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SOC 481

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Introduction

This survey was on student's thoughts on returning to in-person learning. As schools begin to open up around the world many schools have started to transition back to in-person learning from online. The research question I posed for this survey is "What is the relationship between a student's thoughts on returning to in-person learning and need for social interaction?" I posed this question because I thought it would be interesting to examine how peoples perspectives differ on going back to in-person learning, and whether their need for social interaction has a correlation to it.. My first bivariate hypothesis I will test is that there is a relationship between a student's feelings about returning to in-person learning and their financial burdens. My second bivariate hypothesis that I will test is that there is a relationship between how comfortable or uncomfortable one is and how their mental health will be affected from returning to in-person learning. There could be a significant effect on one's mental health because one may feel uncomfortable going back to in-person learning. I think it will be sociologically interesting to analyze this survey because it can provide a rough example of how the many perspectives in the population see the return to in-person learning. There is a large argument currently being made that people need to socialize because people are socializing creatures, and the need to avoid others because of health complications. By doing an analysis on this small sample of university students one can see the different opinions and reasons people have to like or dislike the return. This can give a small insight to what the population could possibly be thinking. Furthermore, this survey is based on a very recent situation and does not have much information regarding it. COVID-19 has caused schools to shut down for nearly three years and has schools have only just started opening up again. This is a problem that students

worldwide have had to face and is also a new experience for everyone. I think it is sociologically interesting to learn how the student's feel about the return after studying from home for so long.

Description of Sample

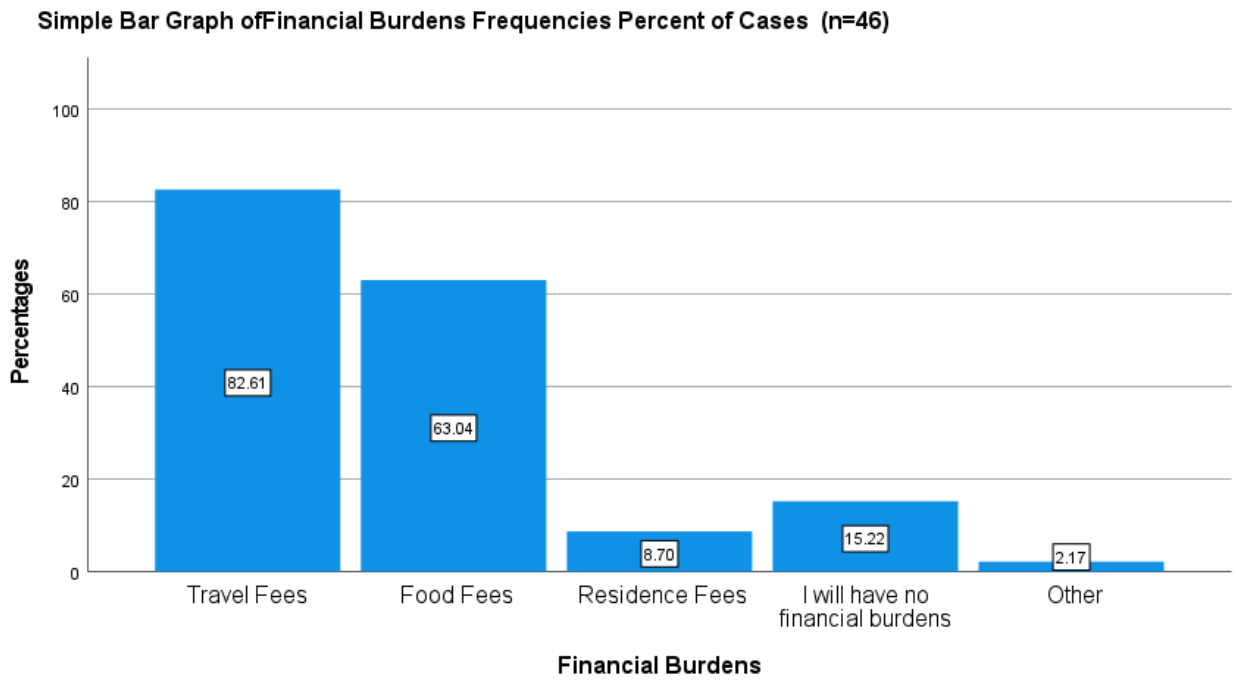
How many courses are you enrolled in during the Winter 2022 term?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3.00 Three or fewer courses	7	15.2	15.2	15.2
	4.00 Four courses	12	26.1	26.1	41.3
	5.00 Five courses	22	47.8	47.8	89.1
	6.00 Six or more courses	5	10.9	10.9	100.0
	Total	46	100.0	100.0	

