2011).

## Current study

Most of the studies conducted with first-generation college students and non-first-generation college students focus primarily on academic success, college adaptation, self efficacy, and parental influence. There has been very little research examining alcohol use, sexual behavior, and risky sexual behavior differences between first-generation and non-first-generation college students. Past research has clearly shown that first-generation college students are more likely to drop-out of college and struggle more with getting used to academia (Ishitani, 2003; Ishitani, 2006; Majer, 2009; McCarron & Inkelas, 2006; Ramos-Sanchez & Nichols, 2007). It is interesting to note that since most first-generation college students will struggle more with school, their struggles could be connected to risky behaviors. College students who engage in risky behaviors, such as drinking excessive alcohol and participating in risky sexual activity are more likely to struggle in school and have poorer grades (Martinez, Sher, & Wood, 2008). With many obstacles to deal with, it may be common for first-generation college students to engage in high risk activities.

This study intended to look at the differences between first-generation and non-first-generation college students in their alcohol consumption behavior, sexual behavior, and also take a look at whether ethnicity and gender also plays a role in these behaviors. It was hypothesized that first-generation college students would differ in drinking alcohol to negatively cope with their problems compared to non-first-generation college students. It was hypothesized that first-generation college students would differ from non-first-generation students in sexual permissiveness, and that first-generation college students will engage in more risky sexual behaviors than non-first-generation college students. Finally, it was hypothesized that ethnicity and gender would be associated with alcohol and/or sexual behavior among college students.

## Method

### Participants

The participants were 441 students (54% females, 46% males) who were enrolled in a general psychology course at a northwestern university. The age range of the participants was between 18-28 years ( $M = 20$ ,  $SD = 2.35$ ). There were 66 % ( $n = 291$ ) freshmen, 23% ( $n = 102$ ) sophomores, 7% ( $n = 30$ ) juniors, and 4% ( $n = 17$ ) who chose seniors or higher as their class standing. Regarding the participants' racial backgrounds, 82% ( $n = 360$ ) were Caucasian, 8% ( $n = 33$ ) were Latino/Mexican-American, 4% ( $n = 19$ ) were Asian, 3% ( $n = 14$ ) were African-American, and the remaining 3% ( $n = 14$ ) were a different race.

There were 50.3% ( $n = 222$ ) students who classified themselves as first-generation college students, 49.7% ( $n = 219$ ) as non-first-generation college students. Of the 222 students who were first-generation college students, 59% ( $n = 130$ ) were females and 41% ( $n = 92$ ) were males. For the non-first-generation college students, 50% ( $n = 109$ ) were females and 50% ( $n = 110$ ) were males.

## Procedure

Data collection was completed in Spring 2011. Participants in the study enrolled through the web-based program Experimentrix and took an online questionnaire. The questionnaire started with a description of the study and a consent section. Once they agreed to participate, the participants took the online survey which took approximately 30 minutes to complete. In the end portion of the questionnaire, the participants were provided with a list of health resources, were thanked for their participation, and given information for the credit allocation process which rewarded them course credit for their general psychology course.

## Materials

A questionnaire comprised of 142 items was used to measure alcohol consumption behavior, risky sexual behavior, and sexual attitudes. Demographic questions were also asked at the start of the questionnaire. Scales used for this study included Drinking Context Scale, Hendricks Sexual Attitudes Scale, and questions asking about the participant's sexual behavior such as their engagement in oral sex and sexual intercourse, along with information such as the age they started to engage in those behaviors. Also, they were asked about partaking in risky sexual behaviors.

*Drinking Context Scale (DCS).* This instrument was created with the intention of measuring excessive drinking among young people (O'Hare, 2001). This 9-item instrument is divided into three subscales: convivial drinking, negative coping, and intimate drinking. This instrument asked participants to rate the chances they might drink excessively based on the situations listed within each subscale of the DCS. Examples of items from this instrument are, "When I'm at a party, similar to a get-together," "When I've had a fight with someone close to me," and "Before having sex." These items were measured with a 5-point Likert-scale (1 = *Extremely Low*, 2 = *Low*, 3 = *Moderate*, 4 = *High*, and 5 = *Extremely High*). These items were reversed scaled and then summed up based on their respective subscale in order to obtain a correct score that would indicate the likelihood of the college students drinking excessively. A higher score means a higher likelihood of drinking excessively (O'Hare, 2001). Cronbach's alpha for the subscales of convivial drinking, negative coping, and intimate drinking were .871, .944, and .875, respectively.

