

How the Use of Social Marketing can Increase Student Well-being

Denise Reina^{*1}, Nikolaos Misirlis¹

¹HAN University of Applied Sciences, International School of Business, the Netherlands

Abstract

The present study aims to help universities to raise awareness about their support systems among their students during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Both desk and field research have been applied to theories that have structured a strategy that complements the current student well-being strategy. Even when students are aware of the support systems, they may suffer from barriers such as stigma, lack of social support or self-reliance. Therefore, this study examines various help-seeking barriers and sees how they can be reduced while creating awareness about support facilities. As this study includes social behaviour and many psychological aspects such as anxiety, depression, loneliness and stress, social marketing theories and models are used to structure the article. The results of the data analyses show that students would find it relevant to receive more information about the support systems, including well-being topics such as mindfulness and maintaining mental health. Nonetheless, students would benefit from a study environment where well-being is promoted, and barriers are reduced. COVID-19 has had an impact on students and their well-being and, therefore, there is a big opportunity for universities to offer extra support to help students during and post pandemic. This paper concludes that in order for students to perform a desired health behaviour, all behavioural factors as indicated by the social cognitive theory, should be positively influenced. Universities would do good by creating more awareness about their support facilities as it helps creating a safe environment for students where barriers are reduced, help-seeking behaviour is normalised and a sense of well-being in general may be improved.

Keywords: Student well-being; COVID-19; Social marketing; Help-seeking barriers; Social cognitive theory.