

**VIRTUAL POSTER SESSION:
CELEBRATING THE WORK
OF OUR 4ZZ6 STUDENTS!**



SOCIAL SCIENCES
Social Psychology

SEPTEMBER 2023-APRIL 2024

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY 4ZZ6



Introduction

- The purpose of our research was to explore perceptions of non-conforming social behaviours among McMaster University undergraduate students.
- This research examined how faculties at McMaster perceive non-conforming social behaviours in their faculty versus outside their faculty.

Topic Area

- Provide insight into how McMaster undergraduate students perceive deviance from within their faculty in comparison to outside of their faculty.
- Understand the saliency of group identities.

Research Questions

- Do McMaster Social Sciences students perceive non-conformity differently from Engineering students?
- Does the saliency of group identity influence perceptions of deviance between in-groups and out-groups amongst different faculties?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=41).
- Sampling Method:** Non-probability, convenience sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through posts on various faculty and club pages on Instagram as well as physical posters put up around campus.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi statistical software.

Results and Discussion

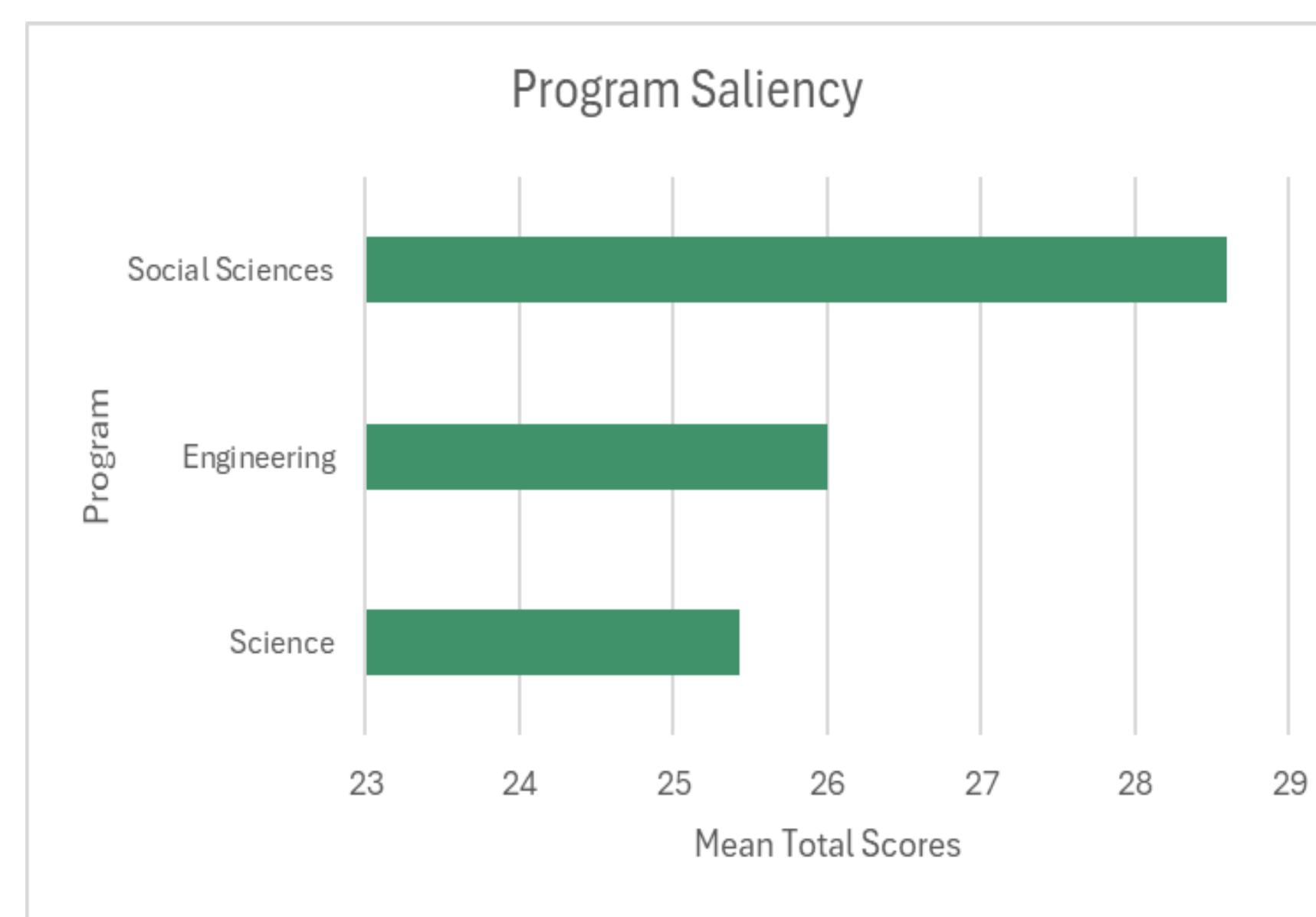


Figure 1 – How strongly each student identifies with their own program

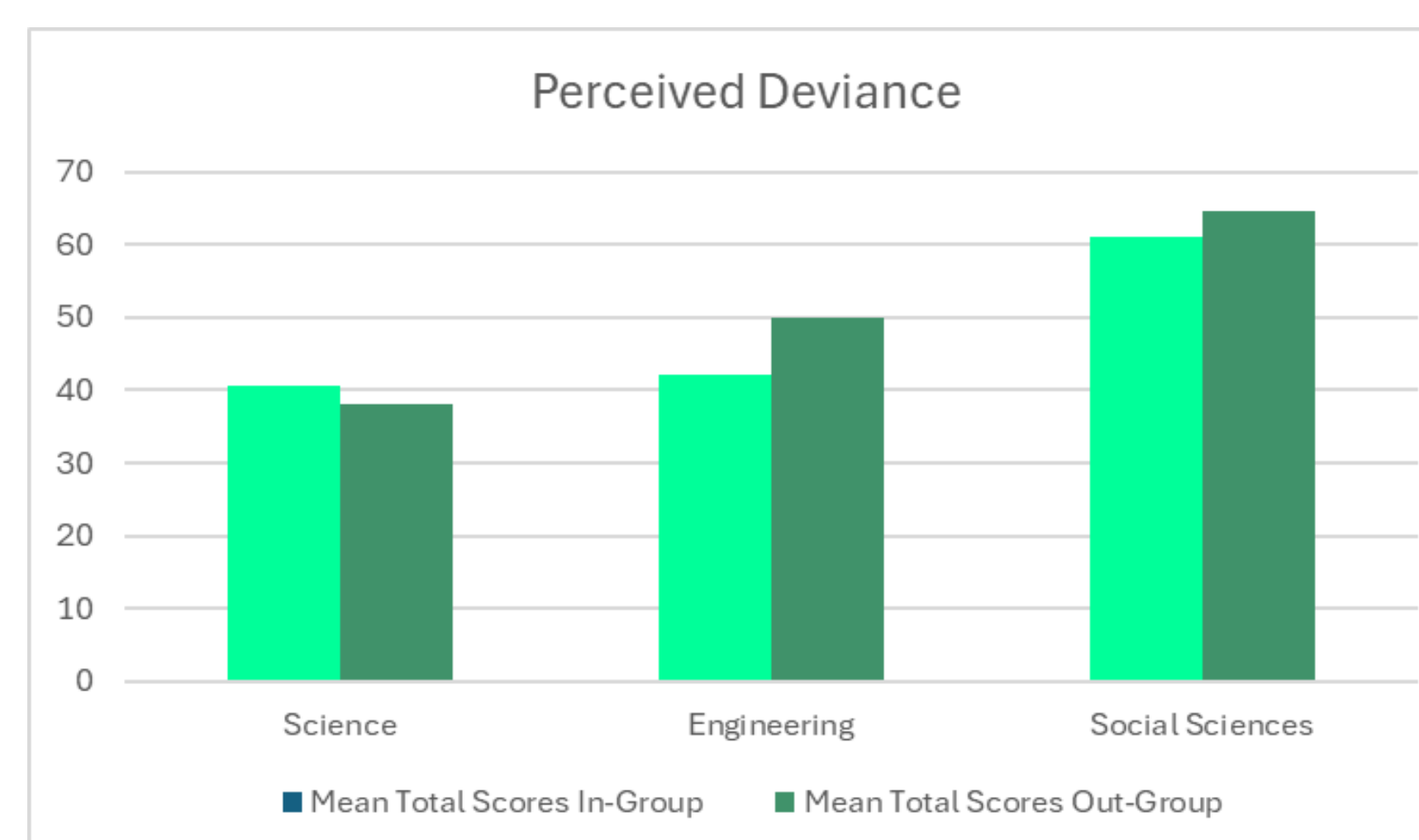


Figure 2 – The students' perception on in-group and out-group deviance

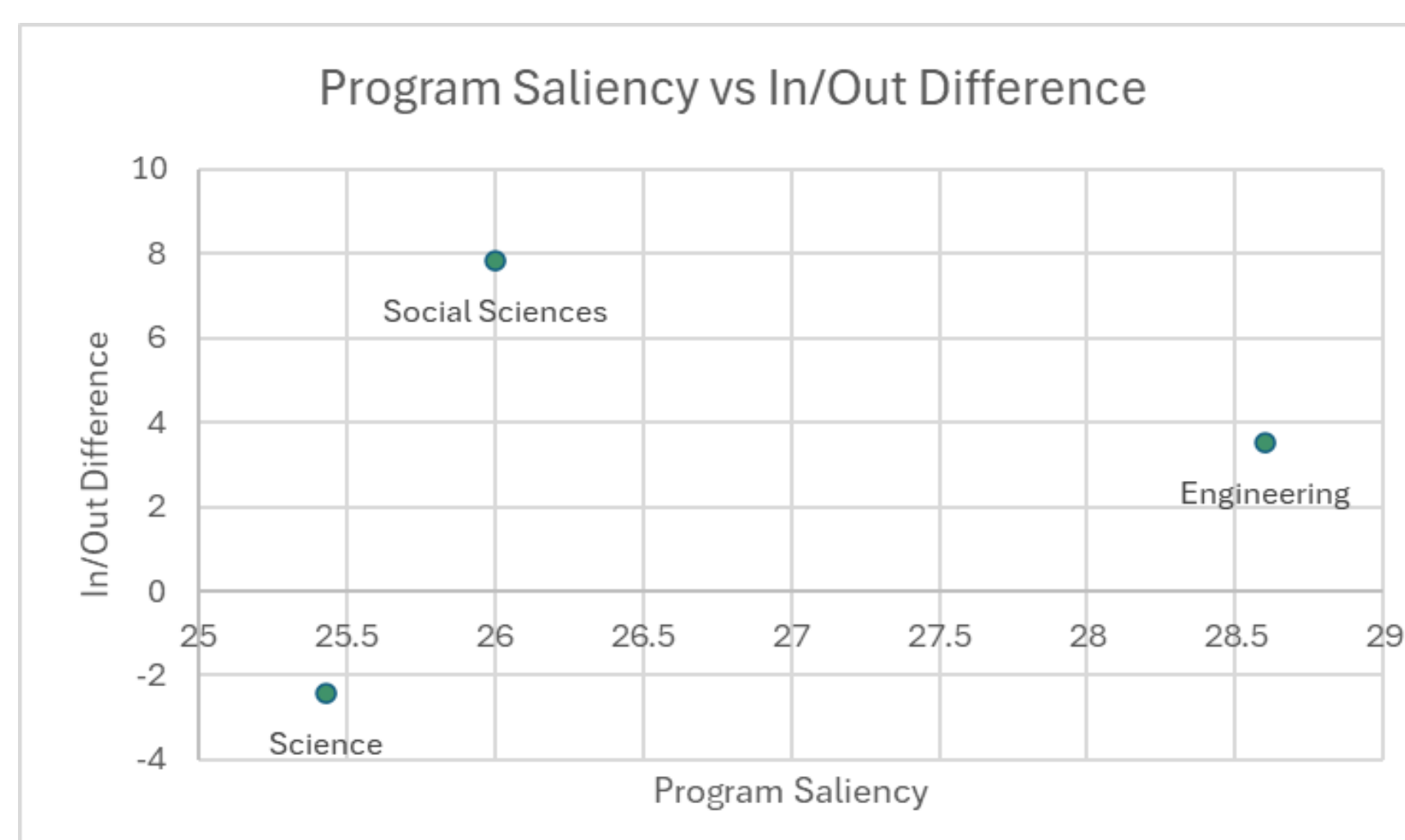


Figure 3 – Correlation between program saliency and difference between perceived in-group/out-group deviance

Welch's T-Test

	Statistic	df	P - Value
Sallience	1.279	9.5	0.231
Difference	-0.891	14.9	0.387

Null: μ Faculty of Social Science = μ Faculty of Engineering

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Figure 4 – Welch's t-test analysis

Program saliency was measured on a continuous scale with a maximum possible score of 50. The higher the score, the stronger one identifies with their respective program. Program saliency was hypothesized to correlate with differences in deviance ratings of one's in group compared to one's out group. This aligns with the research done by Naomi (2023), regarding the participant's behavioural and cognitive motivation towards preserving their social identity. Although responses between faculties look stark, they are not statistically significant. This may be due to our small sample size.

In Figure 2, both Social Sciences and Engineering students perceived in-group deviance as more acceptable than out-group deviance, while science students displayed an inverse effect. Research by Vinney (2021), explains how individuals gain their collective identity based on their belonging to a group. As a result, participants want to maintain a positive relationship between their group members, as well as preserve their own identity through association. This illustrates the bias and relevancy of group membership on their cognitive and motivational processes (Vinney, 2021)

Figure 3 represents a synthesis of the data in the above graphs. Here, program saliency is measured against the difference between student's perception of in-group and out-group deviance. The divergence shows that students in general are more accepting of in-group deviance. Science students, on the other hand, are less accepting of in-group deviance. As seen in Figure 1, Engineering students have stronger saliency which correlates with their higher acceptance of in-group deviance. Meanwhile, Sciences students have a weaker program saliency; hence, they have a lower acceptance of in-group deviance.

Significant Insights

- Students reported to be more approving of deviance within their in-groups.
- Students are more critical of deviancy outside of their in-groups.

Conclusions

- Current research involving deviance and non-conforming behaviours do not account for the effects of in-group and out-group perceptions and influence.
- With that in mind, due to our limited sample size, our conclusions about perceptions of deviance cannot be generalized to the entire undergraduate student population.

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Acknowledgements

- We would like to acknowledge Dr. Sarah Clancy for her valuable guidance and unwavering support during this process. Additionally, we would like to thank the Social Psychology Department for covering the costs of this poster. Lastly, we would like to thank the various McMaster faculties and clubs that promoted our survey.

Introduction

- In today's society, social media has a dominant impact on how information is shared and expressed. Many individuals utilize these platforms to stay connected with others.
- As social media plays such a vital role in people's lives, we were interested to examine the ways social media may impact mental health, positively or negatively, while also evaluating the impact on academic performance (Junco, 2012).

Topic Area

- This research sought to explore and assess the connection between digital media consumption and student's academic performance.

Research Question

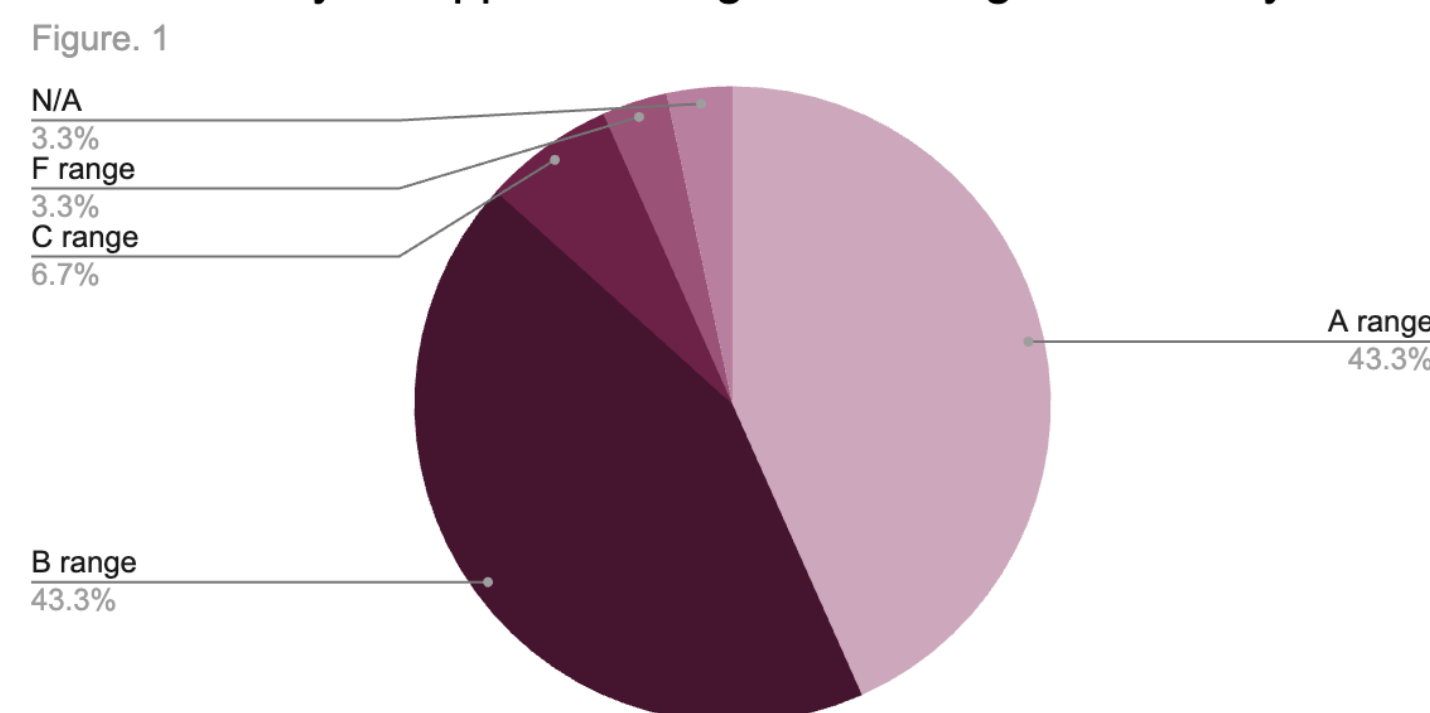
- How do feelings of stress mediated by digital media consumption and/or use affect academic performance of undergraduate students at McMaster University?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=30).
- Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through McMaster student-run clubs, societies, and groups via e-mail and social media, and through physical posters displayed with approval throughout the McMaster campus.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Our group analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi and Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

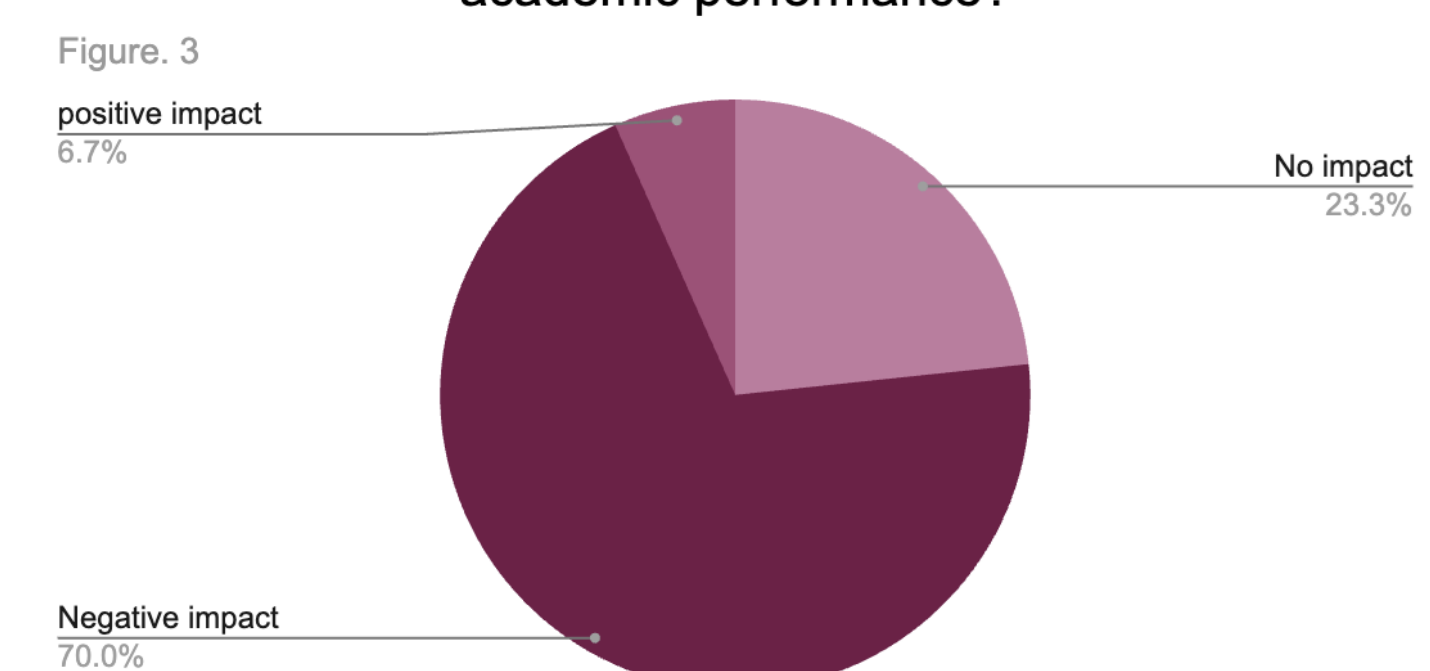
Results and Discussion

Figure 1: What was your approximate grade average last term/year?



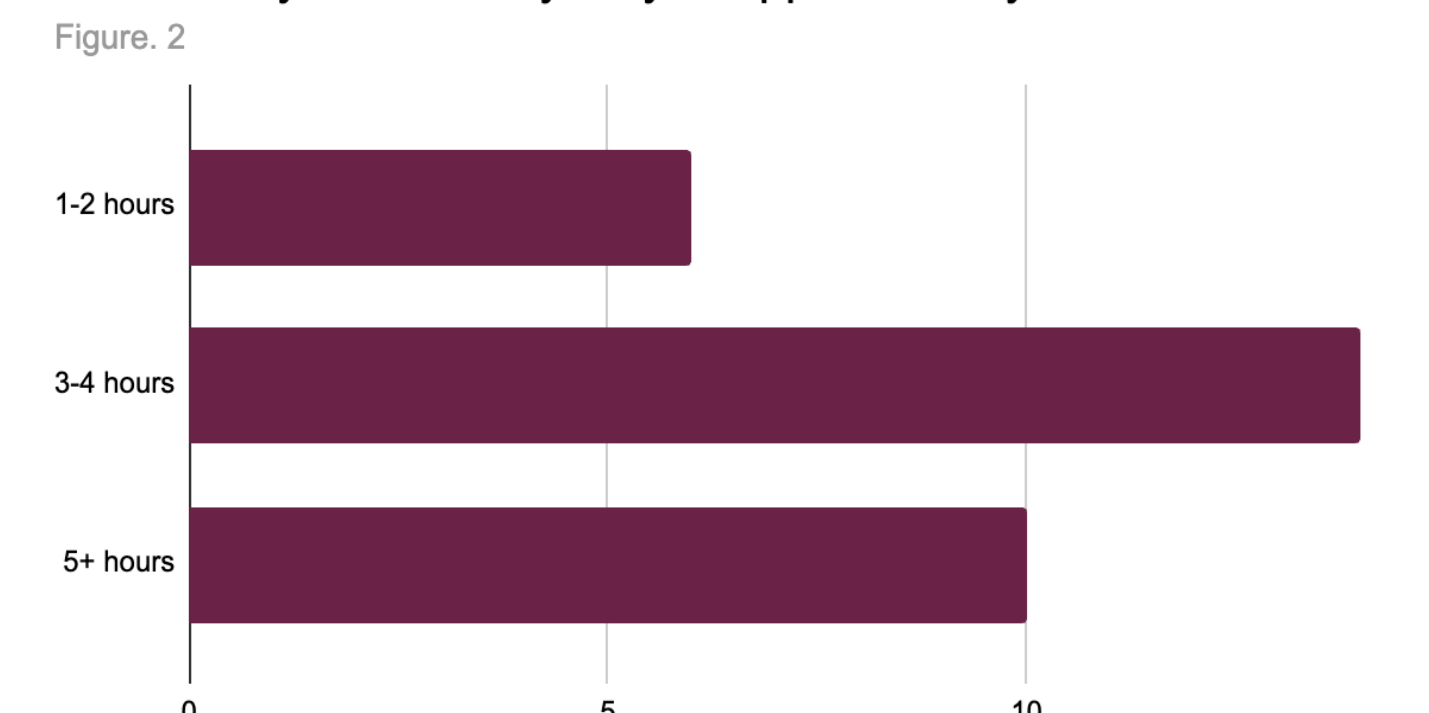
- Figure 1** demonstrates the survey participants' (n=30) self-disclosed grade-range achieved last term or year. 43.3% of participants achieved an A-range, 43.3% of participants achieved a B-range, 6.7% of participants achieved a C-range, 3.3% of participants achieved an F-range, and 3.3% of participants did not disclose their grade range.

Figure 3: What impact do you think social media has on your academic performance?