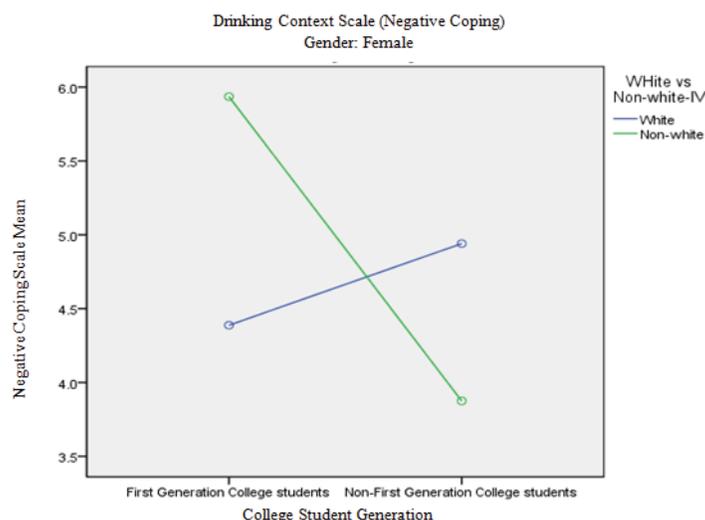
*Hendricks Sexual Attitude Scale (HSAS).* This instrument measures how permissive people can be within each of the four levels of sexuality: overall permissiveness, sexual practices, communion in the relationship, and instrumentality (Henrick & Henrick, 1987). Two subscales—permissiveness and sexual practices—were used in the questionnaire. Examples of items from this instrument were, "I do not need to be committed to a person to have sex with him/her," "It is okay to have ongoing sexual relationships with more than one person at a time." These items were measured with a 5-point Likert-scale (1 = *Strongly agree*, 2 = *Moderately agree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Moderately disagree*, and 5 = *Strongly disagree*).

Other scales related to sexual behavior were used to measure sexual behavior among college students. These questions included what age they began to have oral sex, when they began to have sexual intercourse, and how many casual partners they have had. Another set of questions asked the participants about which sexual behaviors the participants have engaged in over the prior six months. This section listed nine risky sexual situations (Table 1) and was coded as a dichotomous variable (1 = *Yes*, 2 = *No*)

## Results

A 2X2 ANOVA was conducted to determine if first-generation college students and non-first-generation college students differed in alcohol consumption behavior. A significant interaction between college generations and races found drinking to be a form of negative coping with problems,  $F(1, 436) = 3.91, p = .049$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .009$ . The graph below shows the interaction between ethnicity and generational status within the female sample of this study. Furthermore, it clearly shows how non-white first-generation college students drink more to negatively cope with their problems compared to white first-generation college students. Regarding our non-first-generation college student female sample, the graph shows how white students drink more to negatively cope with their problems compared to non-white students.

Figure 1.



In the examination of sexual behavior, a 2X2 ANOVA was used to determine if there were any differences in generational status and race. There was no significant interaction between college generation and ethnicity for permissiveness in sexual practices,  $F(1, 432) = 1.20, p = .27, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .003$ . There was no significant main effect between first-generation ( $M = 1.66, SD = .62$ ) and non-first-generation ( $M = 1.73, SD = .64$ ) students on how permissive they are in their sexual practices,  $F(1, 432) = 9.32, p = .06, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .008$ . There was, however, a significant main effect between white ( $M = 1.65, SD = .61$ ) and non-white ( $M = 1.86, SD = .72$ ) participants on how permissive they are in their sexual practices,  $F(1, 432) = 9.32, p = .002, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .021$ .

With regard to other sexual behaviors, the results showed that there was no significant interaction between generational status and race for light necking (close body contact, with hugging and prolonged kissing),  $F(1, 431) = .55, p = .46, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .001$ . However, there was a significant main effect between white ( $M = 4.47, SD = .112$ ) and non-white ( $M = 4.04, SD = 1.31$ ) students on how many times they have participated in necking,  $F(1, 431) = 8.22, p = .024, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .012$ . There was a significant main effect among the male sample between white ( $M = 4.40, SD = 1.23$ ) and non-white ( $M = 3.80, SD = 1.36$ ) students in how much they have participated in necking,  $F(1, 195) = 2.19, p = .006, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .04$ .

When referring to differences in light kissing, there was no significant interaction between college generation and race,  $F(1, 431) = 1.12, p = .291, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .003$ . There was a significant main effect between white ( $M = 4.53, SD = .107$ ) and non-white ( $M = 4.19, SD = 1.32$ ) students on how they differed in the amount of times they participated in light kissing,  $F(1, 431) = 5.14, p = .024, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$ . Among males, there was no significant interaction between college generation and race,  $F(1, 195) = 2.79, p = .09, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .014$ . There was, however, a significant main effect of race among males within white ( $M = 4.44, SD = 1.19$ ) and non-white ( $M = 3.90, SD = 1.41$ ) students differing in light kissing,  $F(1, 195) = 2.79, p = .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .033$ . There was no significant main effect between first-generation ( $M = 4.37, SD = 1.28$ ) and non-first-generation ( $M = 4.30, SD = 1.24$ ) male students in how much they differ in the activity of light kissing,  $F(1, 195) = .37, p = .55, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .002$ .