This survey was administered to all the students in the course SOC 481 at X university. In total the survey was answered by 46 students. This frequency table shows that most of the students the survey was administered to are currently full-time university students. Almost half of the sample or 47.8% takes a full five courses while attending university, while 26.1% are taking four courses, and 10.9% are taking six or more. This means that 84.8% of students are full time university students. As shown in the frequency table there were no missing or invalid entries. The students of X university are also all taking the course online. While some courses remained online, others started to transition back to in-person learning. This makes these students the perfect demographic to answer my survey.

Hypothesis 1 Results

a) The first variable I will be describing the univariate distribution for is a student's feelings about returning back to in-person learning. The total number of students who answered this question was 46 and had no missing or invalid cases. 26 people or 56.5% of people said that they are not looking forward to going back to in-person learning. On the other hand, 20 people or 43.5% of people said that they are looking forward to going to school. Since this was a dichotomous level variable, I will be using Mode to describe the center of the variable. The attribute that occurs the most frequently is the answer "No".



The second variable I will be describing the univariate distribution for is a student's financial burdens. The total number of students who answered this question was 46 and had no missing or

invalid cases. This was a select all that apply question with an option for other.One can see from the bar graph that 82.61% of people will have some sort of travel fee when traveling to attend in-person learning. 63% of people also said that there will be some sort of food fee when returning to in-person learning. Only 15.22% of people stated that they will have no financial burdens when attending in-person learning. Since this is a nominal level variable, I will use Mode to describe the center of distribution. Using mode I can conclude that Travel Fees are the center of distribution because it was picked the most frequently at 82.61%.

b)

Are You Looking Forward and Financial Burdens Crosstabulation (n=46)

			Financial_Burdens[a]					
			Travel Fees	Food Fees	Residence Fees	I will have no financial burdens	Other	Total
AreYouLookingForward	1 No	Count	22	15	3	4	0	26
		% within Financial_Burdens	57.9%	51.7%	75.0%	57.1%	0.0%	
	2 Yes	Count	16	14	1	3	1	20
		% within Financial_Burdens	42.1%	48.3%	25.0%	42.9%	100.0%	
Total		Count	38	29	4	7	1	46

Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

To find the magnitude and direction of the relationship between my two categorical variables I must do a cross tabulation. The independent variable is financial burdens and thevariable is whether they are looking forward to in-person learning. Among students who have travel fees, 57.9% of students are not looking forward to going back to in-person learning. Among students who have food fees, 51.7% of them are not looking forward to going back to in-person learning. The magnitude or size difference of this is a 6.2 percentage point difference. This is not that large of a percentage point difference and shows a small magnitude. Using the bivariate correlation

feature in SPSS I can find the pearson's correlation as well as the p-value of my bivariate variable. From SPSS I can see that looking forward to in-person learning and financial burdens have a negative and very weak relationship. This is because the pearson's r is less than 0.3 and also has a negative sign in front of it. The p-value is also greater than 0.05 which means we cannot reject the null hypothesis. Due to these factors shown from doing a correlation test on SPSS, we cannot conclude that there is definitely a relationship.

c) I found it interesting that there is a very weak relationship between financial burdens and whether a student is looking forward to in-person learning or not. I had assumed that someone with less financial stability would also not be looking forward to returning to in-person learning. While the data does indeed show that people who are not looking forward to returning are mainly because of food fees and travel fees, there are also many people who are looking forward to returning with the same financial burdens. This is most likely because students are sick of staying at home all day and would rather go to school. Studies show that "the students who felt that they mattered the least were those who learned online full-time during the pandemic" (Vailliancourt et al., 2021) This shows that even though one may have many financial burdens, they find it worth it for the benefit of their mental health to return to in-person learning. Another important factor shown from asking why they are looking forward to going back to in-person learning shows that many people want to meet their friends. We as humans are sociable creatures that need to depend on each other for a sense of belonging. These values may overcome the financial burdens. Another case I did not account for was how much of a financial burden one could potentially have. Since the survey only asked for what financial burdens and not how much

of a financial burden, I will not be able to identify people who spend more than others and are less financially stable.