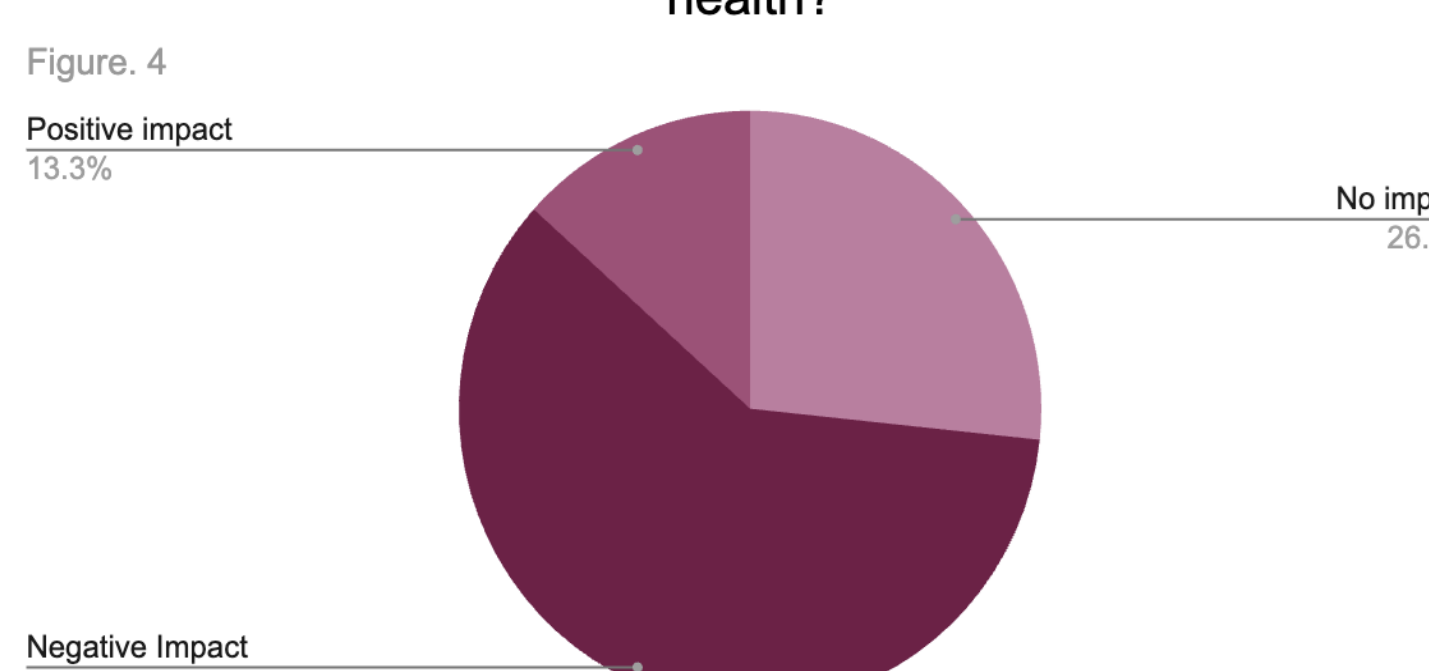
- Figure 3** demonstrates if survey participants think that social media has an impact on their academic performance. The results show that 70% of participants (n=21) think that social media has a negative impact on their academic performance, 23.3% of participants (n=7) think that social media has no impact on their academic performance, and 6.7% of participants (n=7) think that social media has a positive impact on their academic performance.

Figure 2: How many hours a day do you approximately use social media?



- Figure 2** demonstrates the number of hours survey participants spend using social media per day. The results show that 46.6% of participants (n=14) spend three to four hours using social media per day, 33.3% of participants (n=10) spend five or more hours using social media per day, and 20% of participants (n=6) spend one to two hours using social media per day.

Figure 4: What impact do you think social media has on your mental health?



- Figure 4** demonstrates if survey participants think that social media has an impact on their mental health. The results show that 60% of participants (n=18) think that social media has a negative impact on their mental health, 26.7% of participants (n=8) think that social media has no impact on their mental health, and 13.3% of participants (n=4) think that social media has a positive impact on their mental health.

- Self-presentation theory (Goffman, 1959) suggests that individuals may present themselves a certain way to the outside world, even if their reality does not match what they present (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). In the context of this research, individuals agreed that social media would negatively affect academic performance. However, most students disclosed their grade range as higher than what would be expected from previous answers (n=26). This is interesting as the students' grades do not match their earlier thoughts on academic performance and social media.
- The concept of 'the looking-glass self' (Cooley, 1983) refers to how one appears to someone, how others perceive them to be, and the judgements that arise, which may elicit pride or shame. In the context of this research, the results suggest that survey participants are aware of the perceived impact social media may have on their academic performance and mental health and are willing to acknowledge it but continue to spend significant time utilizing a variety of social media platforms throughout their day.

Significant Insights

- Most of our study participants self-identified as female (n=27).
- While participants were aware of the negative impacts of online social media, the majority have noted at least 3+ hours of usage per day (n=14), with most spending time on social media as opposed to studying (n=18).
- While participants note the negative effects and usage of social media, they conversely report quality grade point averages.

Conclusions

- Overall, most of our participants reported that spending time on social media has a negative impact on academic performance (n=21). However, that did not seem to actually affect their grades.
- Self presentation theory may be used to understand the discrepancy between how students felt about social media negatively impacting their academics compared to their actual grades.
- Moreover, our data suggest that social media usage seems to impact levels of stress and mental health more than academic performance.

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- We would like to thank Dr. Clancy for her guidance and support throughout the research process. We would also like to thank the Social Psychology Program for covering our costs for our project and supporting us by posting our survey to gather participants in our research. Finally, we thank the McMaster community for participating and allowing us to gain insight into our topic of concern.

Introduction

- The purpose of our study was to investigate the relationship between employment status of undergraduate students and its effect on their stress, health and well-being.
- Our study examined how employment status and weekly hours worked shapes undergraduate students' experiences in university, namely in terms of stress levels, overall health and well-being, and academic performance.

Topic Area

- Understand the impact associated with employment status of undergraduate students.
- Observe the greater effect that working during studies has on stress, health, and well-being.

Research Question

- How does employment status and weekly hours worked affect undergraduate students' stress levels, overall well-being and academic success?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older. We took in responses from students who were unemployed as well as a control group; sample size: (n=36).
- Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through posts on student-run Instagram pages, as well as through email. Posters were put up on boards across campus with details on the study and the survey link.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Data was analyzed using Jamovi.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1: Perception of Mental Health

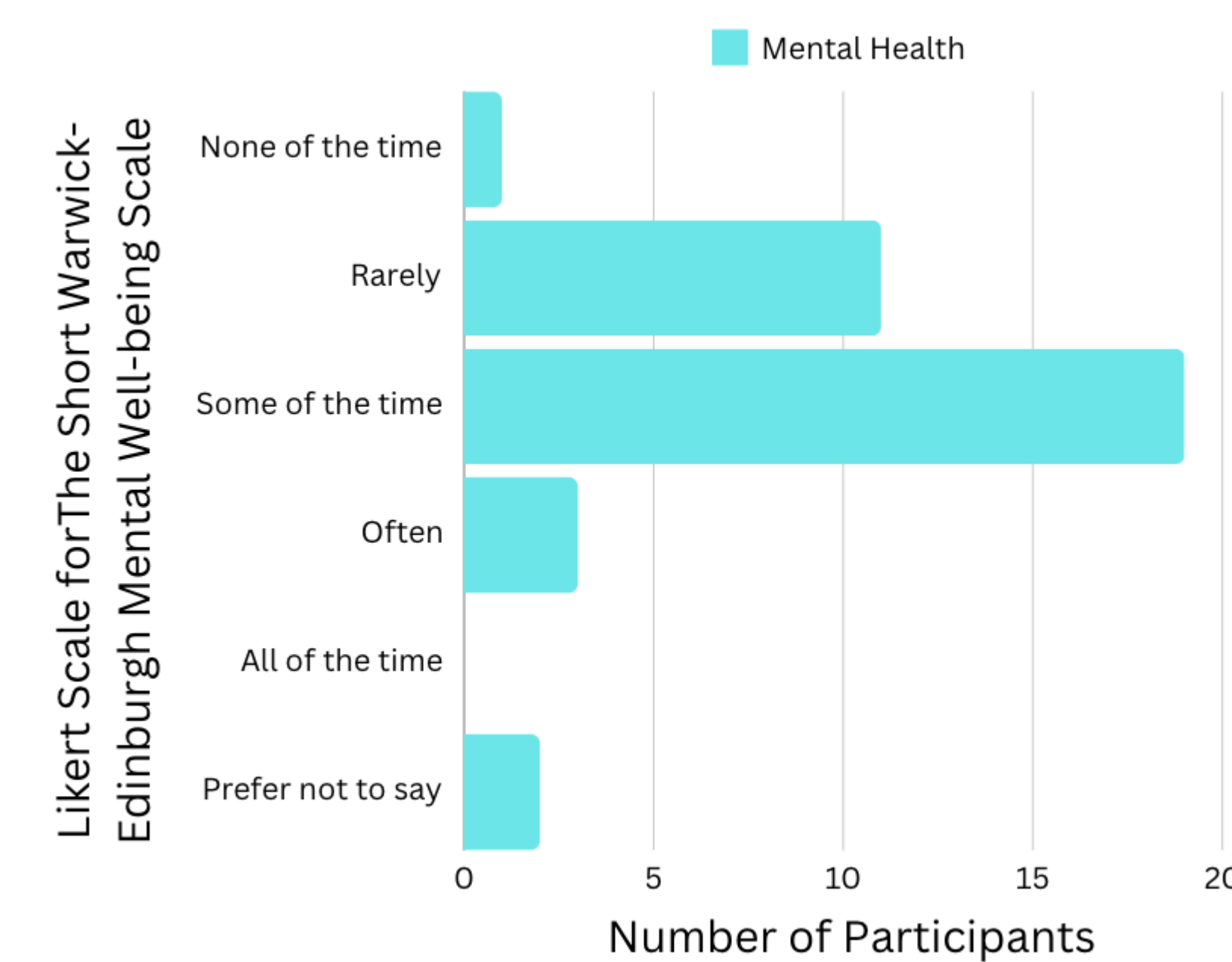


Figure 1: Participants noted moderate perceptions of mental health. We found a significant positive correlation between job satisfaction and mental health ($r = 0.568, p < .001$). Predictors like family status, weekly hours worked, hourly wage, and type of employment showed no significant associations with mental health outcomes.

Figure 2: Perception of Physical Health

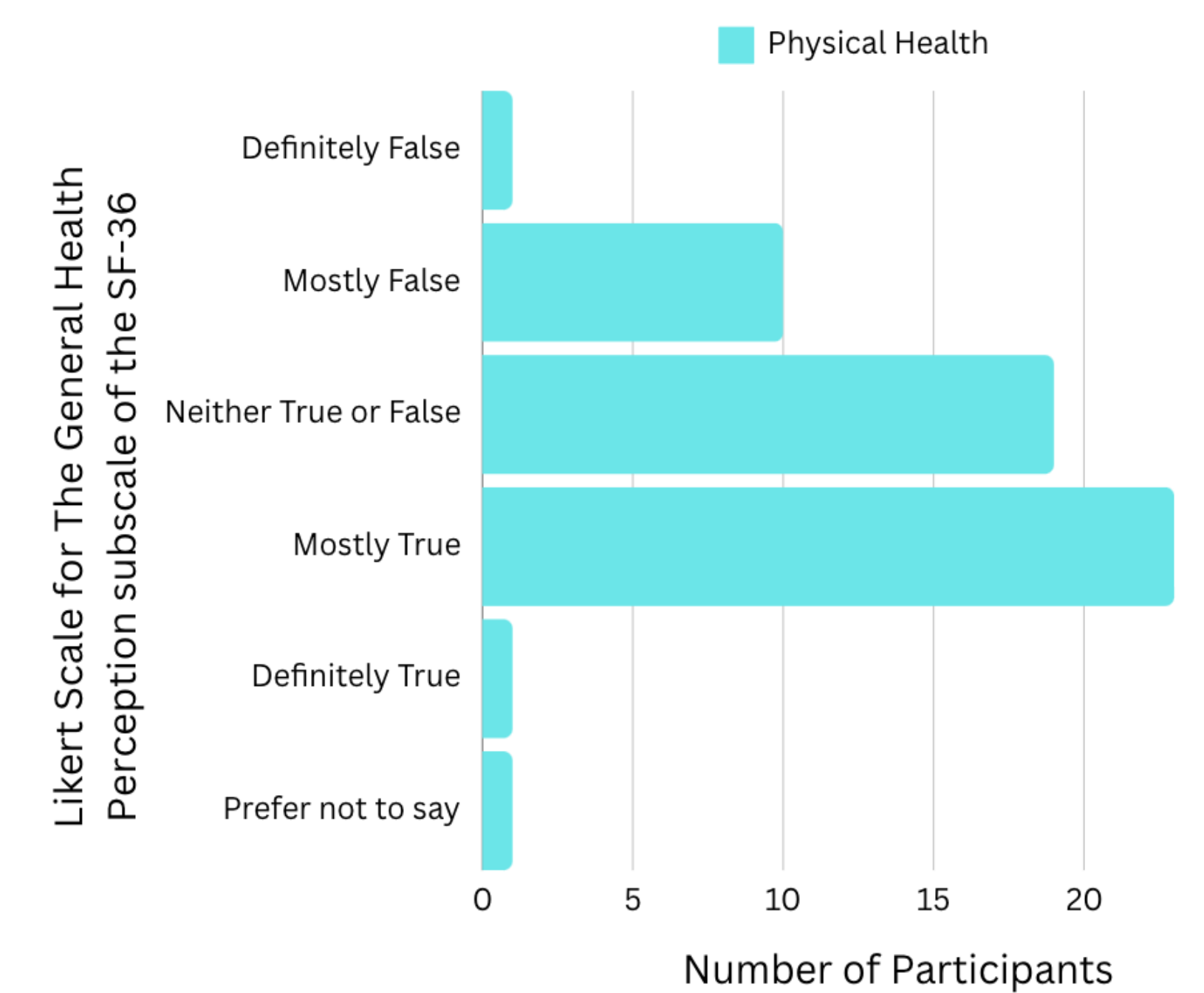


Figure 2: We found a positive correlation between physical health and stress ($r = 0.609, p < 0.001$), with participants viewing physical health positively overall. Our research suggests worse physical health may be linked to lower mental health scores, but data lacked sufficient evidence for certainty. Further, type of employment affected physical health scores, with part-time, seasonal, and temporary jobs associated with lower physical health scores compared to full-time employment. Family status did not affect physical health in a substantial way nor did weekly hours worked or hourly wage.

Figure 3: Perception of Stress and Academic Performance

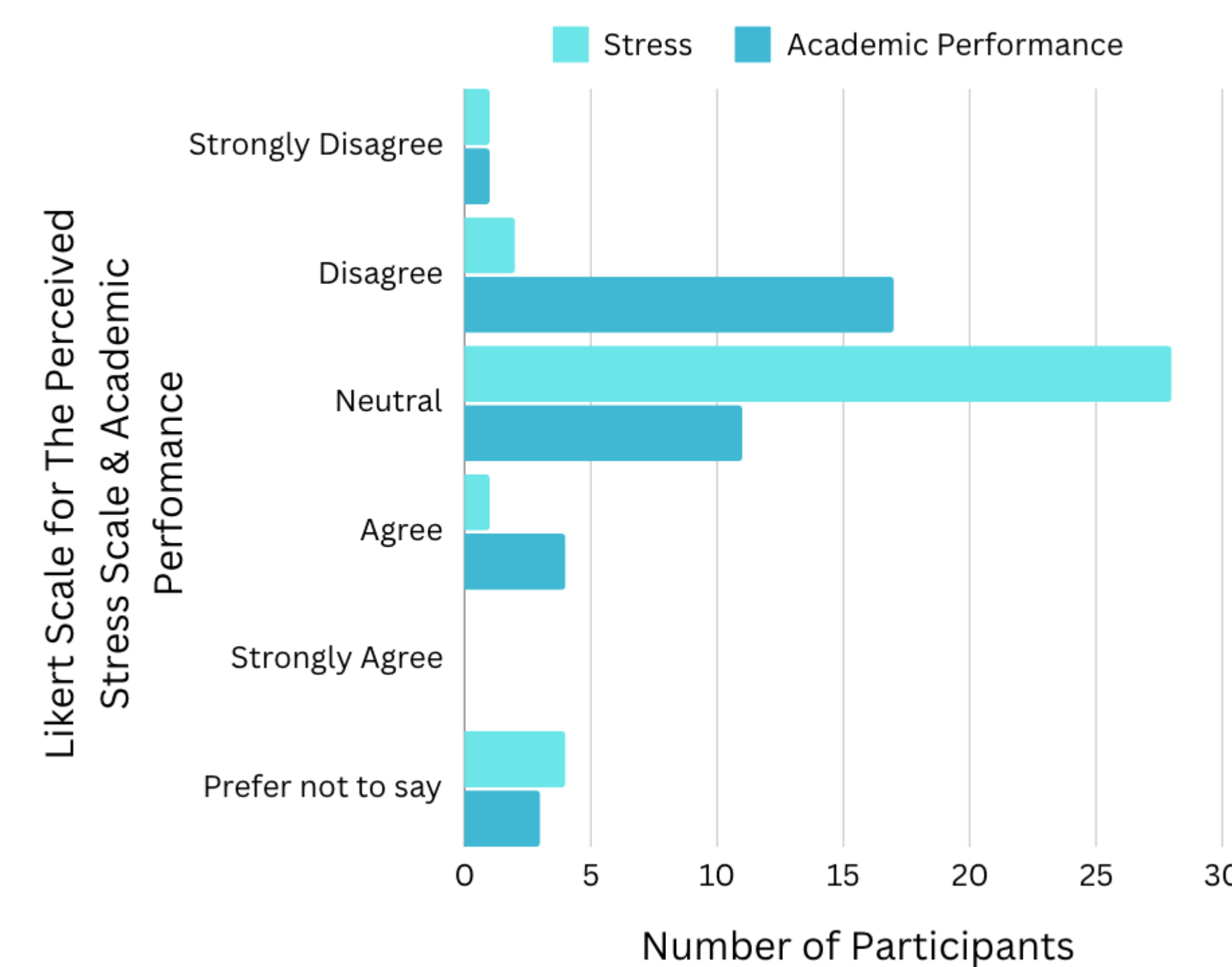


Figure 3: We found a moderate level of perceived stress among our participants. There was a positive correlation between satisfaction in employment and stress levels ($r = 0.609, p < .001$). However, there were no significant correlations between stress and academic performance, weekly hours worked, or hourly wage. Further, family status nor any type of employment were significant predictors of stress. Academic performance, mental health, and physical health did not show significant associations with stress.

While positive correlations existed between hourly wages and job satisfaction ($r = 0.102, p = 0.573$), the correlation was not significant and was not a sufficient predictor. Job satisfaction was found to have positive correlations with mental health, which was further supported by previous research (Moxham et al., 2018).

Significant Insights

- Although not statistically significant, there was a positive correlation found between mental health and weekly hours worked, which opposes previous research that suggested working more hours was associated with lower levels of mental health in student populations (Verulava & Jordanadze, 2022).
- 84.8% of students reported that their employment status impacted their independence and financial freedom ranging from moderate to extreme levels of reliance.
- Aside from employment status, our research findings align with the general findings where job satisfaction is linked with mental health. A meta-analysis by Faragher et al., (2005), found that job satisfaction greatly influences the health of workers.

Conclusions

- Research findings illustrated the disparity in available employment opportunities for field-specific work in the student population. Research also suggests that students' financial freedom and independence gained through employment may have positive impacts on overall well-being.
- Small sample size, limited research population, and research study design are limiting factors of research findings. Further research is needed such that possible correlations can be further developed and established, as many correlations yielded from this research were weak or not significant.

References

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- We would like to extend our gratitude to Dr. Sarah Clancy for her help and guidance throughout the research process and to the Social Psychology Program for covering the cost of this research poster. We would additionally like to thank the survey participants for their time and consideration.

Introduction

- Our research examined the effects of COVID-19 restrictions on students both before and after the implementation of the restrictions.
- We investigated this topic by comparing how responses altered before and after restrictions were set in place.
- Our aim was to explore how the COVID-19 restrictions affected McMaster University students' attitudes, behaviours, and actions regarding the cost of living.

Topic Area

- The COVID-19 pandemic took the world by surprise, impacting individuals and societies in various ways due to the implemented restrictions.
- We examined how students were affected by these restrictions, which consequently heightened the cost of living.
- We aimed to assess whether the measures implemented as a response to the pandemic, had an impact on students' well-being, particularly concerning the increased cost of living.

Research Question

- What are the impacts of the cost of living on a university students' well-being pre-covid-19 restrictions and post-covid-19 restrictions?

Research Methods

- **Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=75).
- **Sampling Method:** Convenience and random sampling.
- **Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited by posting approved posters around McMaster University and sharing the survey link and poster on student-run Instagram pages of clubs and organizations listed in the McMaster club directory.
- **Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- **Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi, Microsoft Excel, and Google Spreadsheets.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1: Pre-COVID-19 Restrictions Well-Being of Undergraduates