In regard to examining more intimate sexual behaviors, a series of 2X2 ANOVAs were used to determine if ethnicity and generational status were associated. The results showed that there was no significant interaction between generational status and race in the activity of oral sex,  $F(1, 429) = .03, p = .88, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .000$ . There was no significant main effect between white ( $M = 3.54, SD = .164$ ) and non-white ( $M = 3.20, SD = 1.66$ ) students on how many times they have participated in oral sex,  $F(1, 429) = 3.08, p = .08, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$ . There was also no significant main effect between first-generation ( $M = 3.53, SD = .163$ ) and non-first-generation ( $M = 3.42, SD = 1.68$ ) college students on how many times they participated in oral sex,  $F(1, 429) = .66, p = .42, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .002$ .

When analyzing how many times the participants have engaged in sexual intercourse, there was no significant interaction between generational status and race in this sexual activity,  $F(1, 430) = .09, p = .96, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .000$ . There was no significant main effect between white ( $M = 3.76, SD = .166$ ) and non-white ( $M = 3.63, SD = 1.58$ ) students on how many times they have done the activity of necking,  $F(1, 430) = .521, p = .47, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .001$ . There was no significant main effect between first-generation ( $M = 3.74, SD = .165$ ) and non-first-generation ( $M =$

3.73,  $SD = 1.64$ ) college students on how many times they have had sexual intercourse,  $F(1, 430) = .12, p = .73$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .000$ .

Finally, when investigating how many times college students have participated in anal intercourse, there was no significant interaction between generational status and race in this sexual activity,  $F(1, 428) = .31, p = .58$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .001$ . There was no significant main effect between white ( $M = 1.51, SD = .967$ ) and non-white ( $M = 1.60, SD = 1.12$ ) students on how many times they have done the activity of necking,  $F(1, 428) = .11, p = .74$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .000$ . There was a marginally significant main effect between first-generation ( $M = 1.63, SD = .109$ ) and non-first-generation ( $M = 1.42, SD = .87$ ) college students on how many times they have had anal intercourse,  $F(1, 428) = 3.76, p = .053$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .01$ .

The next set of analyses explored generational status and the age participants began to have sexual intercourse. A  $t$ -test found that there was a significant difference between first-generation college students ( $M = 1.63, SD = .11$ ) and non-first-generation college students ( $M = 3.73, SD = .12$ ) in the age they experienced sexual intercourse for the first time,  $t(430) = 2.18, p < .05$ . There was also a significant difference among males in their sexual intercourse experiences. Overall, first-generation males ( $M = 8.13, SD = 2.03$ ) reported being older than non-first-generation males ( $M = 7.44, SD = 1.63$ ) when they started to have sexual intercourse,  $t(157) = 2.37, p < .05$ .

For the examination of the nine different risky sexual behaviors, chi-square analyses only found one significant difference. More non-first-generation college students responded with *yes* in regards to having sex while being on multiple substances (e.g., drugs and alcohol) compared to first-generation college students,  $\chi^2(441) = 5.25, p = .022, \eta^2 = .11$ . Also, a  $t$ -test was used to determine if there was a difference in generational status in heavy drinking and then having unplanned sex. It was found that first-generation ( $M = 1.81, SD = 1.20$ ) and non-first-generation ( $M = 2.09, SD = 1.29$ ) college students have unplanned sex while drinking excessively,  $t(438) = -2.38, p = .018$ .

Table 1. Chi-Square values applied to generational status and risky sexual behaviors

Risky Sexual Behaviors	Chi-Square	P
Sex without a condom	.001	.976
Sex with people before finding out they had STD's	.340	.560
Sex while using multiple substances (e.g., drugs and alcohol)	5.252	.022*
Sex with multiple partners at once	.798	.372
Sex while intoxicated	1.636	.201
Unprotected anal sex	1.923	.165
Sex without my full consent	.058	.810
Sex outside of a monogamous relationship	.006	.940
*Significant at the .05 value		

## Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to determine if there were any differences in alcohol use and sexual behavior between first-generation and non-first-generation college students. We also examined whether ethnicity and gender was associated with alcohol use and sexual behavior. Overall, the study demonstrated few differences between first-generation and non-first-generation college students in regard to sexual behavior. However, the study found that ethnicity and gender played an important role in determining the differences in certain sexual behaviors. When examining alcohol use, this study found a significant interaction between generational status and ethnicity within the female sample of this study, which showed similar results to that of Johnson and Glassman (1998). The significant interaction, as seen in Figure 1, shows how both generational status and ethnicity were both equally important when determining if there were alcohol use differences. Interestingly, Johnson and Glassman (2008) found that it is common for females to drink alcohol as a way to deal with problems, so seeing a result that demonstrates females drinking alcohol to cope with their problems is really no surprise.