Hypothesis 2 Results

a)

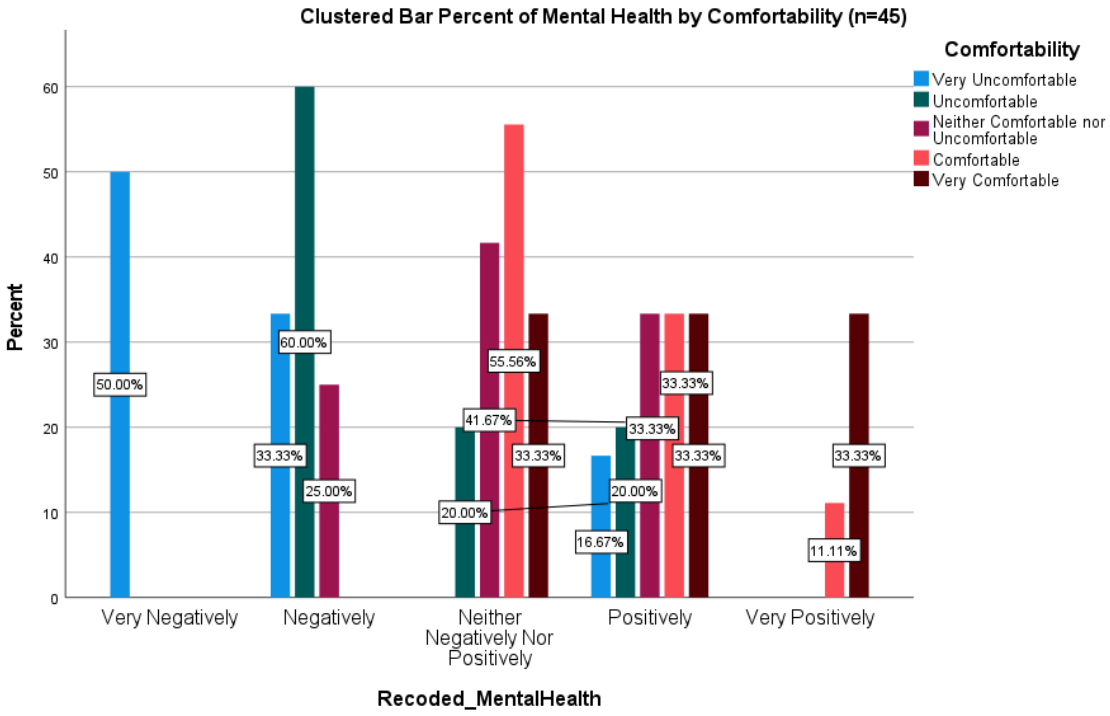
How Comfortable or Uncomfortable (n=46)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Very Uncomfortable	6	13.0	13.0	13.0
	2 Uncomfortable	15	32.6	32.6	45.7
	3 Neither Comfortable nor Uncomfortable	12	26.1	26.1	71.7
	4 Comfortable	10	21.7	21.7	93.5
	5 Very Comfortable	3	6.5	6.5	100.0
	Total	46	100.0	100.0	

The first variable I will be describing the univariate distribution for is how uncomfortable or comfortable a student feels about returning to in-person learning. The total number of students who answered this question was 46 and there were no missing or invalid cases. As one can see from the frequency table most people feel uncomfortable about returning to in-person learning at 32.6%. Since this is an ordinal level variable, I will be using the mode and median to describe the center of the variable. The mode is “uncomfortable" because it appears the most at 15. The median is “Neither Comfortable nor Uncomfortable” because it is the part where the cumulative percent passes over 50%. The second variable I will be describing the univariate distribution for is how the students mental health is affected by returning to in-person learning. The total number of students who answered this question was 45 and has 1 missing case. The frequency table shows that both “Negatively” and “Neither Negatively Nor Positively” have the same frequency.

