

SYMPOSIUM

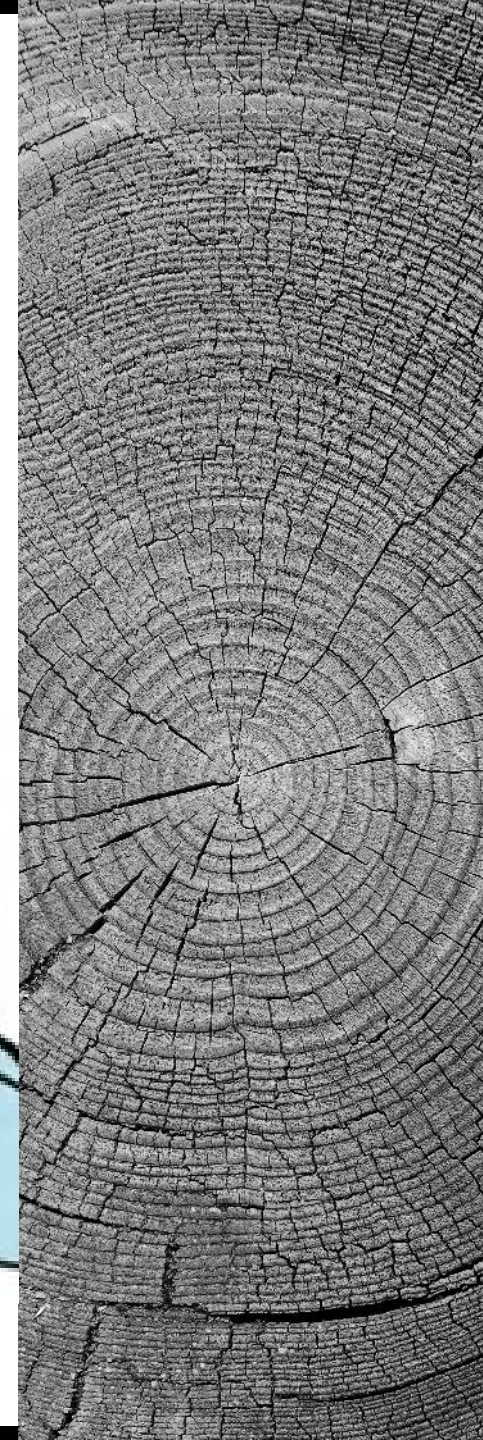
Understanding Mental Health: Exploring the challenges and coping strategies adopted by Black students at Universities in the UK

Book: Living Black at University: race and racism beyond the curriculum

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Overview

Black student's experience of mental health at university

Cultural shock for Black students and mental health stigma

Environmental factors and Black students' mental health

The relationship between mental health and drugs/medications usage

Peer support services and other coping strategies

Mental Health Support available at universities



BLACK STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH AT UNIVERSITY

- Mental health of ethnic minority students: a crisis in higher education.
- Effects of racial discrimination on students' mental health and well-being.
- Degree awarding gap for Black students.
- Inadequate institutional services.
- Underrepresentation of Black students in health-related research.



CULTURAL SHOCK FOR BLACK INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

- Black international students and the challenges of studying abroad.
- Mental health issues: a Taboo medical condition.
- Climate: lack of sun – vitamin D.
- Live in the UK and the Cultural shock.
- Diets and weight gain.



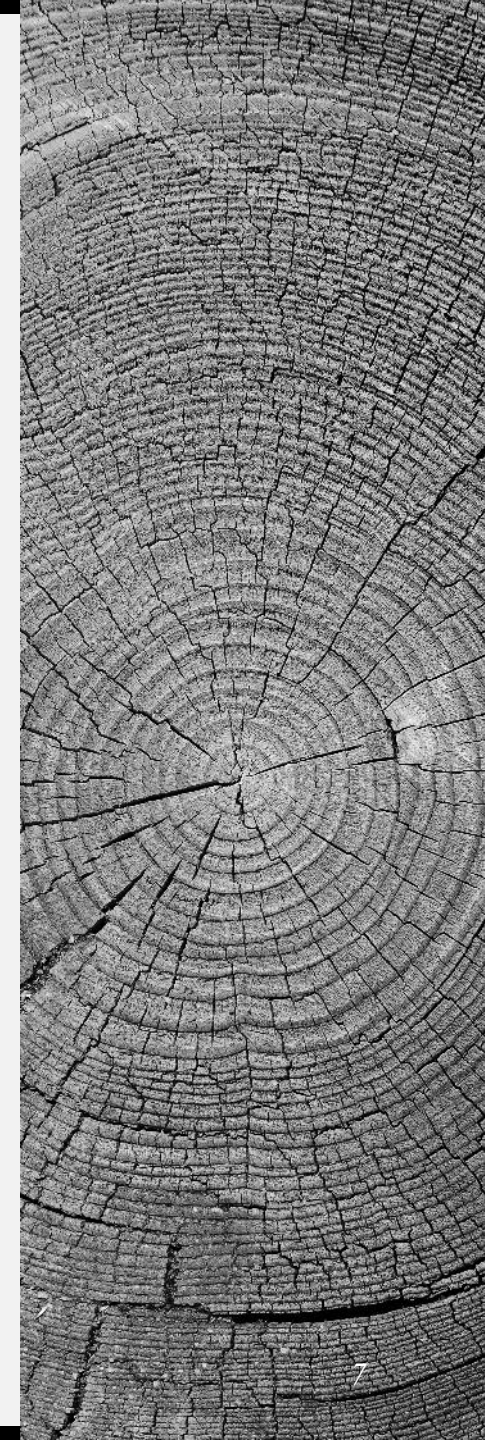
ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND BLACK STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