Most of the sexual behavior differences found in this study showed an association between ethnicity within the male sample of the study. Overall, white participants reported being less permissive in their sexual practices compared to non-white participants. This meant that students who were not Caucasian were more open-minded with

their sexual practices, which can be a variety of situations (e.g, sexual toys, masturbation during intercourse). Buhi et al. (2010) found in his study that Caucasians participated more in anal and oral sexual activities compared to other ethnic groups, meaning that the results in this study do not concur with their study. Unfortunately, we did not have a large ethnically diverse sample, which would have given us a more well-rounded sense of ethnically diverse sexual behaviors, should there have been any.

Interestingly, white students reported engaging more in necking, light kissing, and in holding hands compared to non-white students. These results show that even though white students were not as permissive in their sexual practices, they participate in the basic sexual practices of kissing. These differences were very apparent within the male sample of the study as white males reported participating in the behaviors of necking, light kissing, and the holding of hands more compared to non-white males. It is possible that our female sample did not have any differences since they are known for being a little more reserved in their sexual practices compared to males (Scott-Sheldon, et al., 2008). Although these results showed that ethnicity and gender are associated with certain sexual behavior differences, there were not differences based on generational status. The results for sexual practices show differences in sexual permissiveness, yet generational status is not the main factor for those differences. Instead, ethnicity played a more prominent role when analyzing differences in permissiveness within the participants of this study.

There was, however, a marginally significant difference between the generational statuses in the engagement of anal intercourse and age at first sexual intercourse. Overall, first-generation college students reported that they engaged in anal intercourse more than non-first-generation college students. Also, first-generation college students had their first sexual intercourse at a younger age compared to non-first-generation college student. There were no other significant differences in sexual practices such as oral sex or the amount of times they had sexual intercourse. Thus, the hypothesis that there is a difference within the generational statuses was not supported

Risky sexual behavior was also examined in this study. It was originally hypothesized that first-generation college students would engage more in risky sexual behavior. However, the results showed that non-first-generation college students reported that they had sexual intercourse more if they drank a lot of alcohol. Engaging in sexual intercourse after drinking alcohol heavily is common among college students (Grossbard, et al., 2007; Scott-Sheldon, et al., 2008). Non-first-generation college students also reported partaking more in sexual intercourse when they were on multiple substances. These results have similarities to research claiming that college students engage in risky sex if they are intoxicated or on drugs (Scott-Sheldon, et al., 2008). Considering that only one of nine risky sexual behaviors was significant, and that the results contradicted the predicted results, this hypothesis was not supported.

In light of the results found for this study, limitations, such as having a primarily white student sample and data was collected strictly at one specific northwestern university, may have influenced the results. Though we did have an ample sample of 441 college students, the lack of ethnic diversity does not accurately represent typical first-generation college students. It is suggested that future research should try to have a more ethnically diverse sample and try to collect data from many areas, if possible. It is possible that the results may differ if the sample collected consists of more Latinos, Asians, and African-Americans since they all tend to differ from Caucasians in alcohol use and sexual behavior (Bourdeu, et al., 2007; Buhi, et al., 2010; Meston, et al., 1996). It is also recommended that future research examine the generational status differences when looking at risky sexual behaviors. Non-first-generation college students reported more engagement in risky sexual behaviors.

Information obtained from studies such as this one can help universities assist parents whose children are first-generation college students. As mentioned before, first-generation college students lack parental guidance at the collegiate level since they are the first in their family to go to college (Alessandria & Nelson, 2005; Majer, 2009; Ramos-Sanchez & Nichols, 2007). Finding information about college students' behaviors, not only inside the classroom, but outside as well, can help programs that are geared towards assisting first-generation college students inform parents about what it means to be the first in their family to go to a university. Also, information obtained from studies like this one will help universities prepare their orientation programs for incoming freshmen.

In sum, the results did not support our hypothesis that there are many significant differences between generational statuses in regards to alcohol use and sexual behavior. Instead, our results showed that ethnicity and gender associated with generational status has a significant influence in certain sexual behaviors. In reference to alcohol use, differences within our female sample regarding drinking alcohol to negatively cope were found. More research is needed to examine the differences between first-generation and non-first-generation college students outside of the classroom setting. For that reason, this study's purpose was to examine whether there were differences between generational statuses in reference to the two mentioned behaviors. It is important to keep researching differences in generational status in order to get a better understanding of sexual behavior and alcohol use among the college population.

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