Since this is a dichotomous variable I will only be looking at the mode for the center of distribution. The mode is both Negatively and Neither Negatively Nor Positively because they appear the most frequent.

b)



To find the magnitude and direction of my bivariate relationship between the two categorical variables, I used crosstabulation and a test for pearson's r. I did not use the chi-square test because more than 20% of my expected count was less than 5. The independent variable is their comfortability with returning to in-person learning and the dependent variable is their mental health.By graphing the bivariate relationship I can see that only people who felt very uncomfortable also had their mental health affected very negatively. On the other hand people who felt comfortable with returning to in-person

learning mainly had neither a negative nor positive change to their mental health. From the crosstabulation I made in SPSS I can see the magnitude. Among the uncomfortable group, 60% of students say that their mental health was affected in a negative way while 0% of students in the comfortable group said that their mental health was affected in a negative way. This is a 60 percentage point difference. On the other hand, among the uncomfortable group, 20% of students say that their mental health was affected in a positive way while 33.3 of students among the comfortable group has said that their mental health was affected in a positive way. Using the SPSS bivariate correlation feature I found pearson's r. Since the Pearson correlation came out to be .588 I can state that there is a moderate positive relationship in my bivariate relationship. The Sig. (2 tailed) value comes out to .000. Since it is impossible for the value to be .000 it must be a very small number. Therefore we can conclude that we can reject the null hypothesis because it is less than 0.05. In conclusion we can state that there is a relationship between the two variables that is likely to occur in the population.

c) The results I found proved my hypothesis to be correct that there is a relationship between a student's comfortability with returning to in-person learning and how their mental health is affected by it. It is significant to notice that there is a moderate positive relationship because it shows a sample of the current population of students' feelings on the return. It is also significant to notice that most people feel uncomfortable with returning and feel that this will impact their mental health in a negative way. I think the reason there is a relationship between these two variables is because of how long

COVID-19 is lasting. I think people who feel comfortable returning to school and think their mental health will be affected in a positive way feel the need for social interaction. People are social creatures and need to socialize with each other to make them feel a sense of belonging. Studies show that “Specifically, individuals who feel as if they matter to others tend to experience better mental health and psychological well-being than those who feel that they do not matter or matter less to others” (Vailliancourt et al., 2021). This explains why those specific people will want to return to in-person learning. On the contrary, a majority of people feel uncomfortable with returning to in-person learning and believe it will affect them in a negative way. This is most likely because of the slew of problems that come with going out in public during the pandemic of COVID-19. The main reason one feels uncomfortable is most likely because a university is a place with many people in closed off spaces. This is particularly dangerous for people as it increases the chances of getting COVID-19.

Reflection and Changes

While processing the data I realized that there were many flaws to my final questionnaire. There are many changes that I would make if I were to repeat this survey project. One thing i realized was that I should have asked at least one demographic question. A question such as "What school year are you currently in?" would have greatly improved the accuracy of my data as I would be able to see which year university student they were. Another change I would make is adding more questions that would help me answer my research question. I Feel that because I did not ask many questions that could correlate to each other well, I struggled to figure out my hypotheses and the bivariate relationships. A strength to my questionnaire was that the re-coding in SPSS was done well so I had no problem using the data set. While I think that another strength to my questionnaire was simple and easy to understand, I feel a major weakness to it was that it was too simple. Since the questionnaire was so simple I lacked major questions that would greatly improve the accuracy of my survey. I realized how hard it was to answer my research questions and prove my hypotheses when I do not have much to work with. Furthermore, another change I will make is creating better questions. An example is when I could not do a chi-square test because the expected counts were less than 5. Knowing that the sample size of the survey was going to be small I should have made previous preparations for the final report. The final change I would make to my questionnaire is avoiding select-all questions. Select all questions are particularly difficult to use in a bivariate relationship with another categorical variable.

Overall I think the greatest change I would make is spending more time in thinking and then creating a proper and well-made survey. I realized only after attempting to write the final report that it is very difficult without a proper and well-made survey.

Bibliography

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