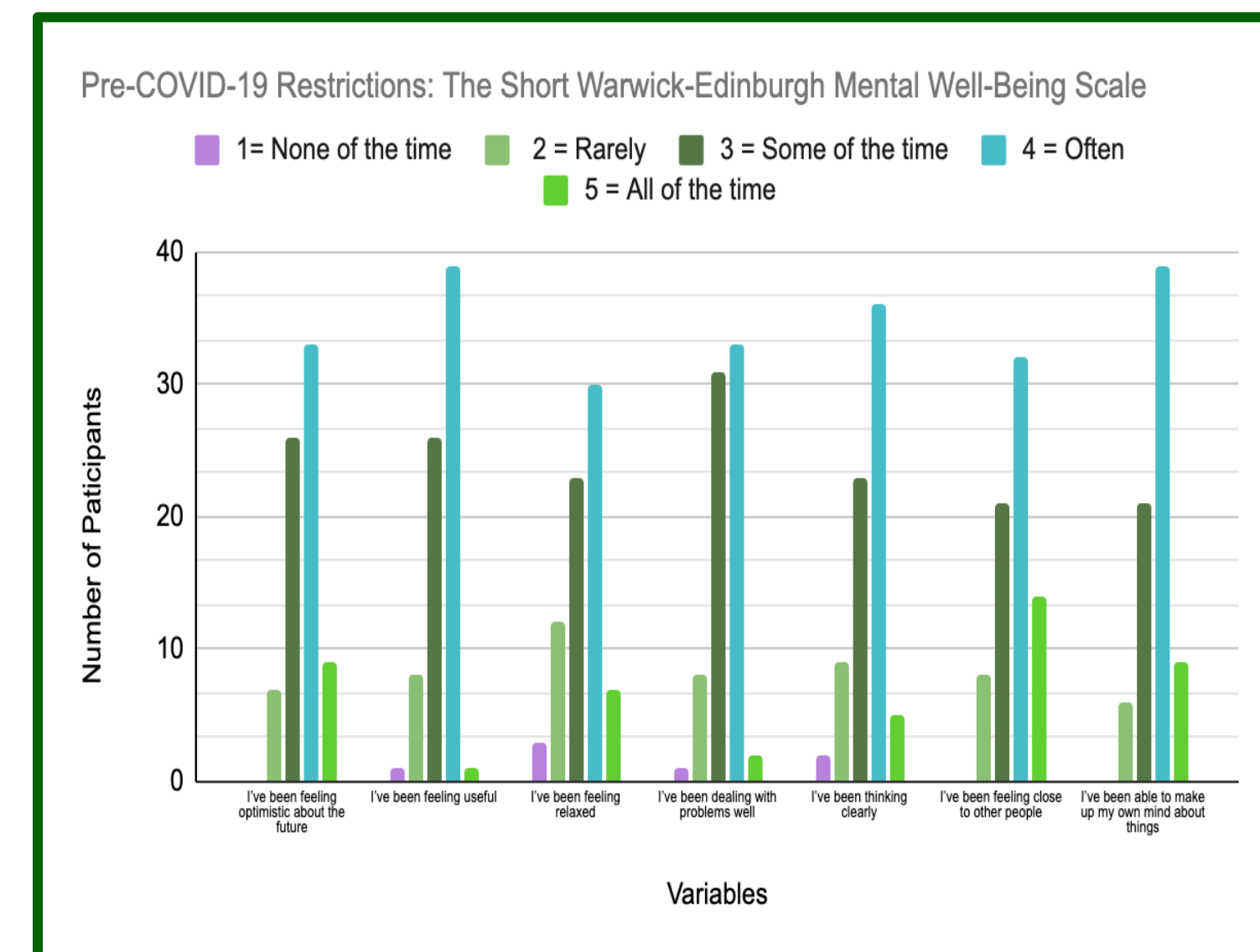


Figure 2: Post-COVID-19 Restrictions Well-Being of Undergraduates

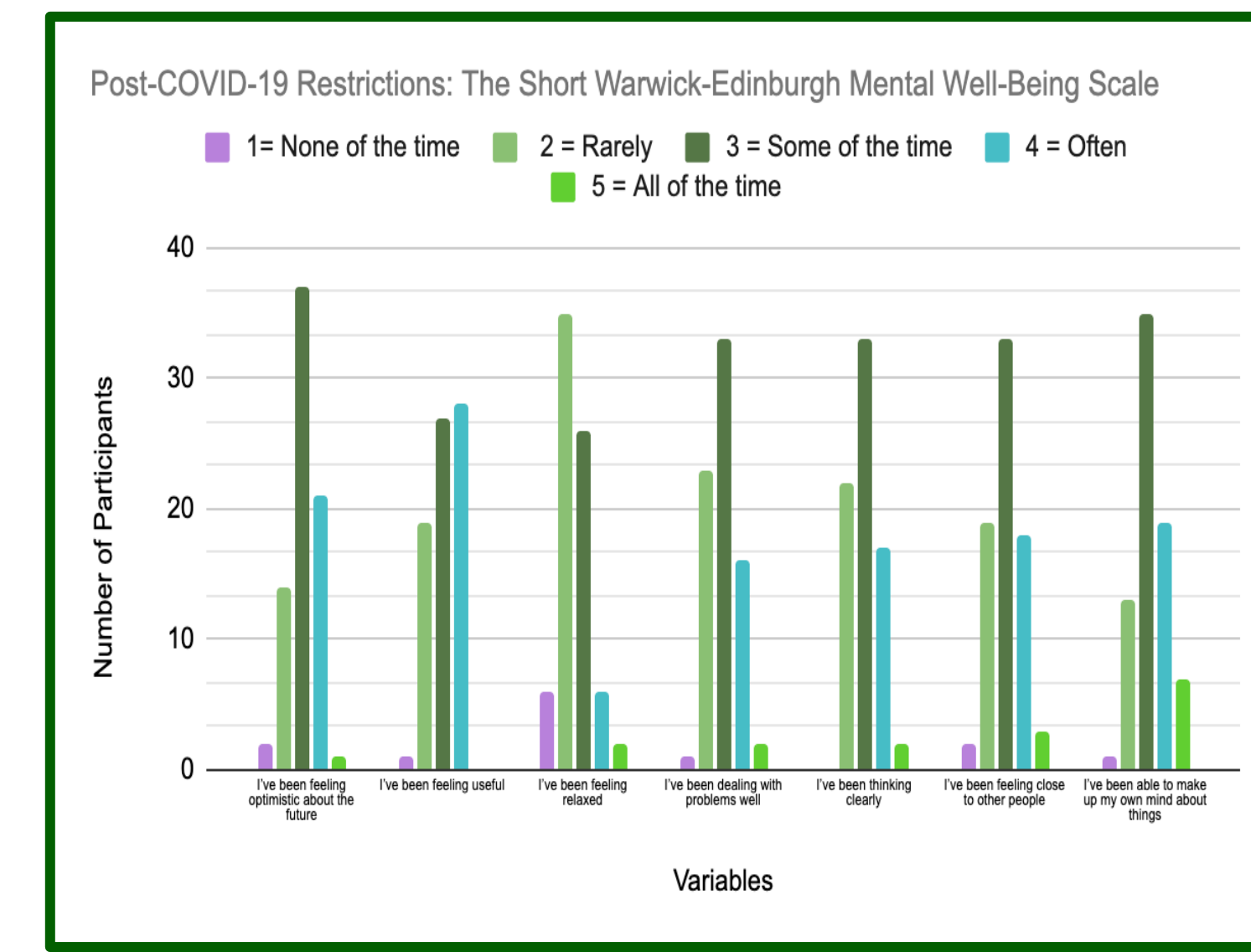


Figure 3: Pre-COVID-19 Restrictions Financial Strain of Undergraduates

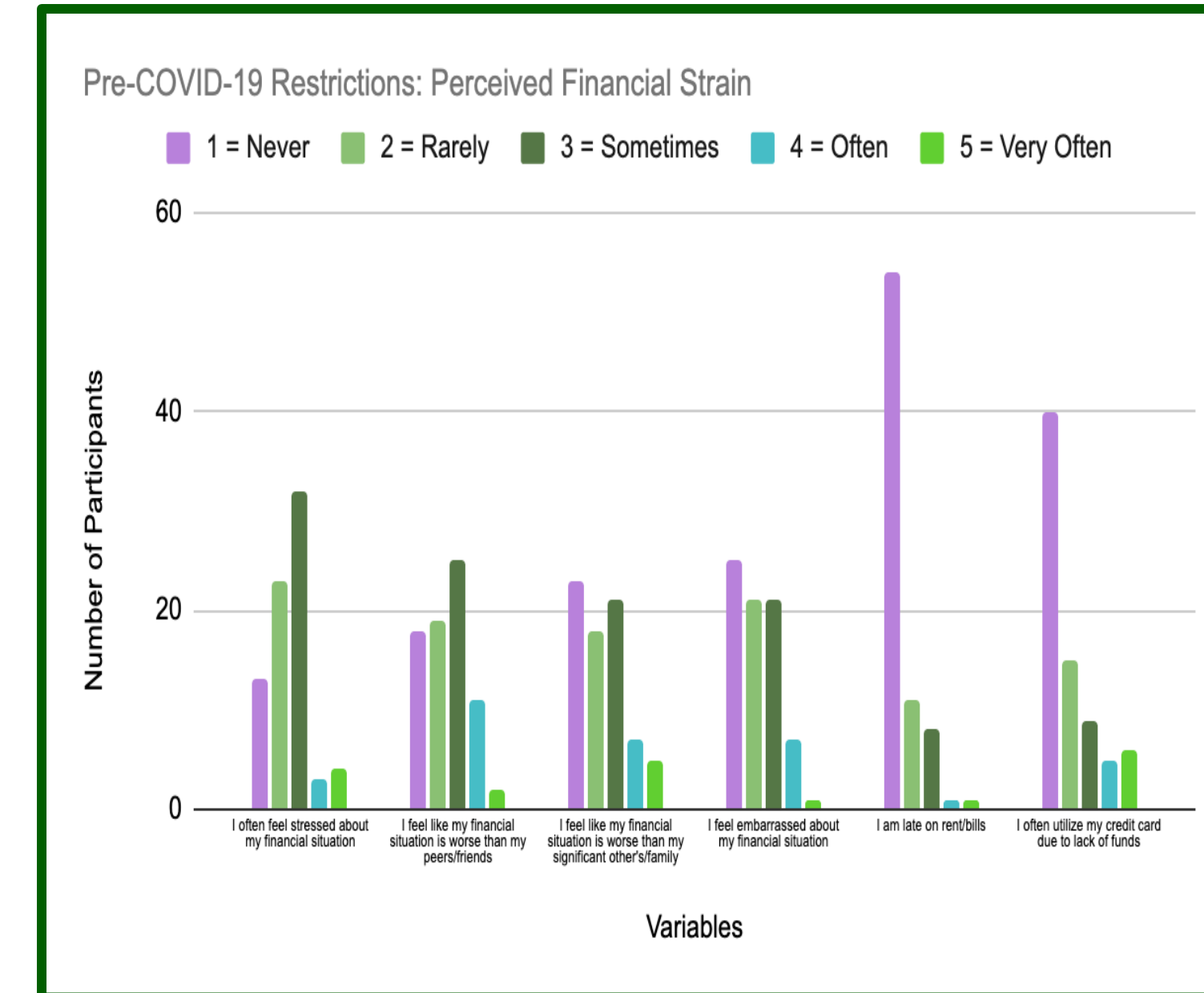


Figure 4: Post-COVID-19 Restrictions Financial Strain on Undergraduates



Figures 1 and 2: These graphs compare McMaster undergraduate students' perceived well-being before and after COVID-19 restrictions. As seen in Figure 1, most participants often felt "useful" (n=39) and "able to make up their minds" (n=39) before the restrictions. However, Figure 2 shows, these feelings decreased after the restrictions, with more participants reporting these factors only some of the time or rarely. We observed a general decrease in the frequency of reported positive well-being after the restrictions, along with an increase in negative well-being rates. For example, under the category "feeling relaxed," the percentage of participants reporting "none of the time" (n=35) and "rarely" (n=6) increased as seen in Figure 2. These findings suggest that the pandemic-related restrictions negatively impacted the well-being of participants.

Figures 3 and 4: These graphs compare McMaster undergraduate students' perceived levels of financial strain before and after COVID-19 restrictions. Based on the results from Figure 3, most participants felt stressed about their finances "never," (n=13) "only sometimes" (n=23) or "rarely" (n=32) prior to the COVID-19 restrictions. Overall, Figure 3 indicates a low response rate to "often" and "very often" regarding financial strain. Though reports of "never" (n=6) did not change substantially after the COVID-19 restrictions compared to before COVID-19, Figure 4 indicates a definitive increase in feelings of stress about one's finances. This led to an increased response rate of "often" (n=28) and "very often" (n=10) after the COVID-19 restrictions. Thus, our data suggests that students have been facing a surge in financial challenges post-restrictions.

Correlation Matrix

Correlation Matrix		post financial strain mean
post financial strain mean	Pearson's r	—
	p-value	—
postcovid -mental wellbeing mean	Pearson's r	-0.329 **
	p-value	0.004

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Correlation Matrix : We observed a statistically significant negative correlation between financial strain and well-being after the COVID-19 restrictions (r = -0.329, p = 0.004). This suggests that as financial strain increased, there was a corresponding decrease in well-being among the individuals studied.

Significant Insights

- Previous research illustrates the impacts financial strain has on students' well-being (Kokkinos et al., 2022), with connections to heightened vulnerability to mental illness (Broadbent et al., 2023) and its influence on academic performance (Tran et al., 2018).
- Our research found a noticeable decrease in well-being when comparing pre-COVID-19 restrictions results and post-COVID-19 restrictions results.
- Financial strain increased by a considerable amount from pre-COVID-19 restrictions and post-COVID-19 restrictions.
- We found a correlation between an increase in financial strain and a decrease in well-being (r= -0.329, p=0.004) post-COVID-19 restrictions.

Conclusions

- There is limited research on the effects of COVID-19 on students' well-being, particularly in the context of the recent surge in the cost-of-living post-COVID-19 restrictions.
- This research was conducted to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on students, connecting it back to the increased cost of living post-COVID-19 restrictions and the vulnerability students face regarding their well-being.

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Exploring McMaster University Undergraduate Students' Knowledge of the Accessibility, Quality, and Availability of Health Resources and Impact on Well-Being

Batul Agha, Alexandra Gallegos Garcia, Jane Gardner, Oneeka Henriques, Ursula Pijanka, Manvi Thakur

Introduction

- The purpose of this study was to explore the accessibility, quality, and availability of various health resources on the McMaster University campus.
- We examined how the perception of physical, mental, and sexual health resources correlates to undergraduate student's subjective well-being (SWB).

Topic Area

- Examine the accessibility of physical, mental, and sexual support resources to undergraduate students.
- Observe how the perception of accessibility correlates to self-assessed subjective well-being (SWB).
- SWB is the basis for individuals to assess their lives based on their levels of satisfaction and their emotional state (Stone et al., 2013).

Research Question

- How does knowledge of accessibility, quality, and availability of health resources among McMaster undergraduate students relate to their subjective well-being (SWB)?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=26).
- Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through posts on student-run Instagram pages, as well as through email.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB-approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

Results and Discussion

Figure 1 - How do you feel about the quality of support resources for physical health on campus?'

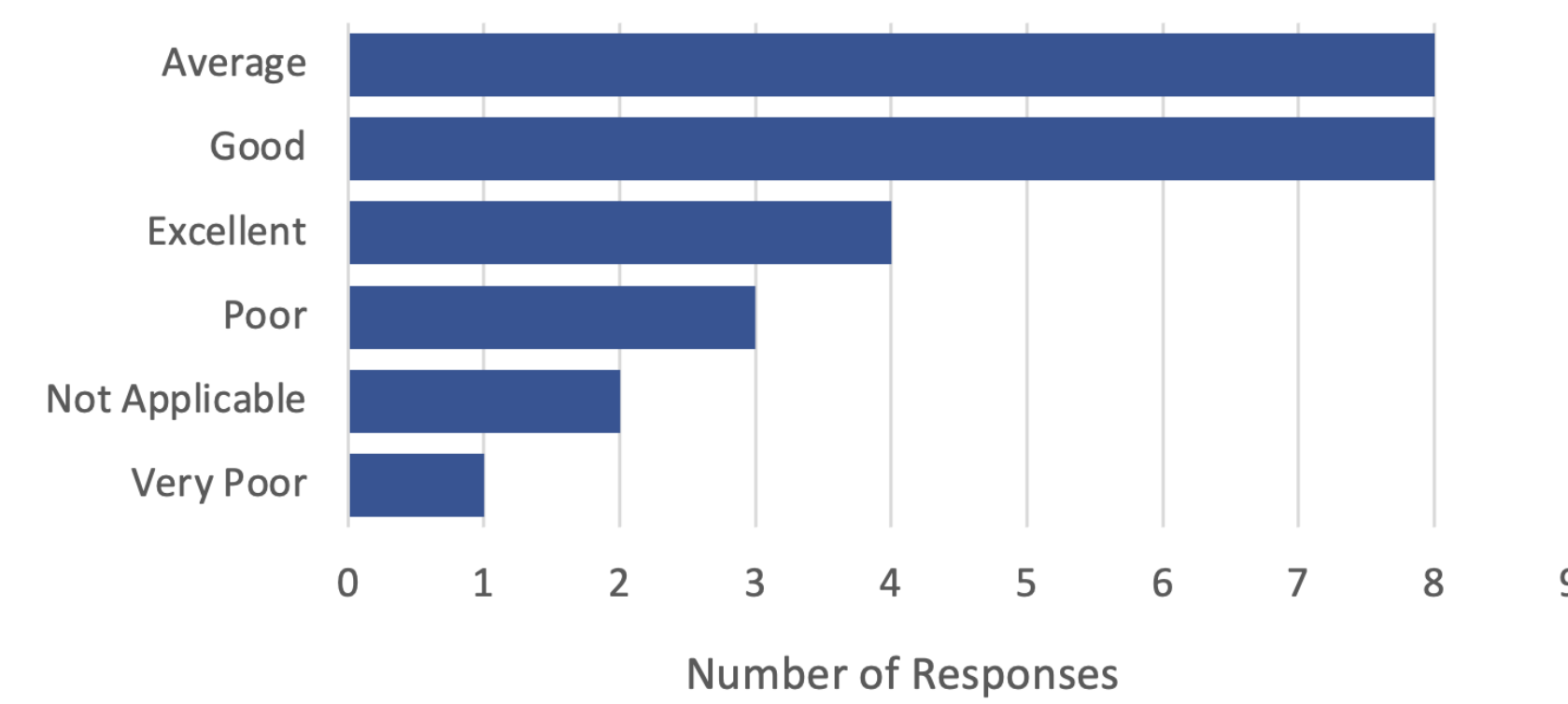


Figure 2 - How do you feel about the quality of support resources for sexual health on campus?'

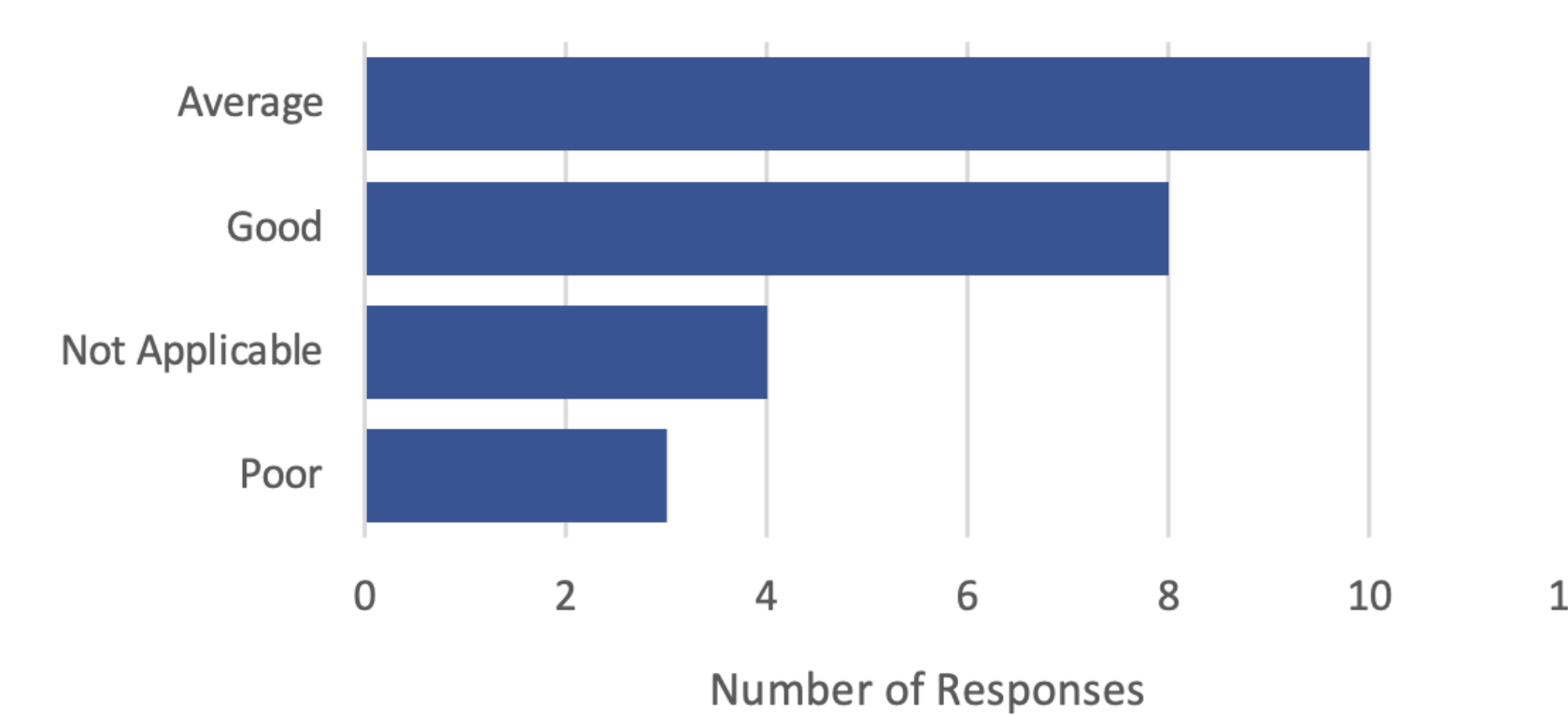


Figure 3 - How do you feel about the quality of support resources for mental health on campus?'

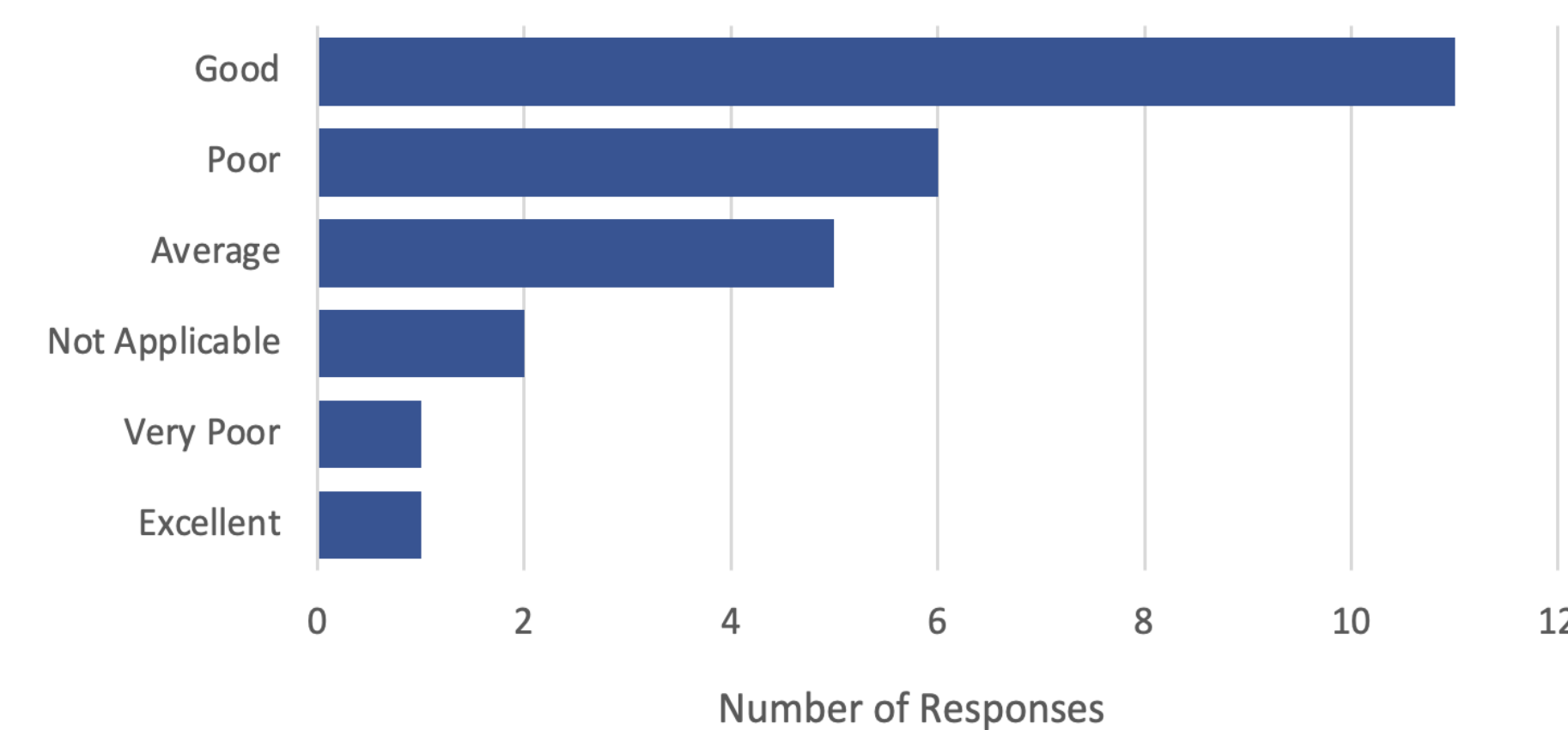


Figure 4 - How would you rate your happiness at its most consistent state within the past year?'

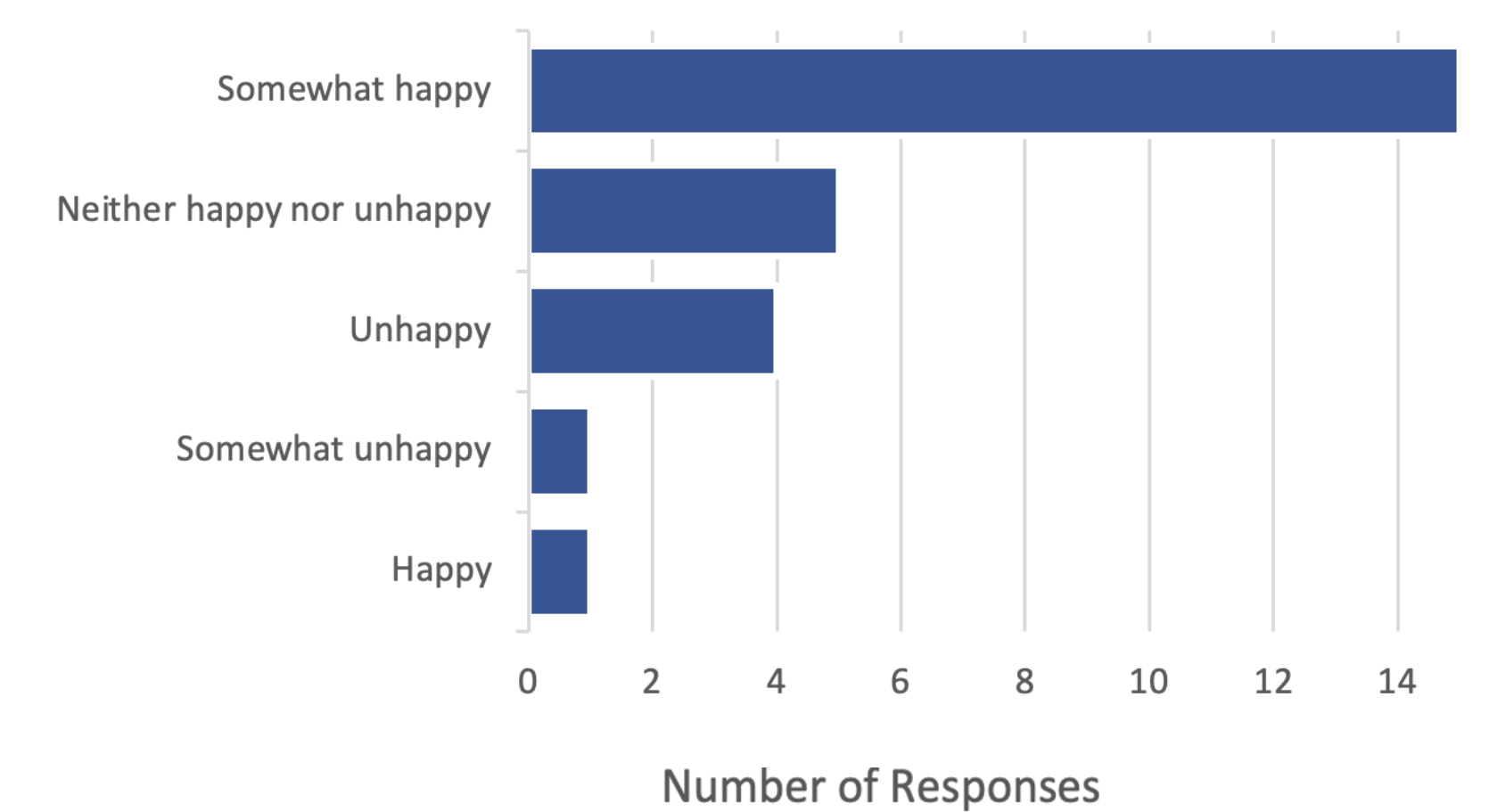
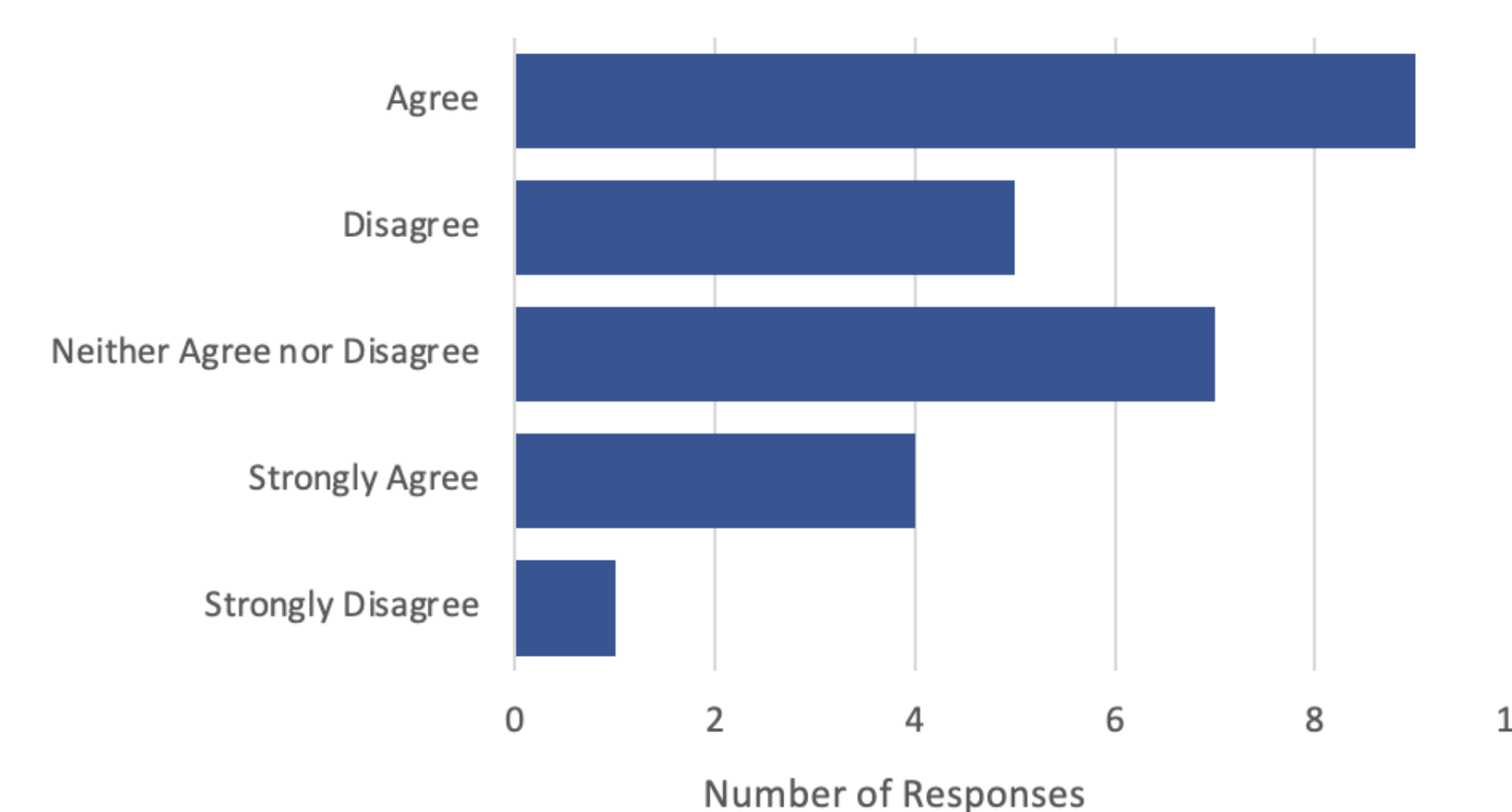


Figure 5 - "I feel like I can talk to my peers about receiving help from McMaster University's health resources"



Figures 1, 2, 3 - These graphs indicate that most respondents perceived the quality of physical, sexual health, and mental health resources on campus to be of average quality. These findings are consistent with previous literature stating that despite student's awareness of resources, external stigma or average/low quality of care can discourage students (Mowbray et al., 2006).