- Black students suffer a range of disadvantage in Higher Education
 - Examples: Black attainment gap; graduate employment and continuation rates
- They experience external demands impacting their student experience and mental health
- Socio-economic demands and familial factors impact on Black students' mental health
- Engage in term-time work which impacts studies and creates increased pressure
- Black students: large propensity to be 'first in family' to go to university



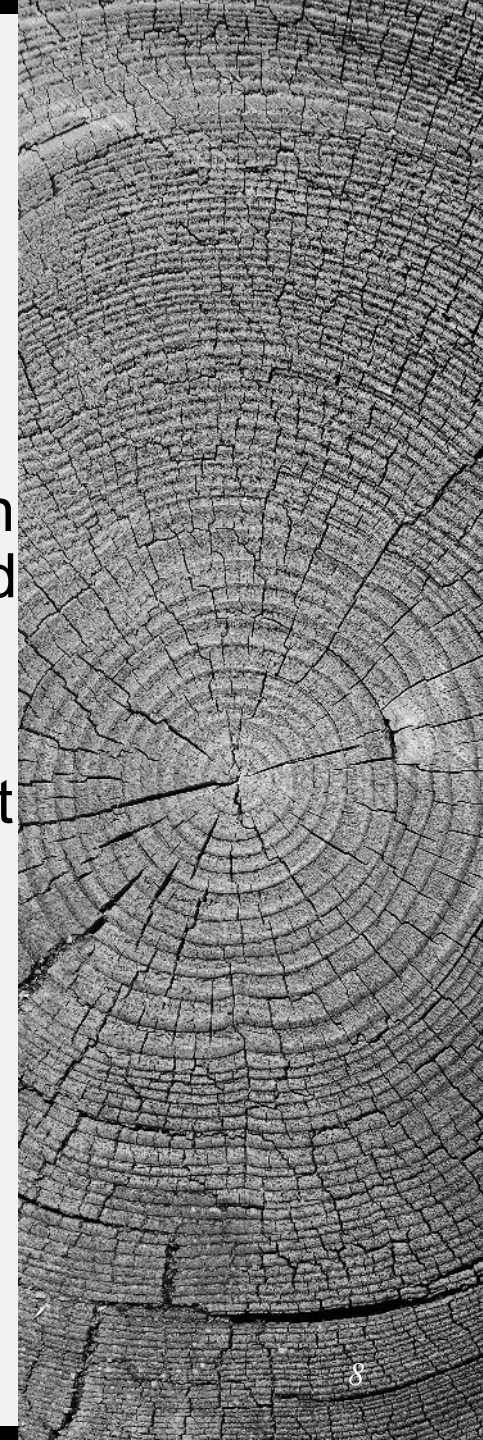
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MENTAL HEALTH AND DRUGS/MEDICATIONS USAGE

- A study from Arizona State University and Virginia Commonwealth University linked problematic alcohol consumption to the depressive symptoms brought on by racial discrimination
- Black youths are less likely to engage in smoking and alcohol use. Our findings also indicated that drug use rates among Black youth were lower in every major drug categories such as tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, illicit drug use, and legal drugs for nonmedical use when compared with Whites.



PEER SUPPORT SERVICES AND OTHER COPING STRATEGIES

- Studies suggest peer support in traditional mental health settings improves engagement and well-being and reduces mental health hospitalisations. Yet, existing peer support does not address aspects of shared identity like race and ethnicity or experiences of discrimination in treatment settings. Affinity peer support groups created around race and culture do.
- The Black X-Scape is a student-led mental health peer support group that allows Black students to have safe and liberating discussions about mental health and healing. Black students can freely express themselves and converse on mental health, wellness, stigma etc
- While peer support can't replace professional counselling, the report concludes, it should be pursued as a valuable part of a public-health approach to student well-being. Peer support can help students deal with temporary issues, like loneliness or homesickness, that aren't the result of a mental health diagnosis



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AVAILABLE AT UNIVERSITIES

- BLM and mainstreaming of EDI impacted the sector
- Multifactorial causes of mental health issues for Black students
- Support available to all students, but Black students do not access university and external mental health support
- Culturally sensitive and appropriate approaches and Black student co-creation approaches may be a solution to Black students lack of engagement in services and support
- Reliance on informal sources of support
- Lack of research in this area relating to Black students



THANK YOU

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