

Protective factors against suicidal behaviors among black college students

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Having a strong ethnic identity was linked with a lower risk of suicidal behaviors among Black college students in a recent study published in the *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*.

The study examined the influence of cultural orientation ([ethnic identity](#), Afrocentric worldview, and [religiosity](#)) and personal resources ([resiliency](#) and optimism) on suicidal behaviors among Black college students.

The investigators noted that for Black college students, especially as members of a racial/[ethnic minority](#) within the society, having a strong ethnic identity may be a stronger protective factor against suicidality as compared with religiosity and Afrocentric worldview.

Also, resilience and a sense of empowerment seemed to matter more than optimism in terms of decreasing suicidal behaviors. Black college students who endorsed a higher level of Afrocentric worldview, ethnic identity, or religiosity were more resilient, which in turn protected against suicidality.

"Most often, the uniqueness of Black persons' identity is viewed from a negative perspective. With increasing calls to respect and uphold Blacks' lives, our study sheds light to the positive role of Black ethnic identity in enhancing their psychological welfare," said co-author Pius N. Nyutu, Ph.D., of Fayetteville State University.

More information: Mei-Chuan Wang et al, Suicidality Protective Factors Among Black College Students: Which Cultural and Personal Resources Matter?, *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development* (2020). [DOI: 10.1002/jmcd.12198](https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12198)

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