Figure 4 - This graph indicates most respondents identified as being somewhat happy throughout the past year. Subjective Well-Being (SWB) is the basis for individuals to assess their lives based on their levels of satisfaction and emotional state (Stone et al., 2013).

Figure 5 - This graph demonstrates that most respondents felt they could communicate with peers about health resources at McMaster University. The findings can be interpreted through the lens of Symbolic Interactionism: students who can openly communicate with peers are more likely to feel positively about health resources on campus (Blumer, 1969, p. 2).

Significant Insights

- Our participants rated the quality of mental health resources provided by McMaster most poorly when compared to sexual and physical health resources.
- Participants who rated the quality of mental health resources as good were more likely to rate their happiness levels as somewhat happy (n=6)

Conclusions

- Most of the research on health resources demonstrates a strong correlation between the utilization of on-campus resources and the SWB of university students (Eisenberg et al., 2013; Mowbray et al., 2006).
- Our research provides insight into McMaster University's health channels through the self-evaluated experience of students.
- Our data suggests that the sexual and physical health resources provided by McMaster University are minimally discussed through their channels.

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Introduction

- The purpose of our study was to examine the impacts of climate change on the mental well-being of undergraduate students.
- In particular, we were interested in the impacts of climate change anxiety and how these feelings differed across programs at McMaster University.

Topic Area

In this research project, we sought to:

- Understand the effects of climate change on the mental well-being of undergraduate students.
- Examine perceptions and emotions revolving around climate change anxiety.
- Explore the relationship between climate change anxiety and specific program of study.
- Investigate the relationship between environmental identity and feelings towards climate change.

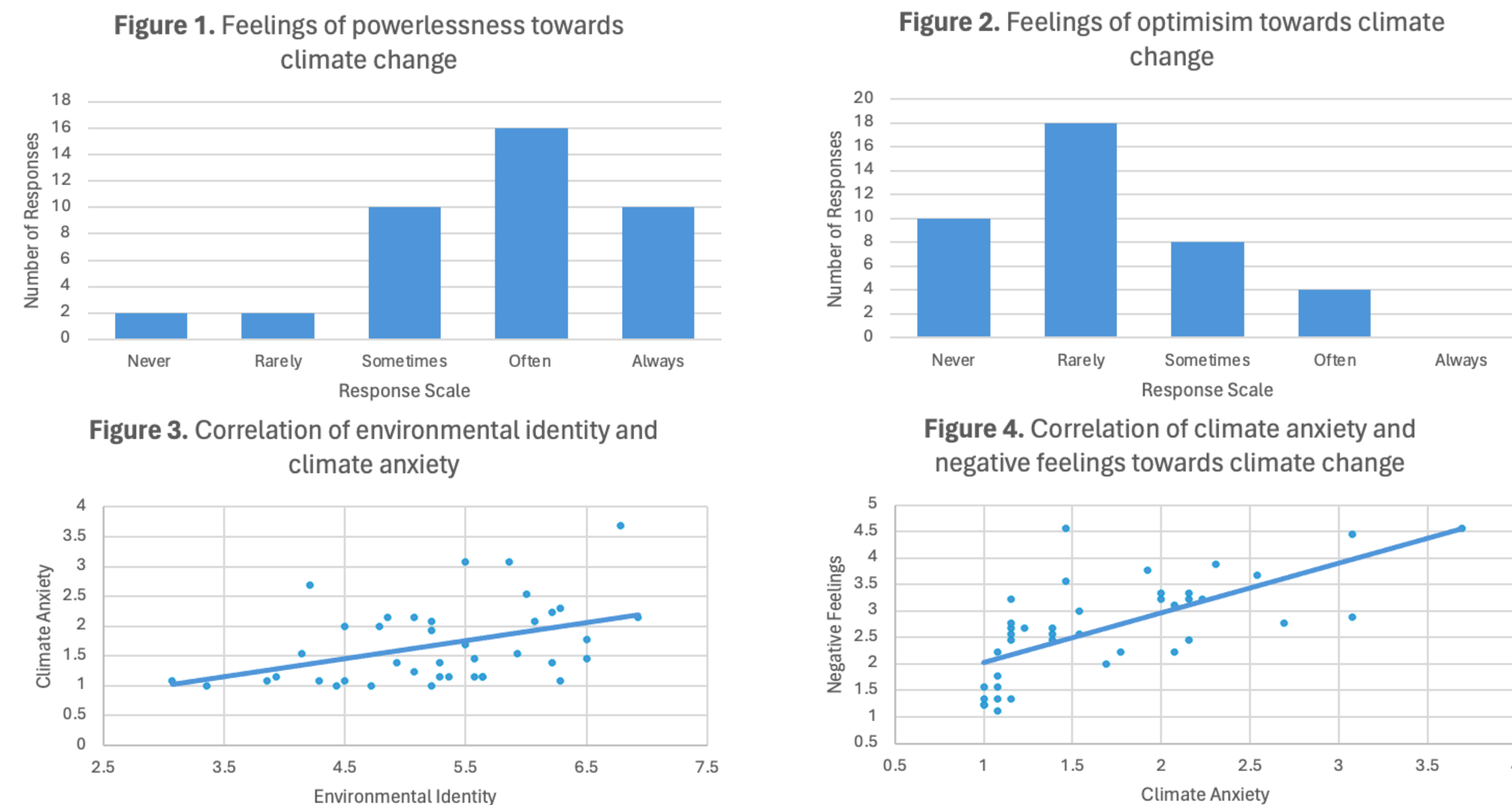
Research Questions

- How is climate change affecting the mental well-being of undergraduate students?
- How do these effects differ between programs of study?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** Undergraduate students at McMaster University over the age of 18; sample size: (n=40).
- Sampling Method:** Randomised and convenience sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through physical posters on McMaster Students Union (MSU) bulletin boards, and through email and social media distribution facilitated by MSU clubs and societies.
- Data Collection:** Online, anonymous survey through the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed through Jamovi and Microsoft Excel.

Results and Discussion



Figures 1 & 2: A large proportion of students often experience feelings of powerlessness (n=16) towards climate change in comparison to optimism (n=4). This is consistent with Terror Management Theory, which explains that individuals experience powerlessness due to lack of control over world events threatening well-being (Greenberg et al., 1986).

Figure 3: The significant positive correlation between environmental identity and climate change anxiety ($p=.007$, $r =.418$), indicates that a stronger identification with the environment may lead to increased feelings of anxiety towards climate change.

Figure 4: The significant positive correlation between climate anxiety and negative feelings towards climate change ($p<.001$, $r =.680$), demonstrates a link between negative feelings towards climate change and poorer mental well-being.

Question	Common Themes	Participant Quotes
Which aspects of climate change worry you the most?	Negative implications on the natural environment. Impact on future generations to come. Decreases in quality of life.	"Worried about the future generation and their health, the changing natural landscape, worried about how many more generations until the earth is inhabitable, worried about the lack of group initiation to make changes at a large scale big enough to make an impact."
If any, what kind of actions do you take to address climate change?	Alternative transportation methods. Responsible disposal practices. Sustainable consumerism.	"I often find myself avoiding solo car rides, I try to take public transport, I avoid single use plastics and fast fashion when I can, and I have attended climate crisis protests."
How does your program of study reflect your feelings towards climate change?	Programs of study recognized and reflected personal feelings towards climate change. Programs of study neglected the implications of climate change.	"My program has courses that focus on sustainability, which allows me to further my learning and understanding of the topic." "I'm in business and we learn that profit is more important than climate change."

Significant Insights

- Qualitative responses revealed that students are concerned about the impact of climate change on future generations, which aligns with past research (Schwartz et al., 2023).
- Overall, our research found significant correlations between identification with the environment and climate change related to mental well-being.
- Many participants stated their program of study reflected personal beliefs towards climate change. The mental well-being of students in science-based programs was more negatively impacted by climate change.

Conclusions

- It is evident that climate change is enhancing undergraduates' anxiety regarding the environment.
- The research initially looked at impacts through the lens of mental well-being generally but shifted towards a focus on environmental identity and its link to climate change anxiety.
- Future research would benefit from looking into general well-being to solidify correlations between environmental anxiety and overall well-being.

References

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Introduction

- A sense of belonging (SOB) is a foundational human need and an integral component for the wellbeing of post-secondary students (Gillen-O'Neel, 2019).
- Additional research is needed to understand which factors contribute most greatly towards developing or worsening students' SOB at University.
- The purpose of our study is to investigate how students' SOB is impacted by COVID-19, commuter status, greenspace utilization, and social support systems.

Topic Area

- Explore which factors and intersectional influences have the greatest impact on a student's SOB and overall post-secondary experience at McMaster.
- By improving our understanding of what might affect belonging, we hope to prompt more focus on factors with high impact.
- Propose steps McMaster University and its student body could take to improve feelings of belonging on campus.

Research Questions

- How can a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between the factors most impactful for students' sense of belonging help develop holistic approaches to enhance students' overall SOB?
- Are there differences in the experience of social belonging among the various demographic groups that students belong to and how does the intersection of these various identities impact belonging?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=20).
- Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through email and social media posts sent out by MSU approved student-run societies/clubs as well as through physical posters displayed on MSU poster boards.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi and Microsoft Excel.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1: Connecting Commute Times to Feelings of Belonging

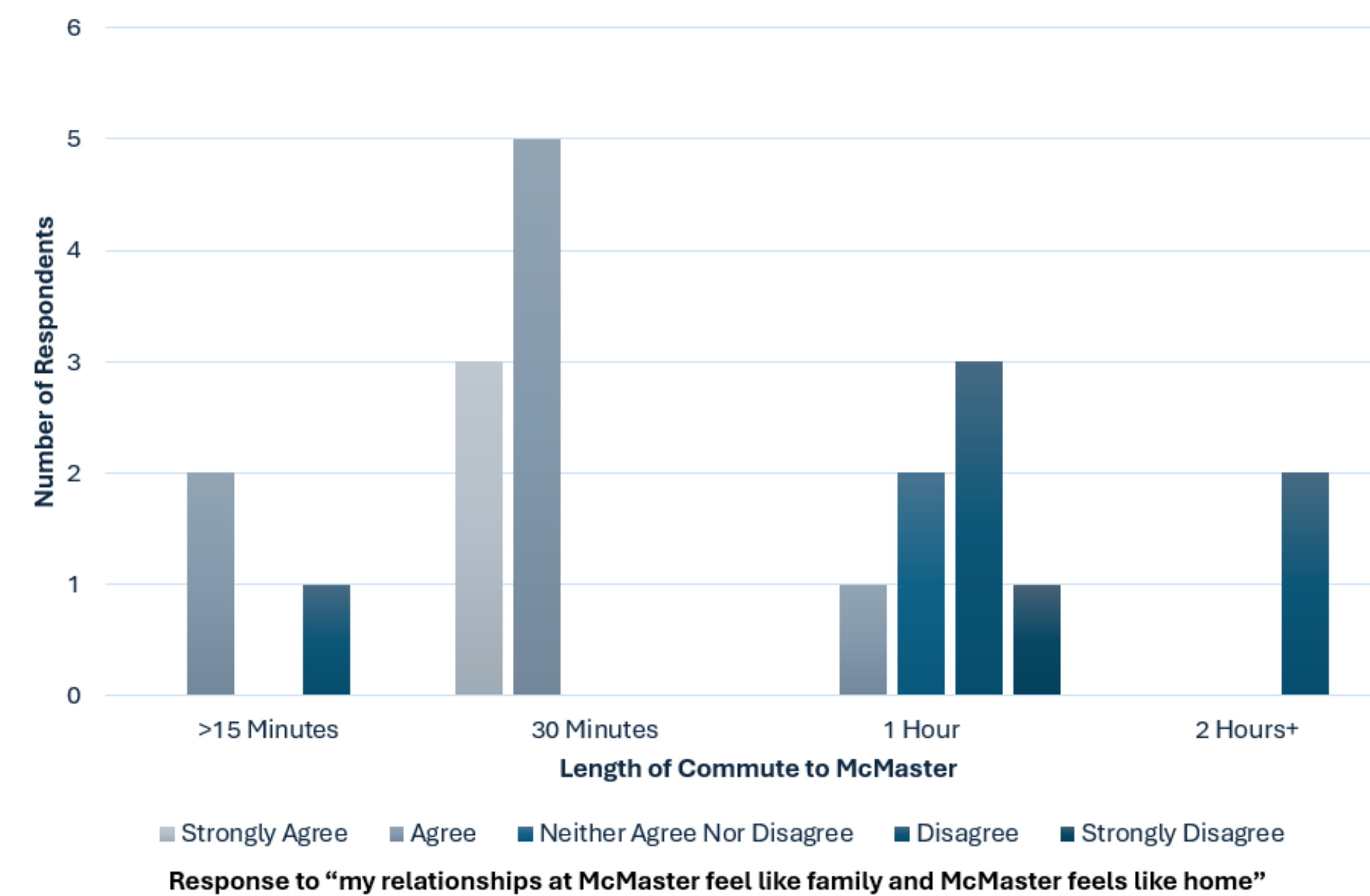


Figure 1: We observed a statistically significant negative correlation between commute time and sense of belonging ($r = -0.736, p < .0.001$).

A higher percentage of respondents with an hour or more commute selected disagree or strongly disagree (n=6) when compared to those with less than an hour commute (n=1). Moreover, 91% (n=10) of respondents with a commute time of less than an hour agreed with the statement.

Figure 2: Response to "How often do you spend intentional time in nature/greenspace?"

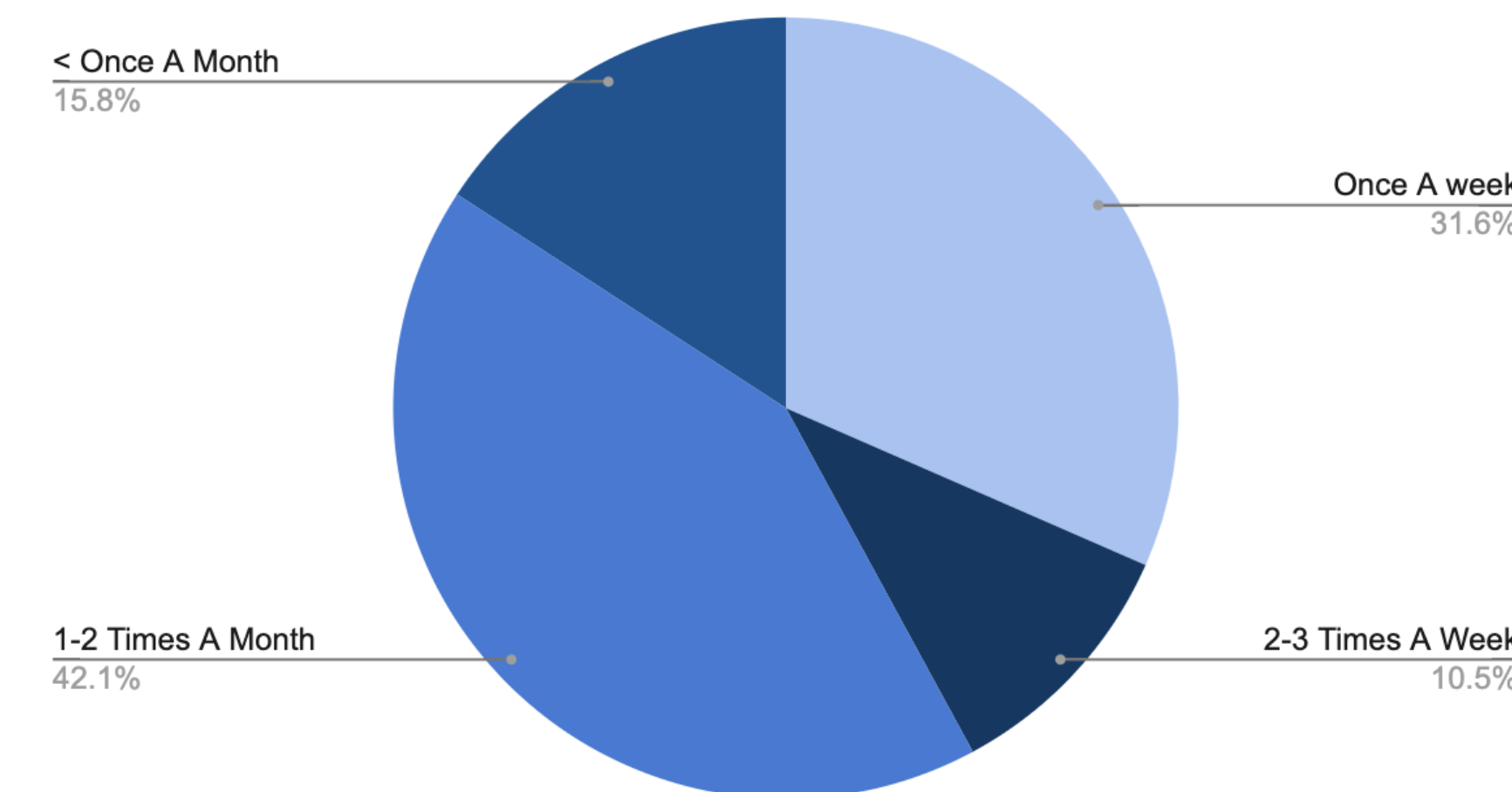


Figure 2: The majority of participants (n=12) expressed that they spend time in nature less than once a week. The limited time spent outdoors cannot be understood to be caused by a lack of greenspace on campus as 55% of participants (n=11) agreed with the statement "nature in Hamilton and around McMaster is easily accessible."

Figure 3: Response to "I feel like COVID-19 hindered my ability to develop a sense of belonging on campus."

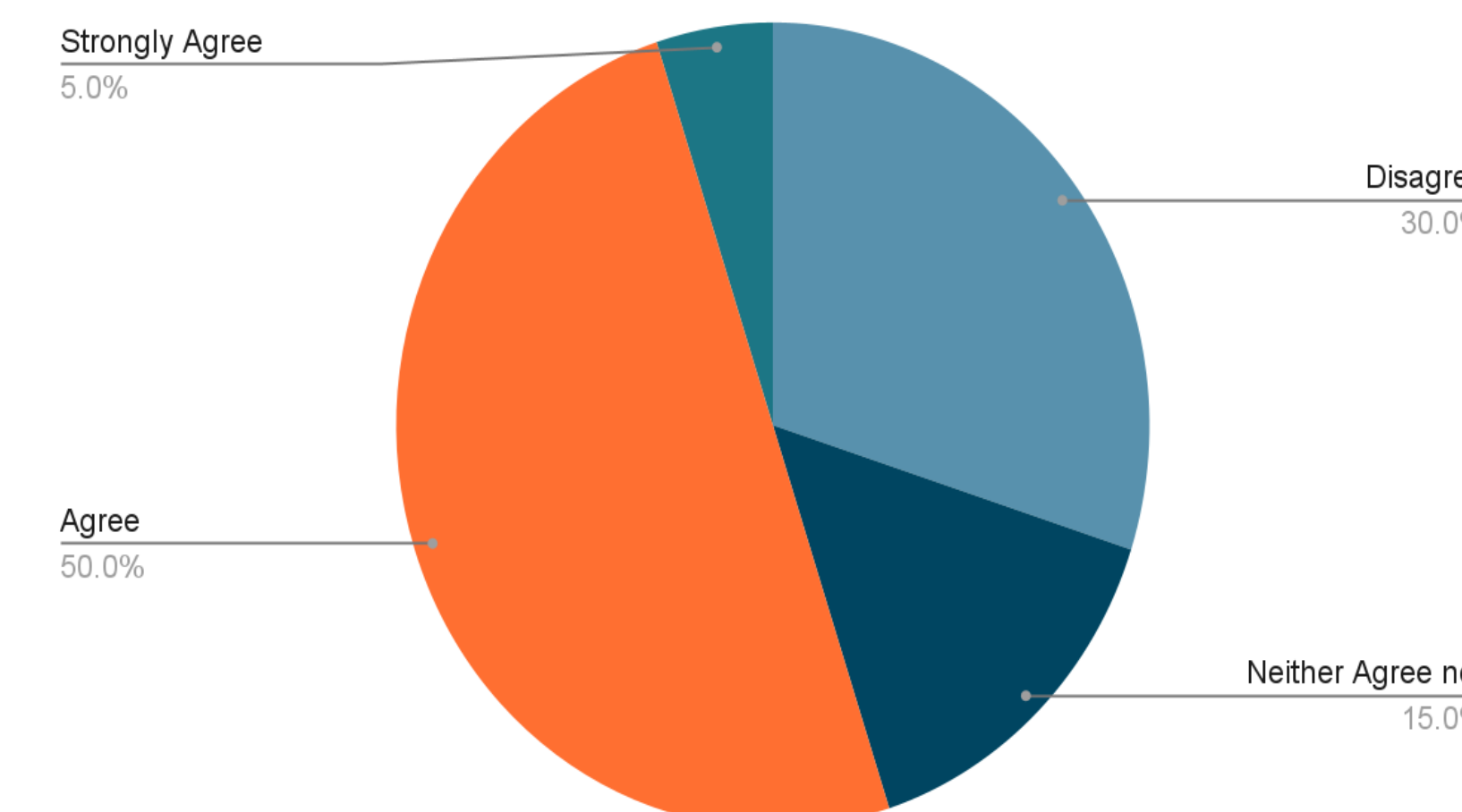


Figure 3: More than half of the respondents (n=11) agreed with the statement that COVID-19 hindered their ability to develop a sense of belonging on campus. Notably, 30% of respondents (n=6) disagreed with the statement.

