Perceptions of How Doctoral Students with Learning Disabilities and ADHD Use Disability Services

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Abstract

This study serves as an initial attempt to examine the ways in which doctoral students with learning disabilities utilize campus-based disability support services. As an increasing number of students with diagnosed learning disabilities are entering doctoral programs, it is important that researchers focus on understanding the unique needs of this population. Research has shown that access to accommodations in the form of disability support services can be critical to academic persistence and success in higher education, but few studies have focused specifically on the perceived needs of doctoral students or the ways in which their needs and use of services may be different from undergraduate students. Service providers in a doctoral degree-granting institutions across the United States were sent a web-based survey aimed at examining the ways doctoral students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD utilize campus-based disability support services. Our findings suggest that there is an array of services provided to doctoral students with learning disabilities. The findings enhance our understanding of the experiences of doctoral students with learning disabilities and ADHD with regard to needs for, and utilization of, campus-based support services.