Figure 4: Connecting Social Support to SOB within campus

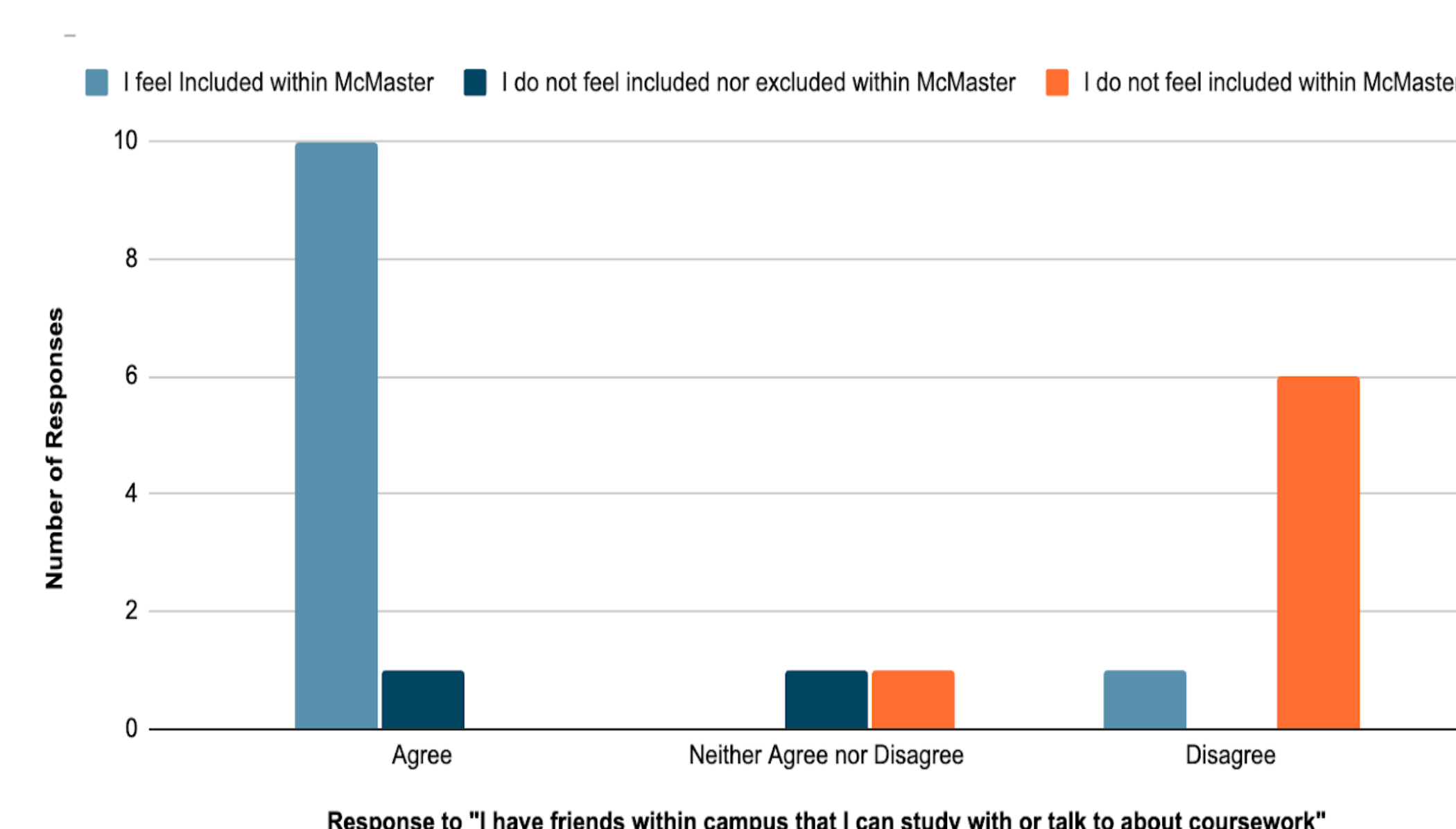


Figure 4: The chart shows that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between students' SOB and having friends on campus to discuss coursework ($r = 0.788, p < 0.001$). Most students who agreed that they have friends on campus to study with also answered that they feel included on campus (n=10). Most students who disagreed that they have friends on campus felt that they do not feel included within McMaster (n=6).

Significant Insights

- Our data suggests that those who take longer to commute to campus had a lower SOB within the University.
- More than half of the participants (n=11) perceived COVID-19 to have negatively impacted their SOB. The finding was somewhat inconsistent with our hypothesis as we hypothesized that a larger proportion of students would be impacted by the pandemic.
- Contrary to the findings of previous research, the availability of greenspace on campus and around the city did not mean that students spend many hours per week outdoors (Han & Rideout, 2022).
- Our data shows that students' perceived inclusion on campus is positively correlated with the strength of the friendships with their peers.

Conclusions

- Our findings revealed that the different demographic groups students belong to (e.g. commuter status) impact their sense of belonging on campus.
- Our research identified that commuter status, perceived impacts of COVID-19 and, the extent of friendships with peers are impactful indicators of a student's sense of belonging at McMaster. Access to greenspace on campus was not.
- The findings highlight the need for programs within the campus which promote friendships amongst peers and provide inclusion opportunities for students with long commute times to increase their sense of belonging.

References

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- Han, B., & Rideout, C. (2022). Factors associated with university students' development and success: Insights from senior undergraduates. *The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.5206/cjsotlrcacea.2022.1.10801>

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Introduction

- Our research study investigated the relationship between academic life and the self-esteem of McMaster undergraduate students.
- We sought to explore how GPA, extra-curricular participation, and class attendance play a role in shaping students' overall self-evaluations.

Topic Area

- Understand how various aspects of academic life may impact self-esteem.
- Determine how students may be emotionally affected by their academic performance.

Research Questions

- Is there a correlation between grades and self-esteem among McMaster undergraduate students?
- Do extra-curricular activities and class attendance have any impact on McMaster undergraduate students' self-esteem?
- How might the relationship between academic life and self-esteem differ based on demographic factors?

Research Methods

- **Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=35).
- **Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling.
- **Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited using physical posters on campus, as well as online Instagram posts through student run-clubs, groups, and societies at McMaster University.
- **Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- **Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi and analyzed qualitative data using descriptive statistics.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Pearson's Correlations

	How satisfied are you with your current academic performance?
Self-Esteem Scale	Pearson's r p-value
	-0.425* 0.011

Figure 1: Which of the following do you feel has the greatest impact on the quality of your academic life?

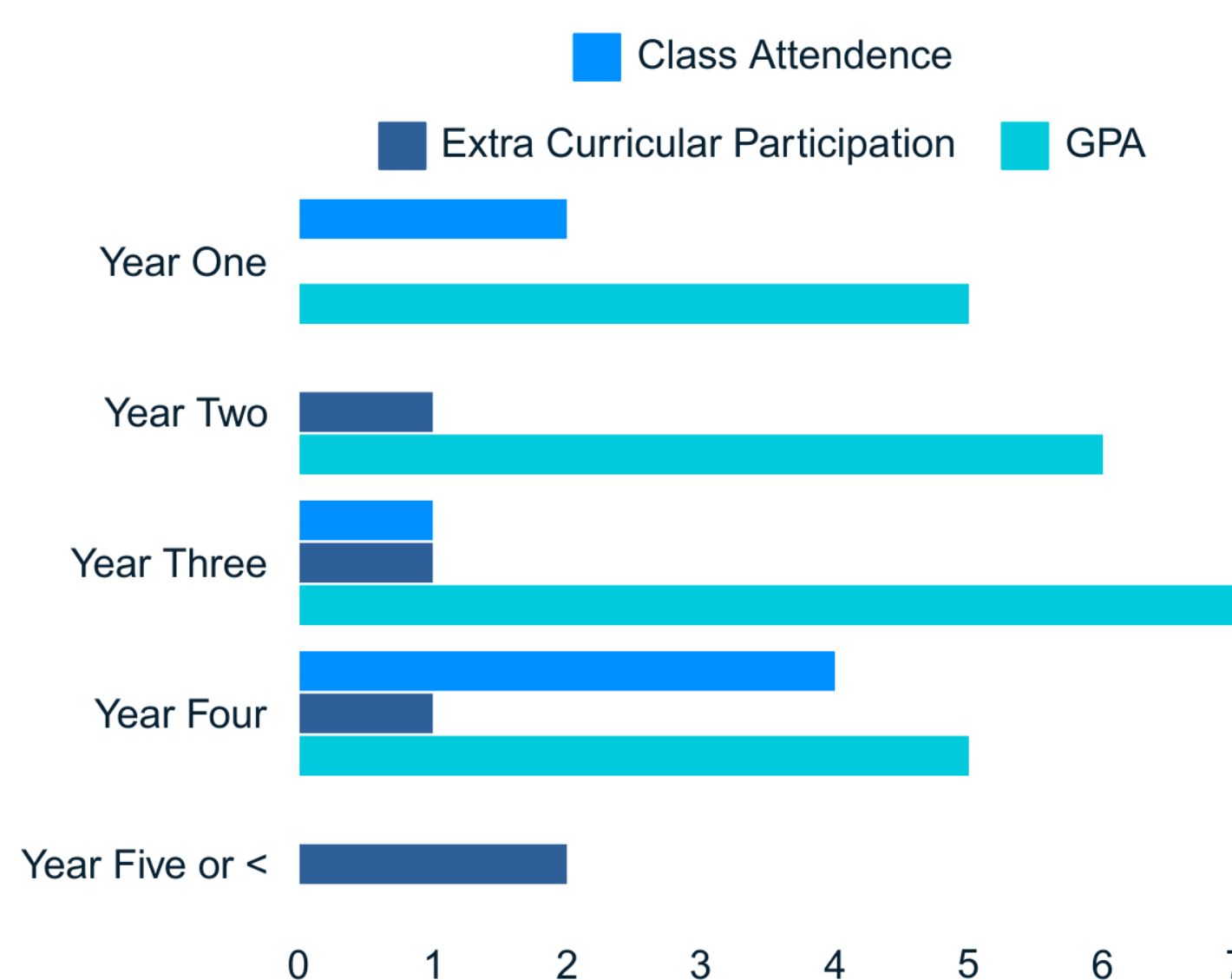


Table 1 –This table demonstrates a significant negative correlation between self-esteem and academic satisfaction, meaning as self-esteem decreases, a student's academic satisfaction decreases as well. This result is consistent with research from Arshad et al., (2015).

Figure 1 – This graph demonstrates the relationship between participants' responses to what variable they feel has the greatest impact on their quality of academic life. It indicates that most participants (n=23) felt their GPA was the most impactful factor on the quality of their academic life. This result is consistent with the research of D'Mello, Monteiro, & Pinto (2018) who found that students with higher levels of self-esteem also exhibited higher levels of academic achievement. This graph also shows that class attendance and extracurricular participation become more significant (p = 0.019) in later years of university.

Common Themes Identified from the Survey:

Themes	Participant Responses
Academic Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult program or degree • Time management • Competitive atmosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Part of my self-esteem has always been tied to my academic life... especially in an environment that is so large and competitive, and where my grades do determine how far I'll get in my academic life and career."
Self-Esteem & GPA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive link between higher GPA and improved self-esteem • Rumination and unexpected poor performance • Self-comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My self-esteem only starts to be impacted when I do poorly on something I thought I'd perform well in." • "It [my academic performance] impacts me strongly as I had very high grades in high school and I have not been able to replicate the same performance."
Coping Mechanisms & Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure and organization cultivating self-confidence • Balancing academic performance with other areas of daily life • Emphasis on effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I think I balance academics well but I feel like I see it as too much of a central part of my life... I want to balance some extra-curriculars too." • "When I study and complete my assignments, I feel a sense of purpose when I get something accomplished."
Emotional Response & Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of shame and sadness due to academic performance • Feelings of pride and self-fulfillment when performing well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Having good marks allows me to feel confident going into the new semester." • "My academic performance is closely tied to my mood and how I view my self-worth – probably more so than I would like."
Environmental Factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of displacement within academic program • Pressure resulting from peer comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My self-esteem is lowered when I find out other people have [a] better extracurricular experience than me. I wonder how they are able to manage school and clubs so well, especially in hard programs such as Engineering."

Significant Insights

- The qualitative responses from participants highlights the reciprocal relationship between academic performance and self-esteem, suggesting that an improvement in academic performance increases self-esteem and vice versa.
- Several factors play a role in shaping the self-esteem of undergraduate students, including GPA, extra-curricular participation, and maintenance of a healthy balance of the two.

Conclusions

- Our research shows how different aspects of academic life can affect students' self-esteem.
- Previous studies have demonstrated a link between low self-esteem and depression (Orth & Robbins, 2013). As mental health concerns become increasingly important to universities across Canada, action should be taken to implement support and guidance for students who may be feeling overwhelmed by academic life.
- As self-esteem was found to rise and decrease based upon academic performance, further research should investigate strategies that enable students to feel confident in themselves and their academics.

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Acknowledgements

- We would like to thank Dr. Clancy for all the support throughout the process of our research project, the Social Psychology Program for covering the costs of the poster, and all the participants for making our research possible.

Introduction

- The purpose of our research was to understand how parenting styles impact the psychological well-being of McMaster undergraduate students.
- Carol Ryff's (1989) Six Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being were used to examine the aspects of well-being in undergraduate students.

Topic Area

- Understand the impact that parenting styles have on the well-being of McMaster University undergraduate students.
- The parenting styles examined were authoritarian, authoritative, neglectful, and permissive (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).
- The six dimensions of well-being are autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989).

Research Question

- How do the four parenting styles impact the well-being of McMaster undergraduate students?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=57).
- Sampling Method:** Snowball sampling.
- Recruitment Methods:** Participants were recruited through emails and posts on societies social media page via McMaster student-run clubs, groups, and societies.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi and analyzed qualitative data using inductive codebook approaches.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1 - If I need someone to talk to about my stresses, Caregiver 1/2 is responsive (Martinez et al., 2017)

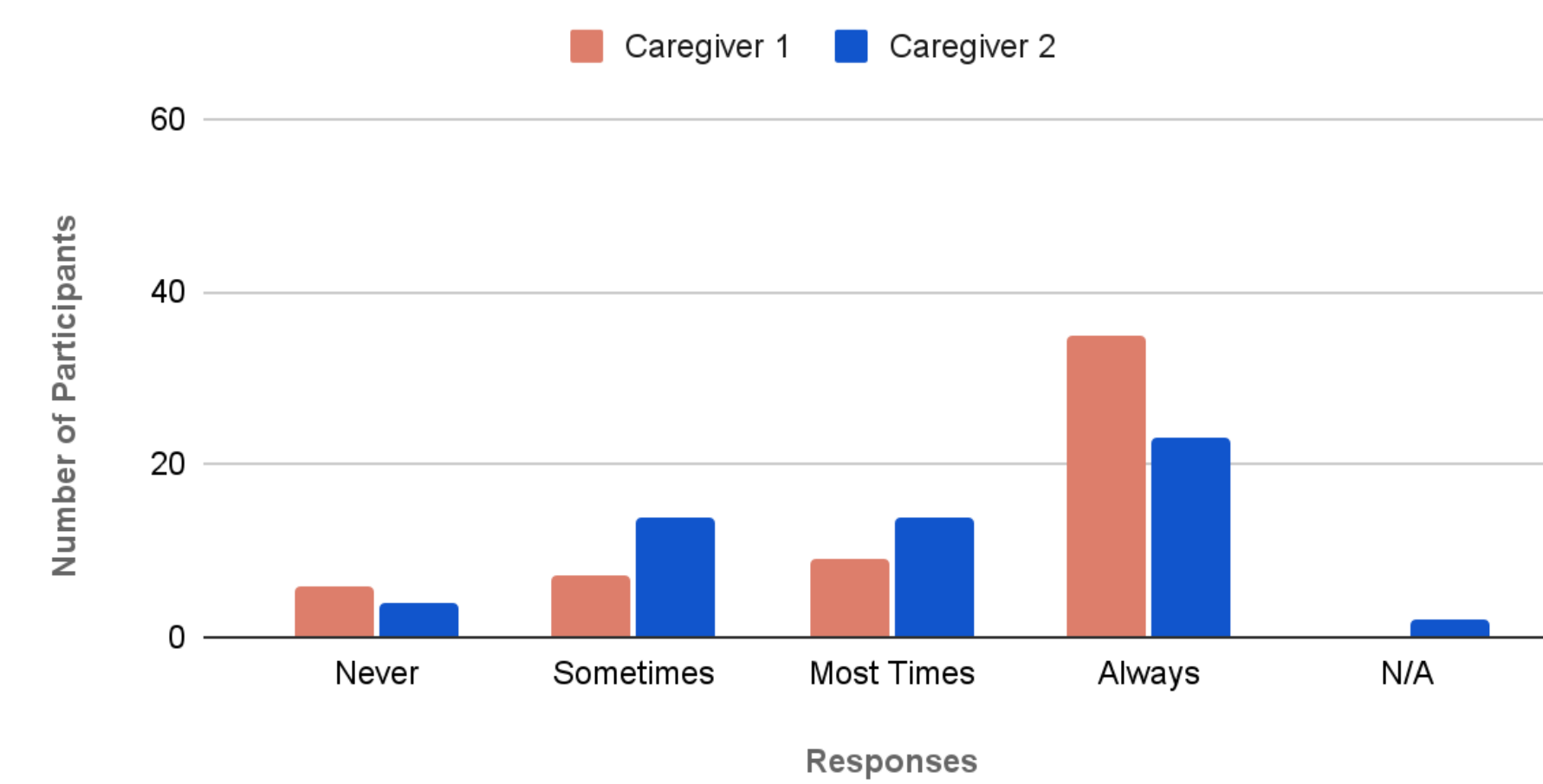


Figure 2 - If I disagree with Caregiver 1/2, they will verbally scold me (Martinez et al., 2017)

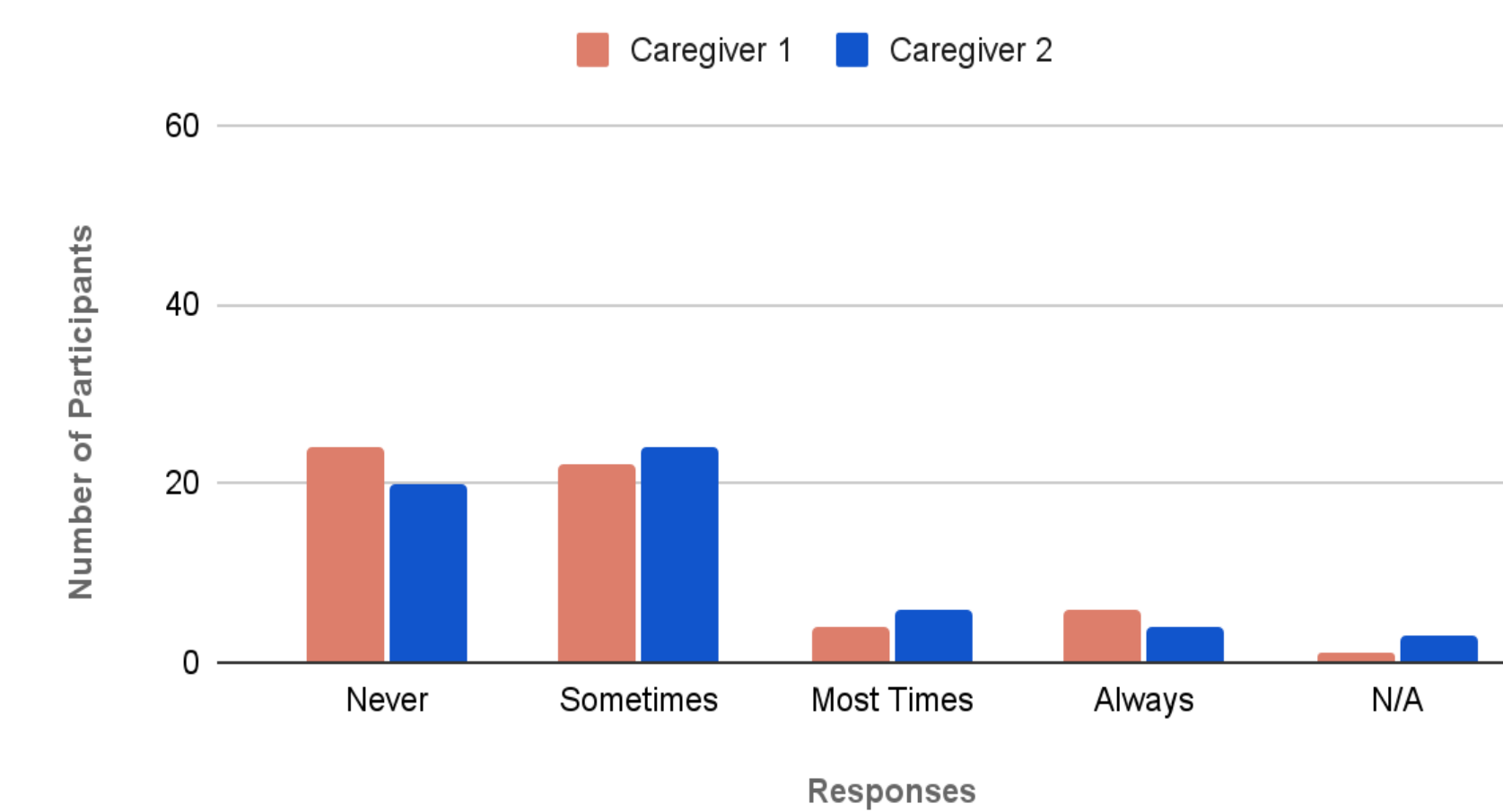


Figure 3 - I am able to rely on myself to make decisions (Ryff, 1989)

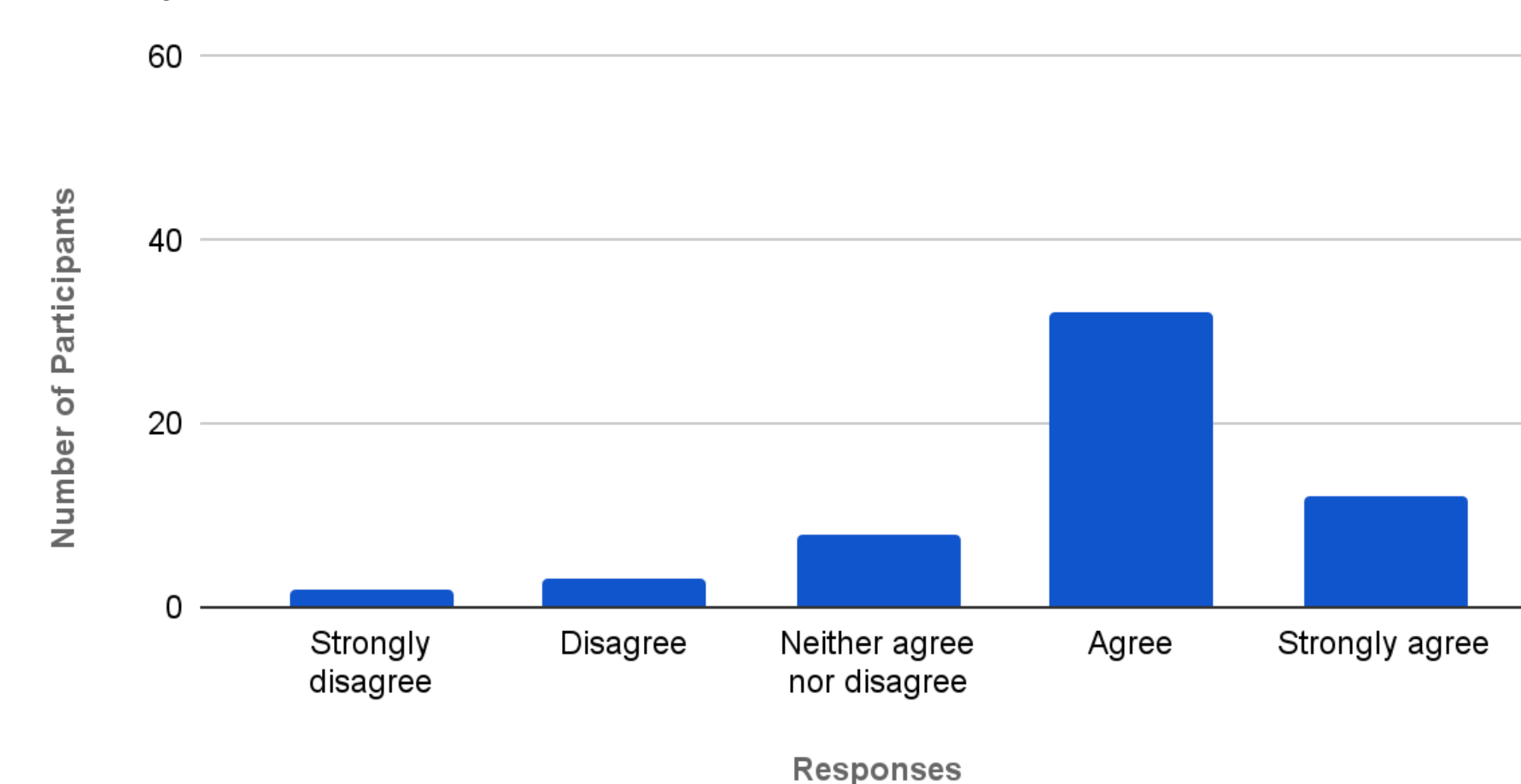


Figure 4 - I feel as though I have difficulty in managing everyday life affairs (Ryff, 1989)

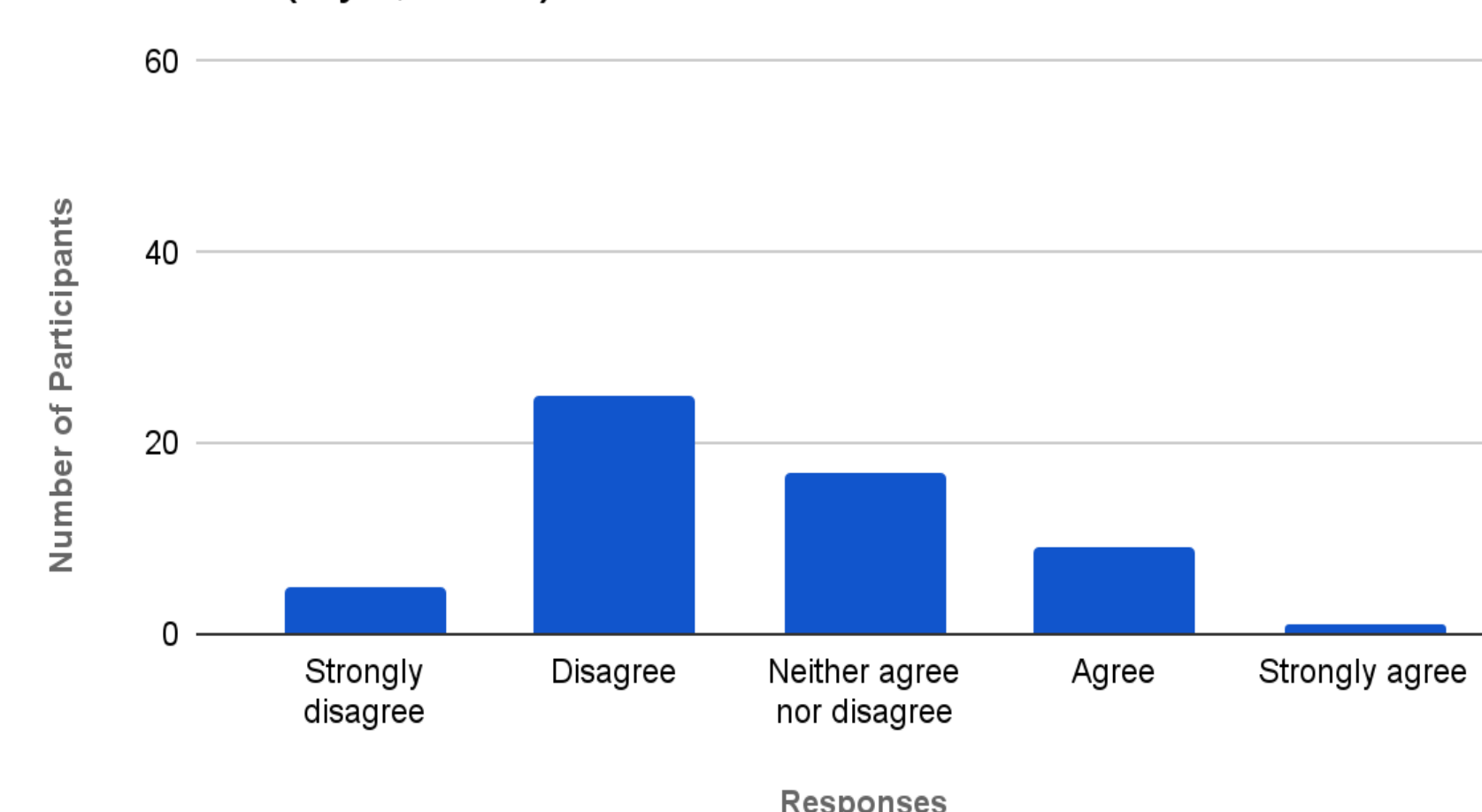


Figure 5 - I am able to see improvements in myself and my behaviour over time (Ryff, 1989)

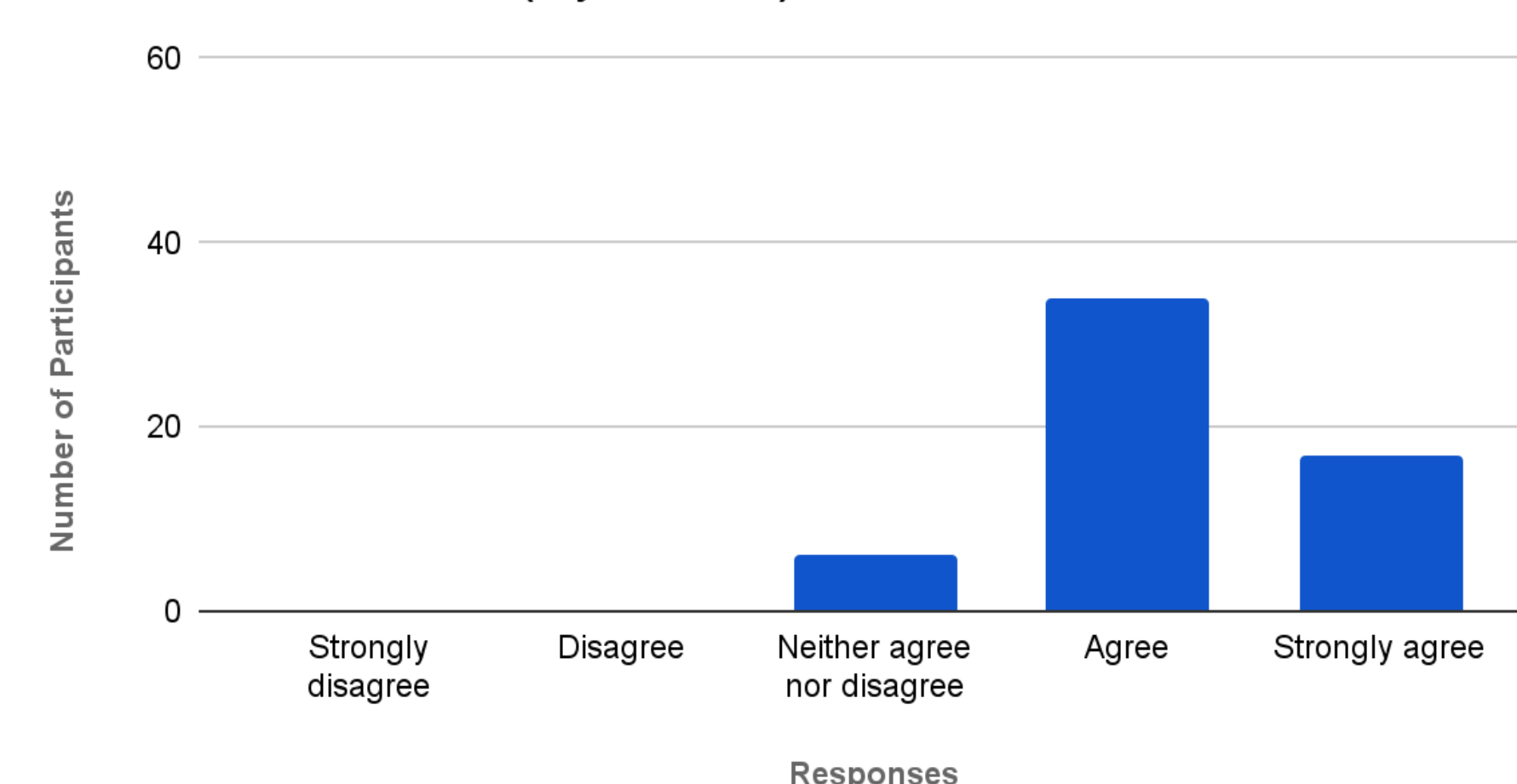


Table 1: Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlations

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Caregiver Responsiveness	-	-	-	-	-
2. Well-Being	.43***	-	-	-	-
3. Autonomy	.33*		-	-	-
4. Environmental Mastery	.46***			-	-
5. Personal Growth	.30*				-
Mean	3.1	3.6	3.2	3.3	3.8
SD	.56	.45	.67	.77	.54

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

- Figures 1 and 2** – In response to caregiver responsiveness and demandingness, most participants indicated that either one or both of their caregivers were high in responsiveness ($M = 3.1$, $SD = .56$), as indicated in Figure 1. Most participants indicated that either one or both of their caregivers were low in demandingness ($M = 2.0$, $SD = .72$), as indicated in Figure 2.
- Figures 3, 4, and 5** – In response to autonomy, environmental mastery, and personal growth, most participants rated themselves as higher in autonomy ($M = 3.2$, $SD = .67$), higher in environmental mastery ($M = 3.3$, $SD = .77$), and higher in personal growth ($M = 3.8$, $SD = .54$).
- Table 1** - This table shows descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlations. Caregiver responsiveness was significantly positively correlated with overall well-being ($r = .43$, $p < .001$), as well as autonomy ($r = .33$, $p = .01$), environmental mastery ($r = .46$, $p < .001$), and personal growth ($r = .30$, $p = .02$). No significant relationships were found between caregiver demandingness and well-being.
- Our findings are consistent with literature indicating that parenting styles higher in responsiveness tend to produce high levels of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, and overall psychological well-being in children and adolescents (Mendez & Sanvictores, 2022; Yadav et al., 2021; Silva et al., 2007). These findings add to the gap in existing literature on how parenting styles impact emerging adults' psychological well-being when analyzed through Carol Ryff's (1989) six dimensions.

Significant Insights

- The participants who rated their caregivers as more responsive had higher levels of autonomy, environmental mastery, and personal growth (Ryff, 1989).
- Our research indicates that parenting styles exert a lasting influence beyond adolescence and into emerging adulthood. This key finding can be used in future research as a basis for understanding the scope of impact that parents have on their children.

Conclusions

- Aspects of our research demonstrate a significant positive correlation between responsive parenting styles and psychological well-being.
- Ultimately, our research exemplifies the long-term effects of parenting styles on psychological well-being.
- The data collected suggests that parenting styles continue to affect the psychological well-being of emerging adults, past adolescence.

References

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- We would like to thank Dr. Sarah Clancy for her ongoing support and guidance throughout our research and the Social Psychology Program for paying the expense of this poster. A final appreciation for the undergraduates who participated in the survey and the student-run clubs that promoted it.

Introduction

- The purpose of the study was to learn more about the relationship between the sense of belonging and subjective well-being among undergraduate students at McMaster University and whether this relationship is stronger for international students' identity.

Topic Area

- Understand the sense of belongingness and subjective well-being of international students and the impact on their identity.
- Furthermore, observe the effect on international students compared to domestic students (e.g., students who hold Canadian citizenship or are permanent residents) (Government of Canada/ Gouvernement du Canada, 2023).

Hypotheses

- International student identity moderates the positive relationship between social integration and SWB, such that international students who report a low social integration are more likely to report lower SWB than domestic students.
- International students who have not established social support systems will report greater loneliness and identity conflicts than domestic students due to cultural differences.

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=36).
- Sampling Method:** Convenience and purposive sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through physical posters placed around campus at McMaster University and through online posts distributed by McMaster clubs and associations.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and analyzed qualitative data through analytical coding.

Results and Discussion

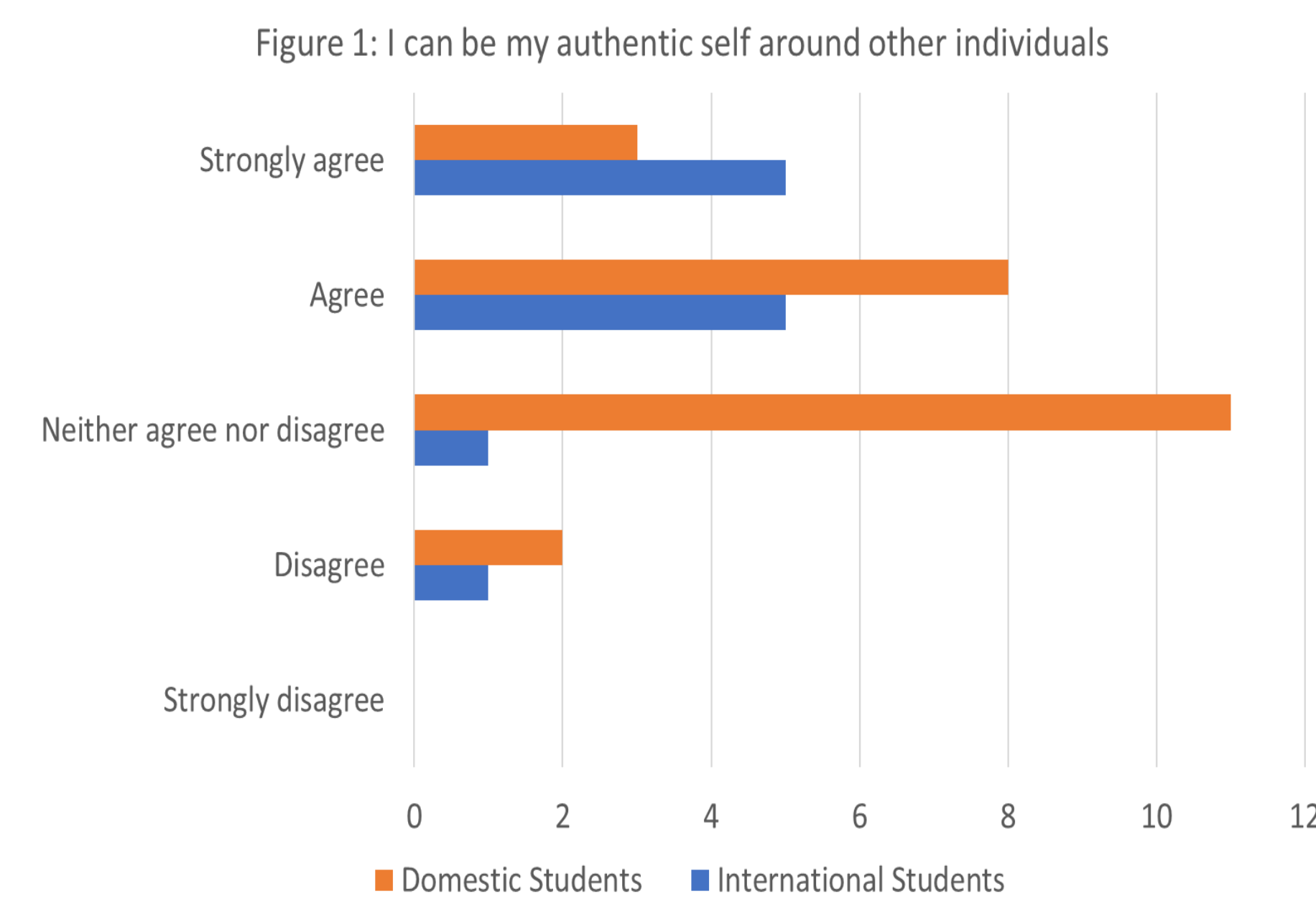


Figure 1: Figure 1 indicates that international students are more inclined to display their true identity rather than conform to the cultural standard. These findings contradict our hypothesis, as well, prior literature and research.

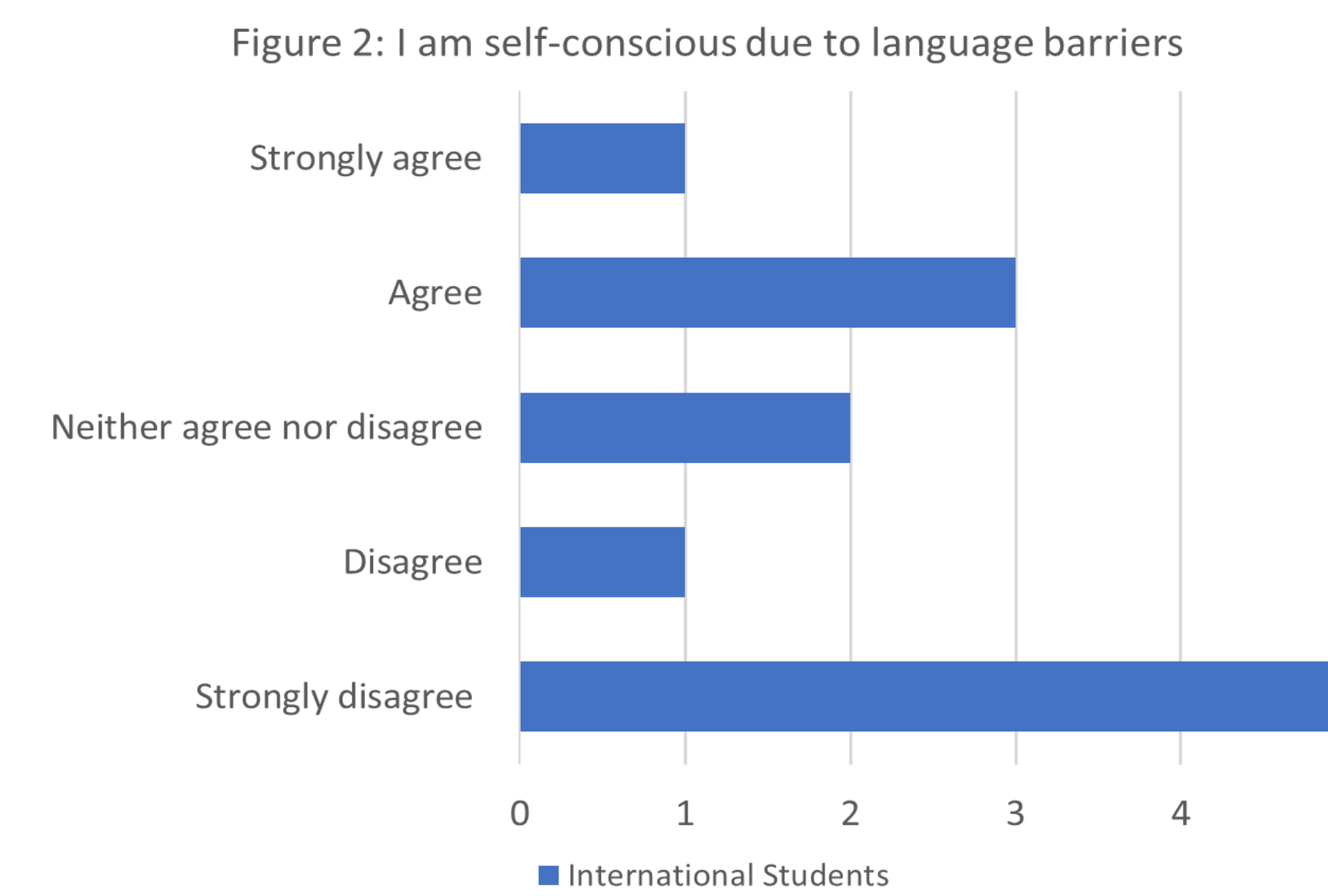


Figure 2: Figure 2 displays that international students are self-confident in their own language abilities. As a result, international students feel they struggle less and experience fewer communication related issues.

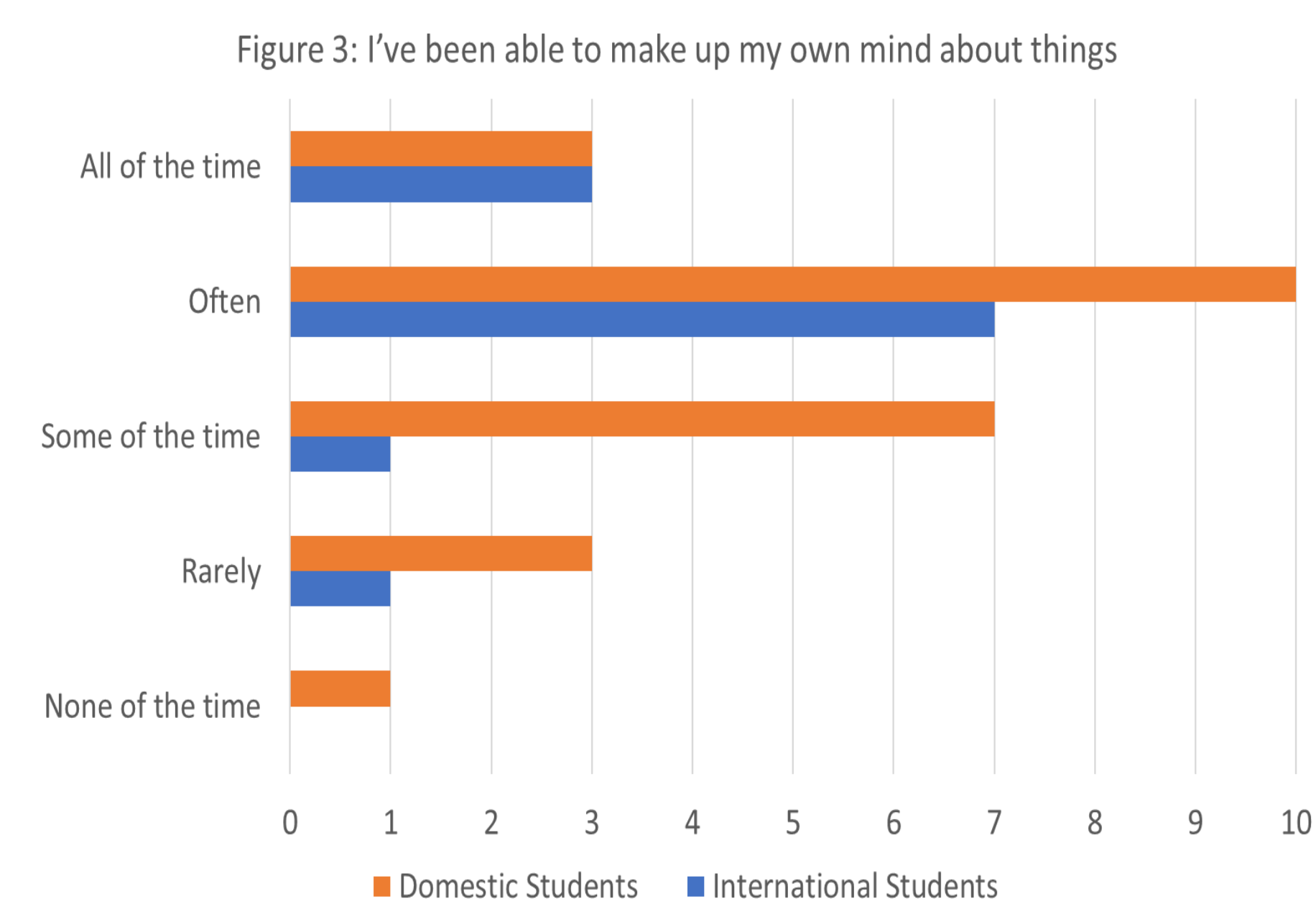


Figure 3: Figure 3 notes that both domestic and international students often have a secure and high level of subjective well-being as they can make their own choices on day-to-day basis.

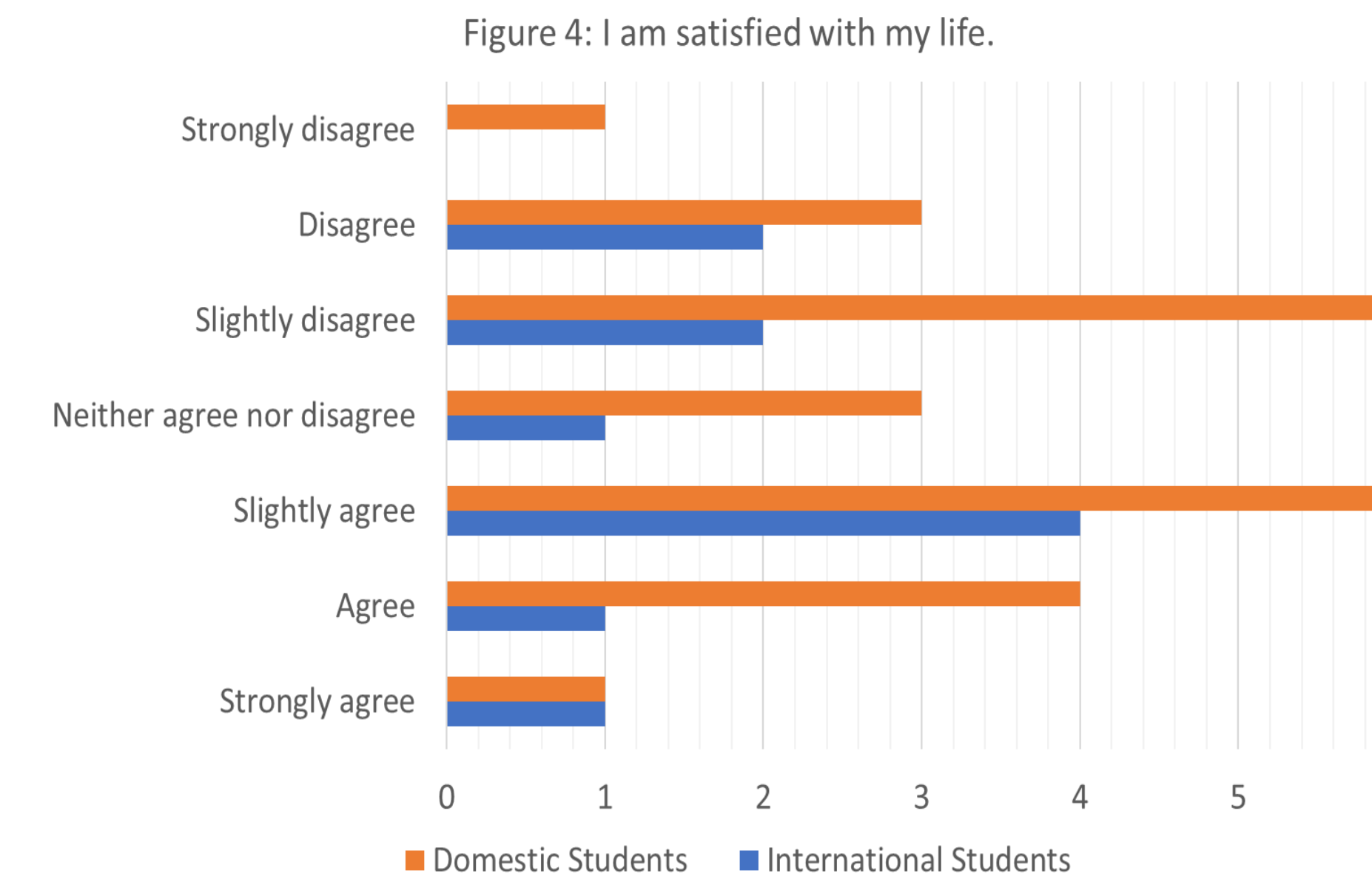


Figure 4: Figure 4 indicates most international students are satisfied with their life, while domestic student's responses are scattered.

Common themes & quotes from our research

Questions:	Most common themes:
How did you feel when you first arrived at McMaster?	<i>Negative feelings transition into positive feelings</i> "I felt nervous but now I am confident with what I am doing." "felt lost and not unsettled, and very alone (a lot due to COVID and being home). Now feel like a part of society and I have a voice."
Would you like to make any further comments about your experience as an international student?	<i>Importance of social ties</i> "It is not the easiest thing to do, but as long as you find people you are comfortable with, you will be fine."

Significant Insights

- In prior research, language barriers such as a "lack of vocabulary" and "poor grammar" represent factors that can evoke anxiety in the process of learning the language of the host country (Mulyono et al., 2019, p. 16). However, our research found that international students are comfortable and unbothered by having to learn and speak a new language.
- Our data suggests that international students are comfortable with their identity and are not as susceptible to cultural assimilation.

Conclusions

- Our results demonstrate that sense of belonging is significantly associated with SWB ($p < .001$). However, international student identity does not significantly moderate the relationship ($p = .34$).
- Our research is important in further understanding the mental health and lived experiences of international students. Furthermore, contributing to the foundation of recognizing, and working towards accommodating the international students.

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- We would like to thank Dr. Sarah Clancy for the support and guidance she provided us throughout this research. We would also like to thank the Social Psychology Program for covering the cost of this poster. Lastly, we would also like to thank the McMaster clubs and associations that shared our poster on their social media and the survey participants for their cooperation.

Introduction

- The purpose of our research was to investigate if students engage in social comparison while using social media sites and how this may affect their well-being.
- We examined the various forms that social comparison can take, as well as how it may impact the mental health of McMaster University students.

Topic Area

- Understand how social media use and social comparison are connected, and how they may alter the well-being of students.
- Investigate the frequency that students engage in social comparison and identify how this may help or hinder their mental health.

Research Questions

- Is social comparison a harmful factor of social media usage among students?
- How do these comparisons affect students' mental health?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older that use social media; sample size: (n=14).
- Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling and snowball sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through recruitment posters that were put up on campus by members of our group and through student-run clubs and their respective social media pages.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi and analyzed qualitative data using descriptive coding.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1 – How often do you compare yourself with others in the following areas?

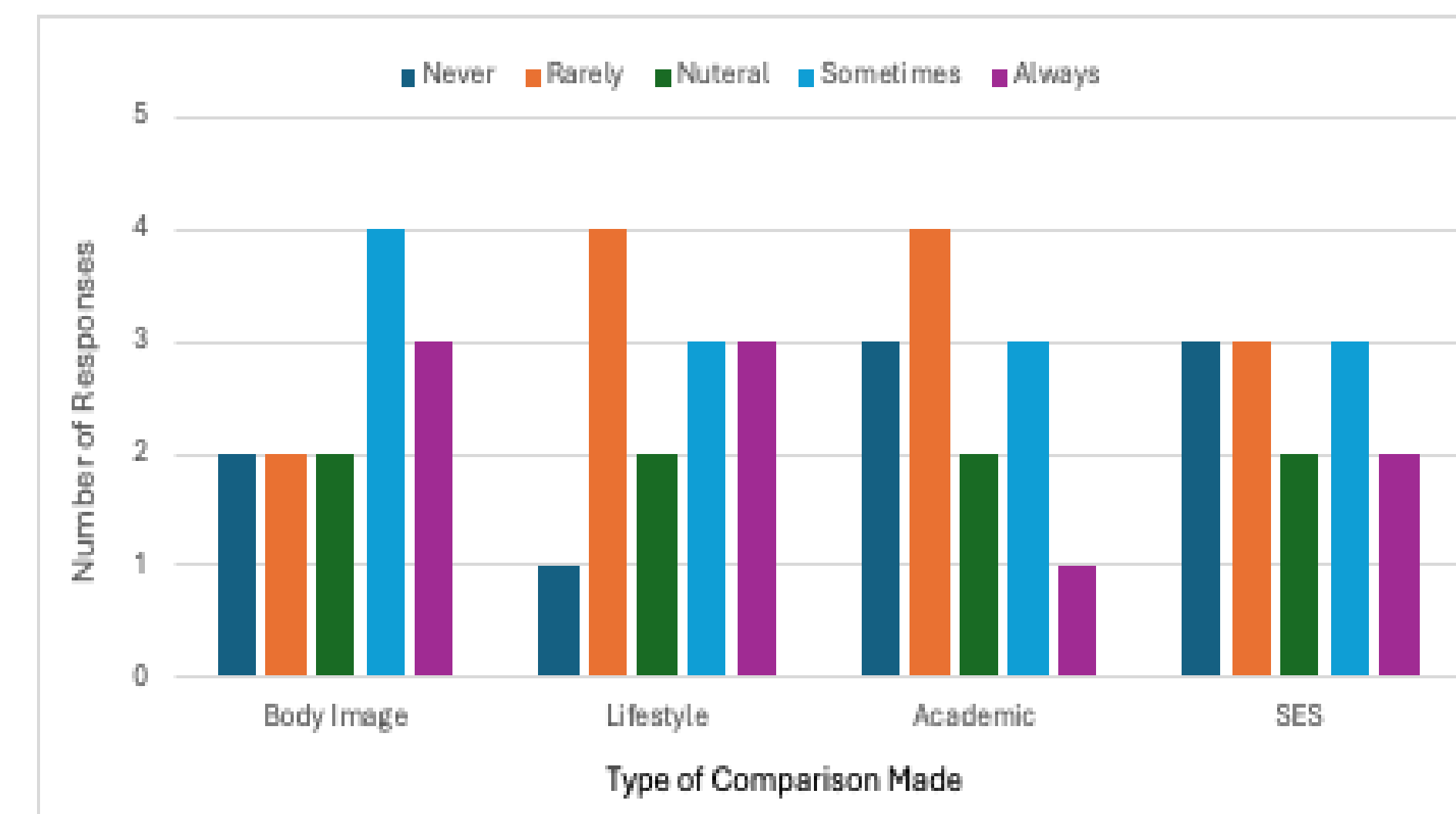


Figure 3 – Types of comparisons made split by grade range.

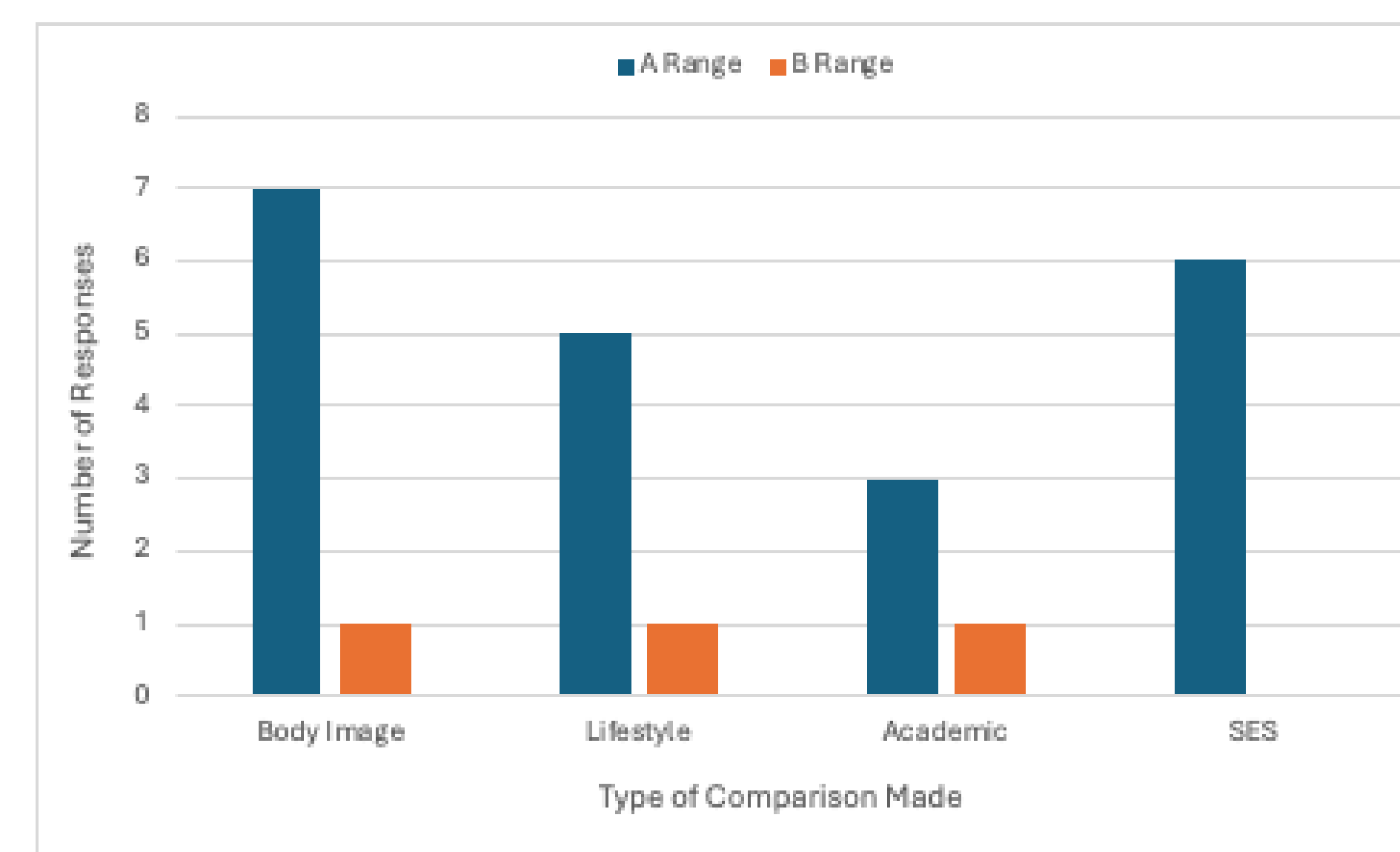


Figure 1 and 2 – These graphs indicate the most common types of comparisons made among respondents and their most used social media platforms. Body image comparisons are made the most and academic comparisons the least. Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are the most used social media platforms. Figure 1 is consistent with literature that finds body image to be a common type of social comparison made (Esiyok & Turanci, 2017; Jiotsa et al., 2021; Scully et al., 2023). Figure 2 adds to gaps in the literature by examining more than one social media platform in our analysis.

Figure 2 – Please select all the social media platform(s) you have used most frequently in the last three months.

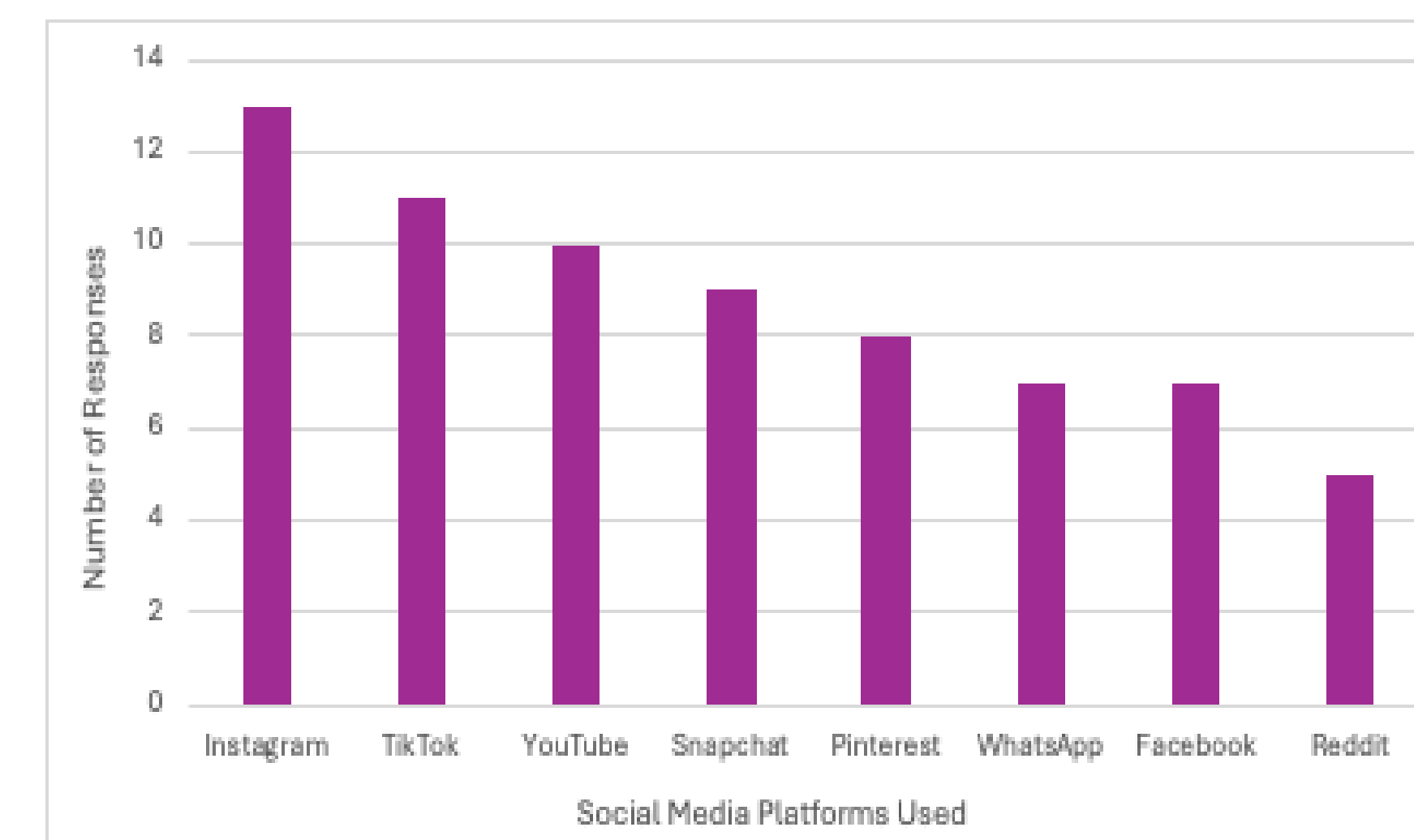


Figure 4 – Types of comparisons made split by year of study

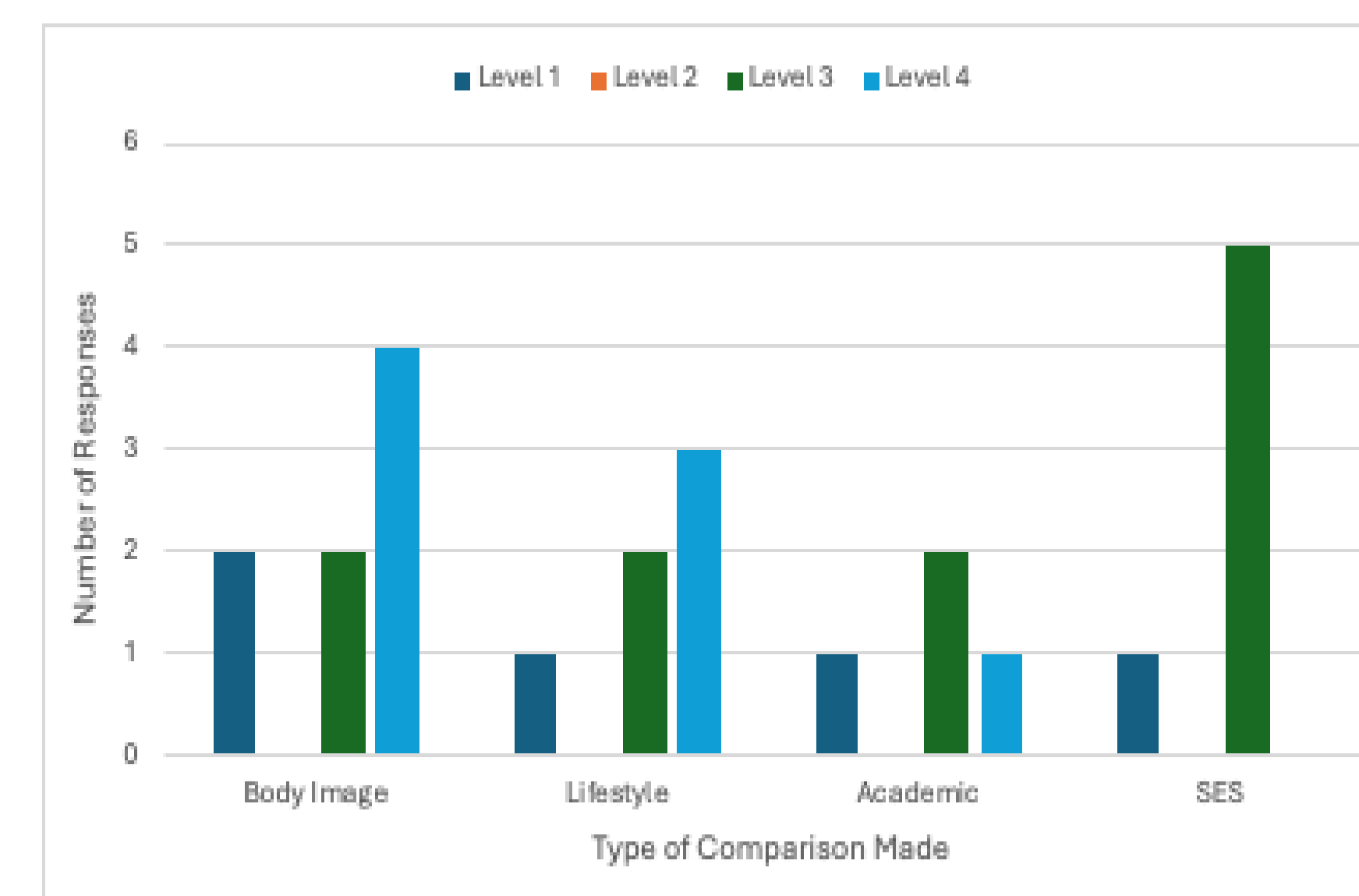


Figure 3 and 4 – These graphs indicate how the most common types of social comparisons made by participants differ based on their grade range and year of study. Figure 4 indicates that fourth-year students make the most body image comparisons while third-year students make the most SES-related comparisons. This information contributes to gaps in literature by considering how aspects of student life such as grade range or year of study may impact their social comparison tendencies.

Question	Common Themes
In the space below, please describe your general mood after using social media sites/networks.	Positive "I feel happy after using social media because the posts are filtered to my interests, so I mostly see and view content such as memes which make me laugh"
Based on your responses to the question above [about types of social comparison], please feel free to share your thoughts about social comparison with others.	Upwards Social Comparison "I only ever really compare myself to others on social factors (do they have more friends than me, are they closer to their friends than me) - partly I think because that's what I'm most insecure about . . . it's the only thing that I really deeply care about and wish that I had but don't"

Significant Insights

- Our research found that all participants used social media (SM) for entertainment purposes, with most using SM to pass time and maintain relationships.
- Instagram users were the most likely to engage in social comparison, particularly in body image and lifestyle.
- Our research concluded that the most common style of comparison was upwards comparison. Although participants engaged in upwards comparison, it had a negligible impact on self-esteem. Our research arrived at similar conclusions to both Anto et al., (2023) and Andrade et al., (2023) that comparison is often related to body image and lifestyle.

Conclusions

- We examined the relationship between the way that students use social media and how it may impact their well-being.
- The body image comparisons that were made by participants showed similarity to other related studies. However, our results differed when we observed that comparisons generally did not lead to poor mental health.
- For future research, a larger sample size is needed to accurately investigate and represent the relationship between social media usage and how it influences university students.

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- We would like to thank Dr. Sarah Clancy for her unwavering support throughout our research project. As well, we would like to extend gratitude to the Social Psychology Program for funding and developing this poster. Finally, we would like to acknowledge and extend our thanks to the participants who responded to our study and made this project possible.

Introduction

- The pursuit of post-secondary education is driven by increased employment opportunities and higher pay.
- Yet, the rising costs of housing, tuition, and heavy reliance on loans, introduce significant financial stress for these students.
- This study examined the implications of financial stress on undergraduate McMaster students.

Topic Area

- Explore the complex relationship between the financial status of these students and its impact on their well-being.
- Delve into specific areas such as reliance on financial support, influence on academic performance, and influence on housing situations.

Research Question

- What implications do financial constraints have on the mental health of undergraduate McMaster students?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=32).
- Sampling Method:** Convenience, non-probability sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through McMaster student-run groups on social media platforms including Instagram and through the distribution of posters around campus.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved LimeSurvey website.
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi and Microsoft Excel and analyzed qualitative data through descriptive coding.

Results and Discussion

FIGURE 1 - Rate the extent to which finances make you feel each of the following emotions (1 = do not feel this emotion, 5 = strongly feel this emotion)

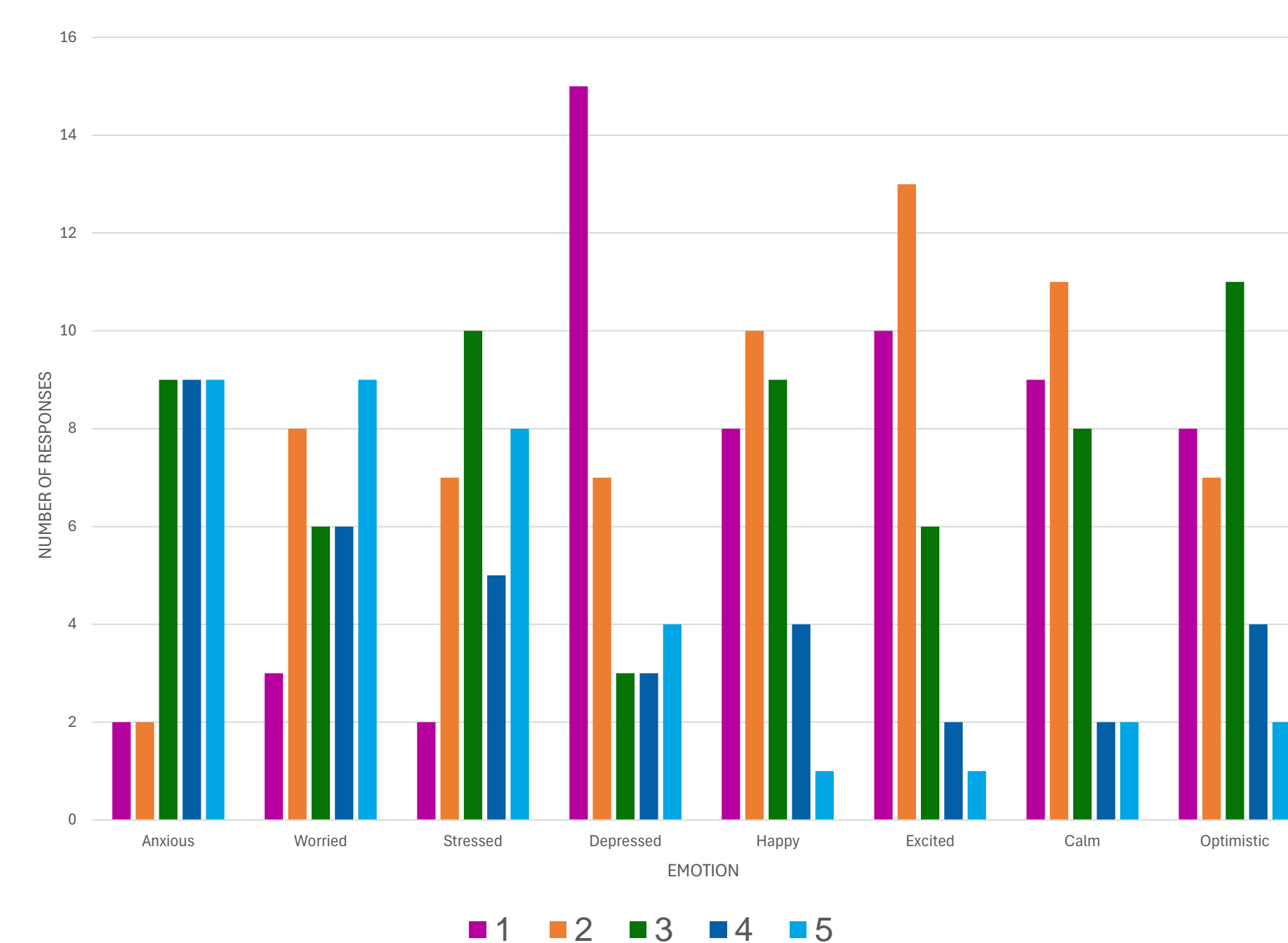


FIGURE 3 – Participants rating extent to which they agree with the statement "I need to work to afford post-secondary education"

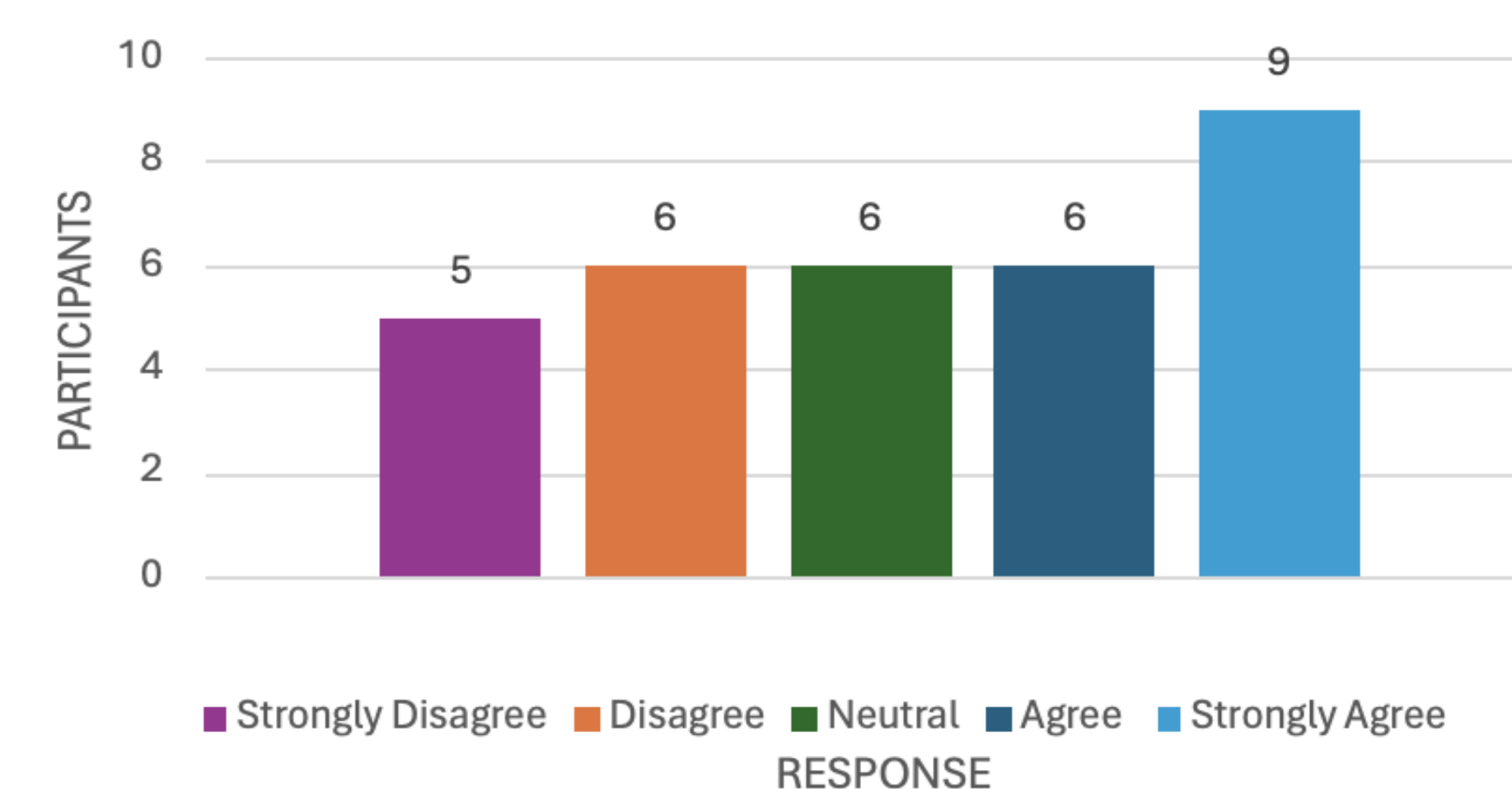


FIGURE 1 - Figure 1 illustrates the rate at which participants felt various emotions when thinking about money. Respondents reported more feelings of anxiety, worry, and stress compared to feelings of excitement, calm, or happiness. This finding is consistent with prior research showing that finances illicit more negative emotions among undergraduate students (Robb, 2017).

FIGURE 2 – Figure 2 displays the extent to which participants feel that their financial situation affects their ability to focus on academics. Participants who do not receive financial assistance from relatives tend to report greater impacts on academic focus compared to those that do, supportive of the research question "What implications do financial constraints have on the mental health of undergraduate McMaster students?".

FIGURE 3- Figure 3 illustrates the extent to which participants felt that they needed to work to afford their post-secondary education. 28% (n=9) of participants indicated they "strongly agree" with the statement and 19% (n=6) indicated they agree with the statement.

FIGURE 4 – Figure 4 demonstrates participant's perceptions of being unable to afford post-secondary education without financial assistance. The majority, 50% (n=16) of participants indicated they "Strongly Agree" that they would be unable to afford their post-secondary education without financial assistance. This finding supports Solis and Durband's (2015) research that found financial support was imperative to the success of post-secondary students.

FIGURE 2 - To what extent do you agree with the statement: "My financial situation impacts my ability to focus on school" categorized by whether they financial assistance from relatives (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

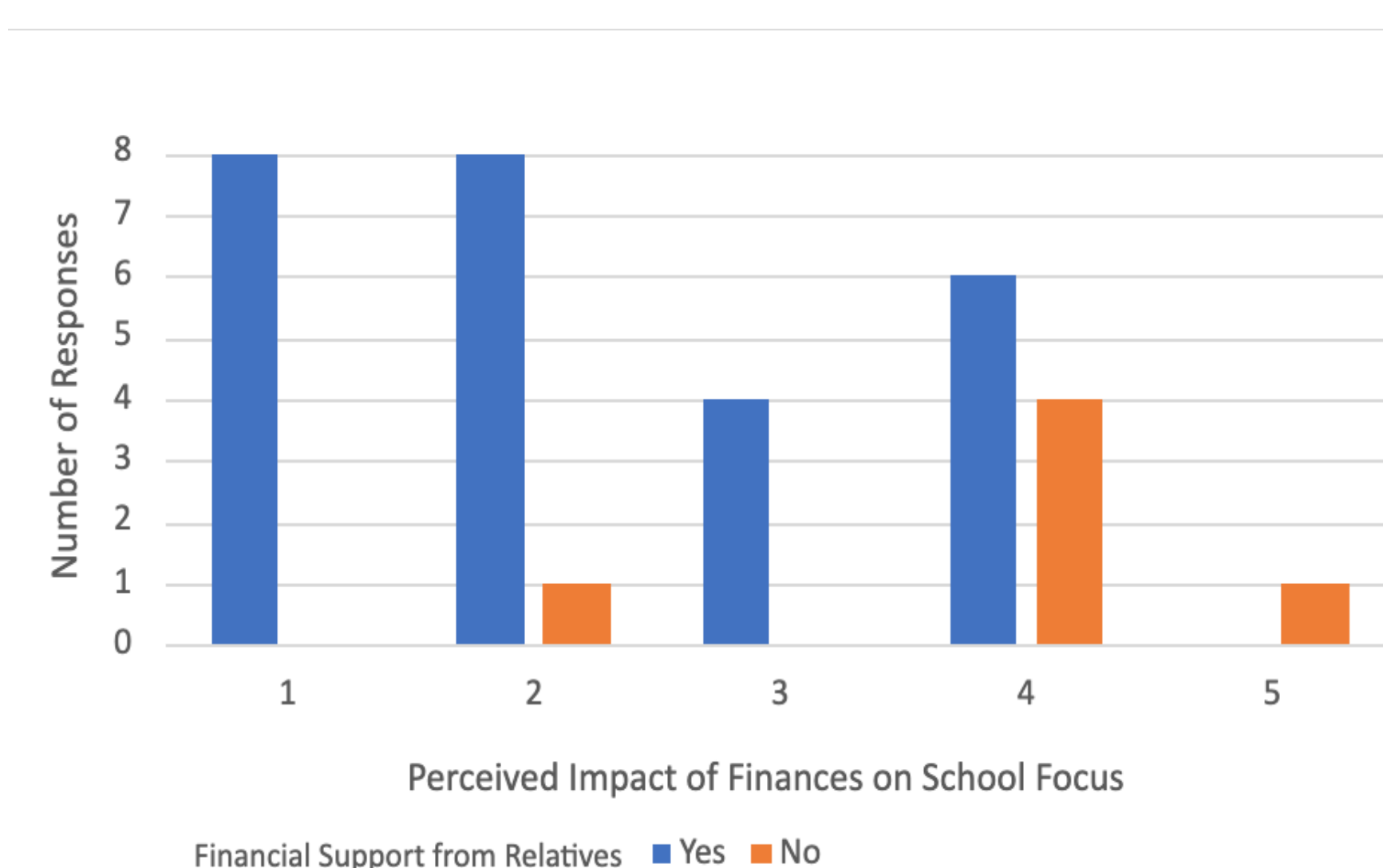
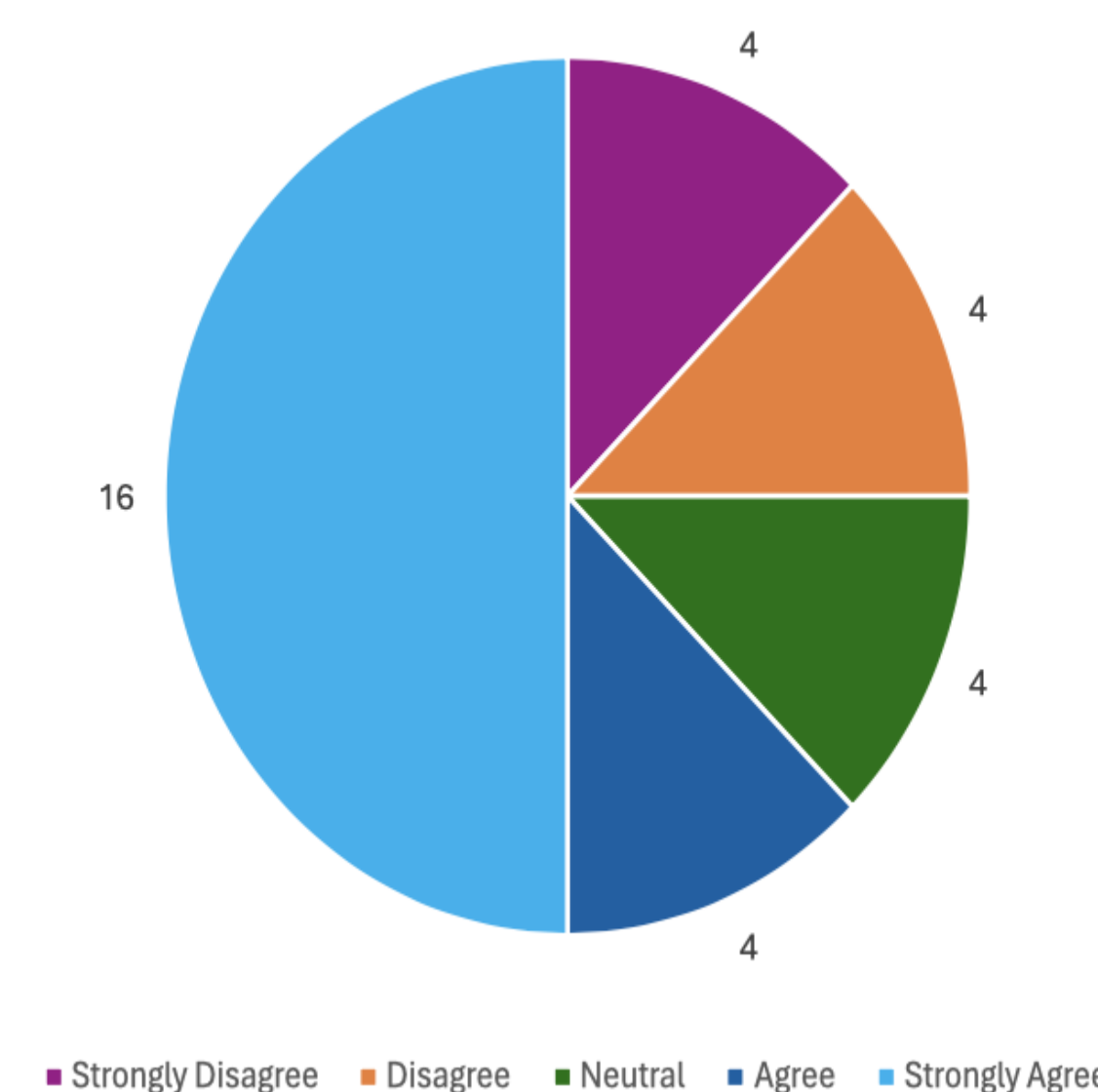


FIGURE 4 – Participants rating extent to which they agree with the statement "I would be unable to attend post-secondary without financial assistance"



Significant Insights

- Students notably reported feelings of anxiety, worry, and stress pertaining to finances. In contrast, there were less reports of happy and excited emotions, indicating a potential need for financial support or counseling services.
- The impact of finances on school focus appears to be moderated by the presence of financial support from relatives, with a significant difference observed between those who do and do not receive support (p = 0.006). Individuals without financial support demonstrate a higher impact on school focus.
- The necessity of working to afford education is a common perception, highlighting the financial pressure of education.

Conclusions

- Our study provides greater insight toward the understanding of how financial stress impacts the well-being of undergraduate McMaster students.
- This research illustrates greater feelings of intrapersonal stress among undergraduate students that report experiencing financial strain while pursuing their post-secondary education.
- It is evident that many students feel that their financial status does impact their ability to achieve academic success, but there are mitigating variables that buffer the correlation, such as academic support.

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Acknowledgements

- We would like to thank Dr. Clancy for her guidance and support through this research as well as the Social Psychology Program for covering the cost of this poster. Finally, we would like to thank the participants for making this research possible.

Introduction

- The purpose of our research was to study the emotional, academic, and social experiences of undergraduate students who attend McMaster University.
- We examined how undergraduate students' attachment styles affect their academic performance and mental well-being.

Topic Area

- Understand the influence of attachment styles on the external aspects of an undergraduate student's life.
- Evaluate the role that students' social and emotional connections play when assessing their university experience and mental health.

Research Questions

- Do explanatory styles predict an individual's attachment style?
- Do attachment styles influence mental well-being?
- Does attachment style predict academic performance?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=112).
- Sampling Method:** Snowball sampling and convenience sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through posters including the anonymous survey, and McMaster club posts distributed through Instagram.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB-approved platform LimeSurvey..
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data through Jamovi and analyzed qualitative data using thematic analysis.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1. Anxious Attachment Item

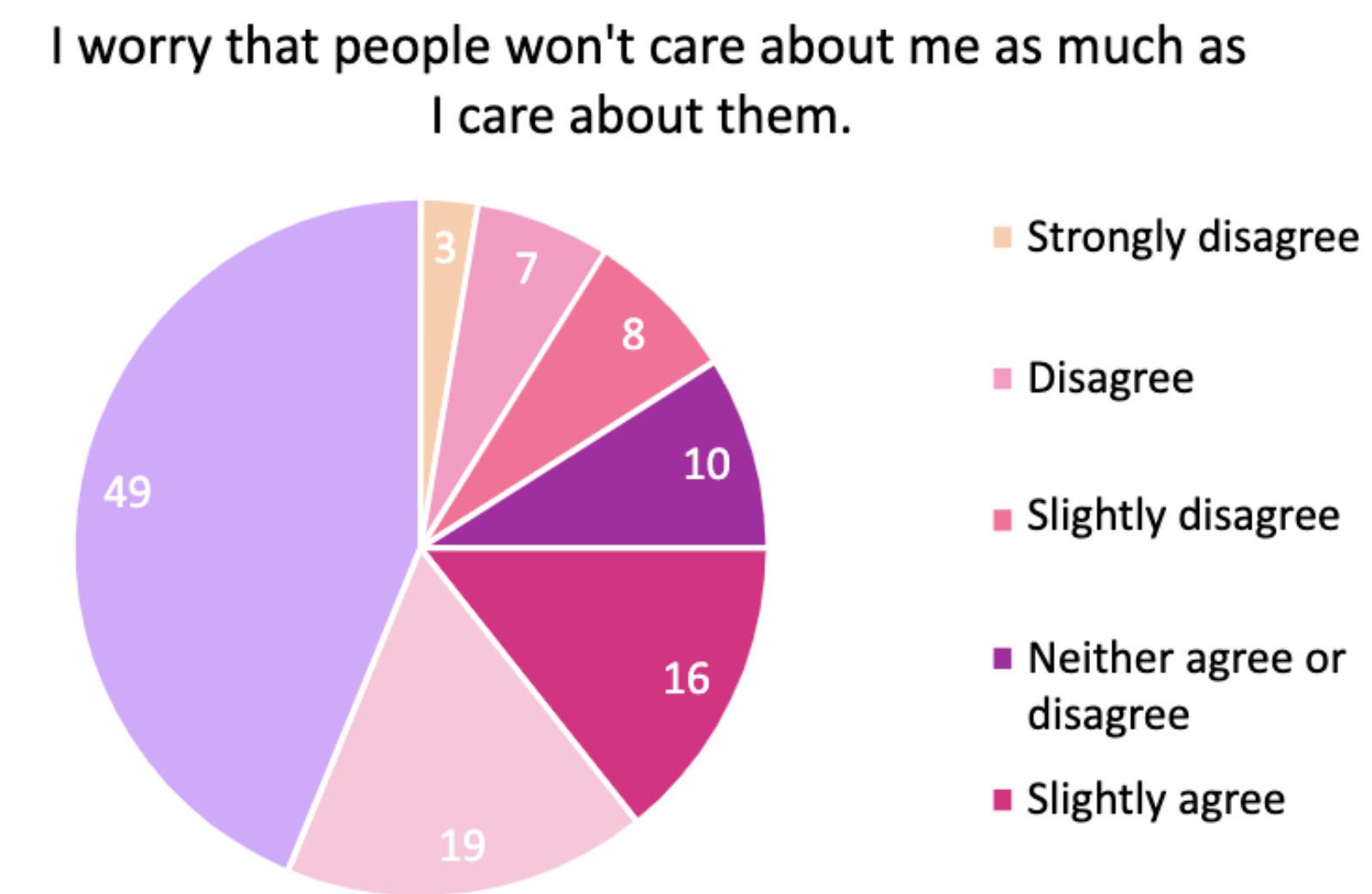


Figure 2. Avoidant Attachment Item

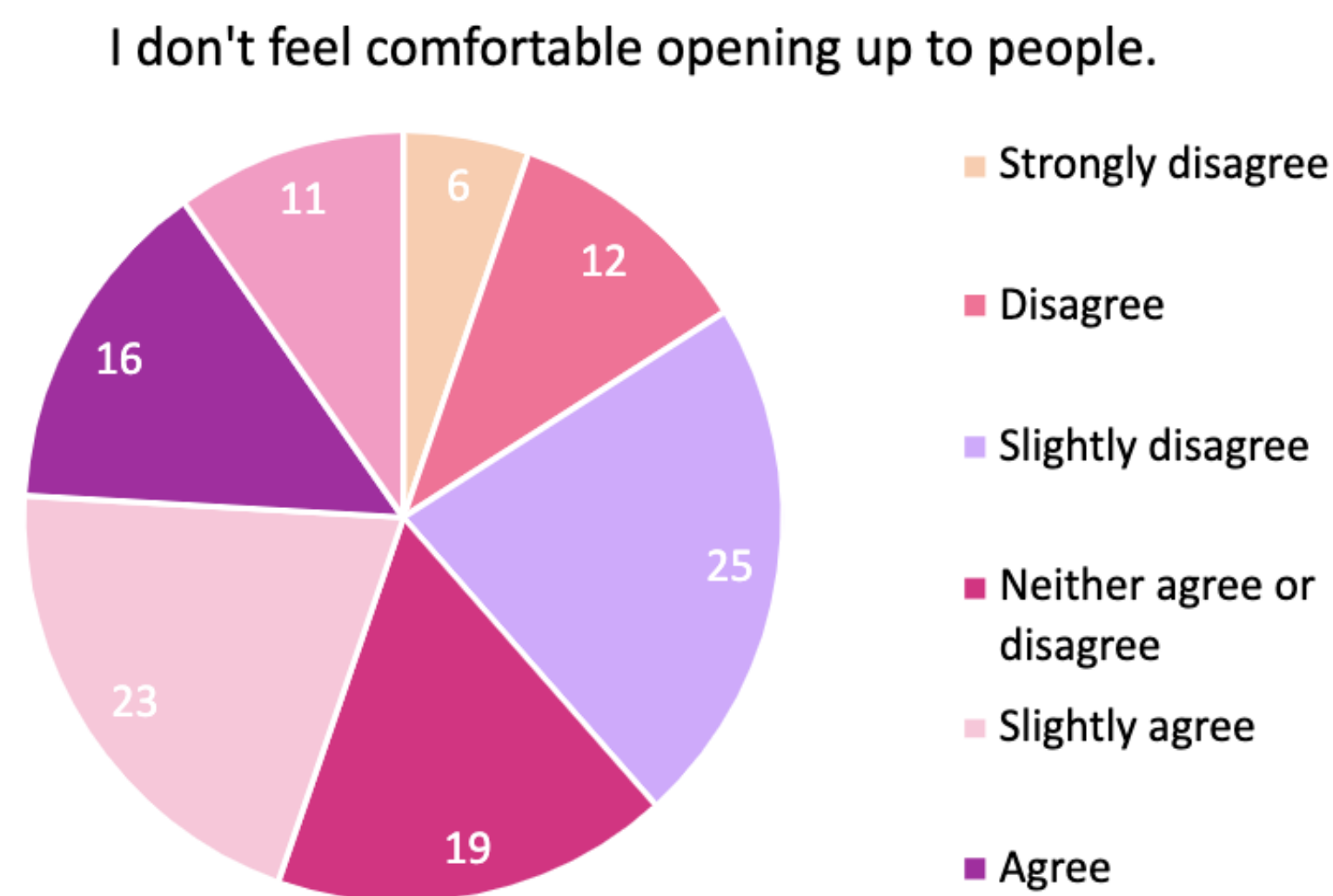


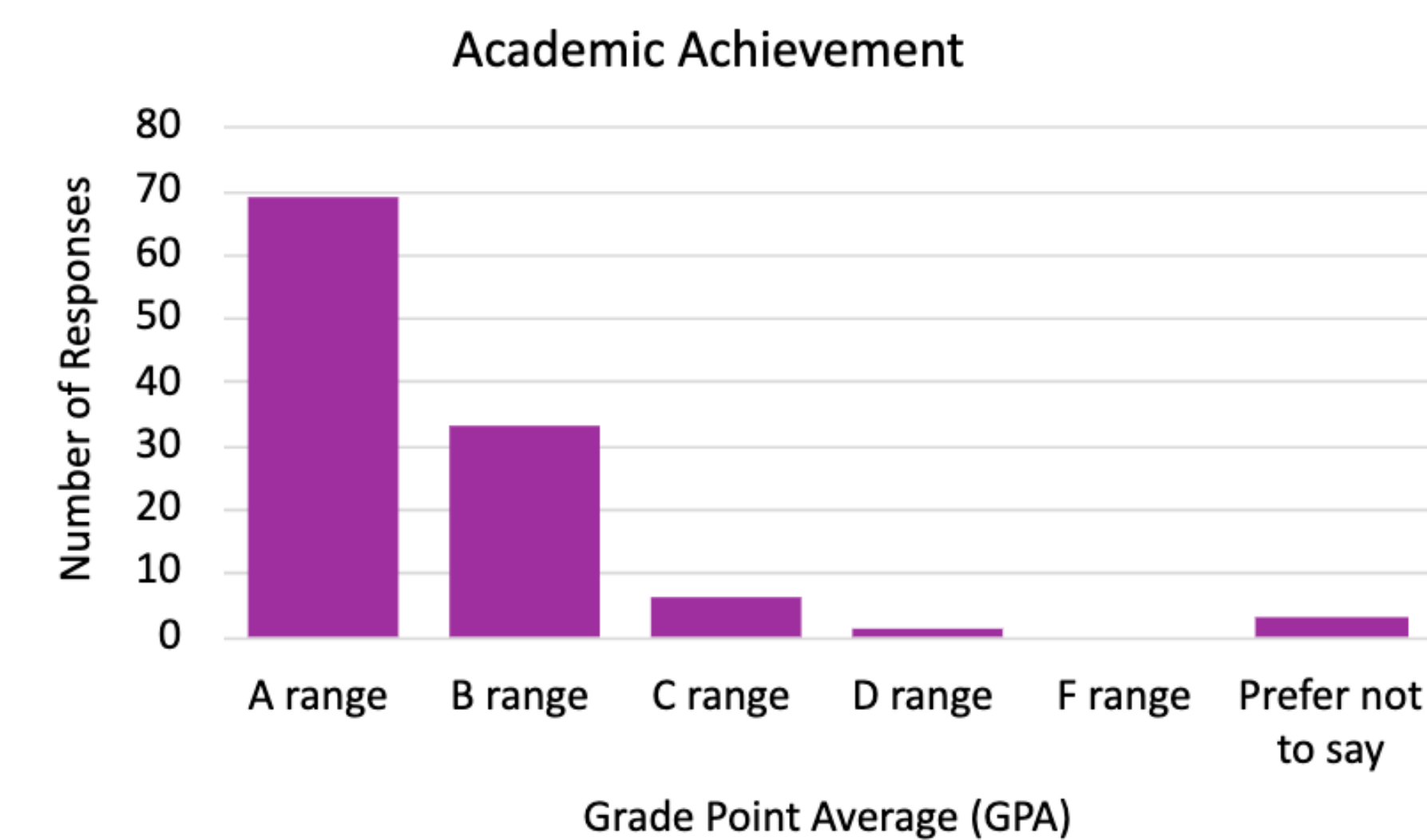
Figure 3 - The majority of our sample (n=69) reported having a GPA within the A range, and a third in the B range (n=33). We found that GPA is positively correlated with avoidant attachment. While some literature found no correlation between academic achievement and attachment styles, other studies did find a correlation between the two (Gore & Rodgers, 2010). Our findings add to the limited existing literature on specific attachment styles and GPA.

Figures 1 and 2 — These graphs show most participants rated moderately or very high in anxious attachment (n=84), with half of the participants ranked moderately or very high in avoidant attachment (n=50) and about half ranked low (n=43).

We found that ranking higher in both anxious and avoidant attachment is associated with worse well-being. These findings are corroborated by existing literature evaluating insecure attachment style and mental well-being (Bradstreet et al., 2018; Bucci et al., 2015).

Certain studies which evaluated specific attachment styles, like ours, produced contradictory or inconclusive findings (Lavy, 2016; Ramsdal et al., 2015). Our findings fill this knowledge gap and help solidify the relationship between specific kinds of insecure attachment styles and well-being, while also supporting pre-existing findings on attachment styles and well-being in general.

Figure 3. Student Academic Achievement (GPA)



Common Themes & Quotes from the Survey:

Questions	Most common theme from respondents:
Please briefly describe your ideal study environment(s) or techniques (e.g., Flashcards, Group/Individual Study, etc.).	Individual Study <i>"An ideal study environment is somewhere quiet and away from people..."</i>
Please provide a brief description of the perceived difficulty of your program.	Difficult <i>"Quite difficult. i receive "wow"s when i disclose it."</i>
Please briefly describe the extent to which your academics impact your well-being, either positively or negatively.	Both Positive and Negative <i>"Positively if I'm doing well. Extremely negatively if I'm not doing great according to my standards."</i>

Significant Insights

- Our research indicates that McMaster University students' attachment styles influence their academic achievement, such that anxious and avoidant individuals exhibit decreased well-being.
- Avoidant attachment was found to be associated with greater GPA ($r = 0.28, p < .003$).
- Our research displayed that the majority of our sample exhibited insecure attachment styles.

Conclusions

- Most of the research on attachment styles does not address the compound interrelationship between university students' specific attachment styles, academic performance, and overall well-being.
- Our research provides valuable insights into students' resilience, coping strategies, and responses to challenges, ultimately guiding the development of programs that aid students at McMaster in utilizing their attachment style to better their academic performance and well-being.

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Introduction

- Our research sought to understand how stress levels and coping strategies differ among undergraduate students as they progress their academic career.
- We studied the perceived stressors for undergraduate students focusing on their year of study and the coping mechanisms used to address this stress.
- This topic is important to enhance student well-being, raise academic performance, and build an encouraging learning environment.

Topic Area

- Investigate how stress levels change as students progress through their undergraduate years, including looking at stressors, coping mechanisms, and overall stress levels.
- Understand the difficulties undergraduate students face at different levels of their academic years and how they succeed in their personal and university life.

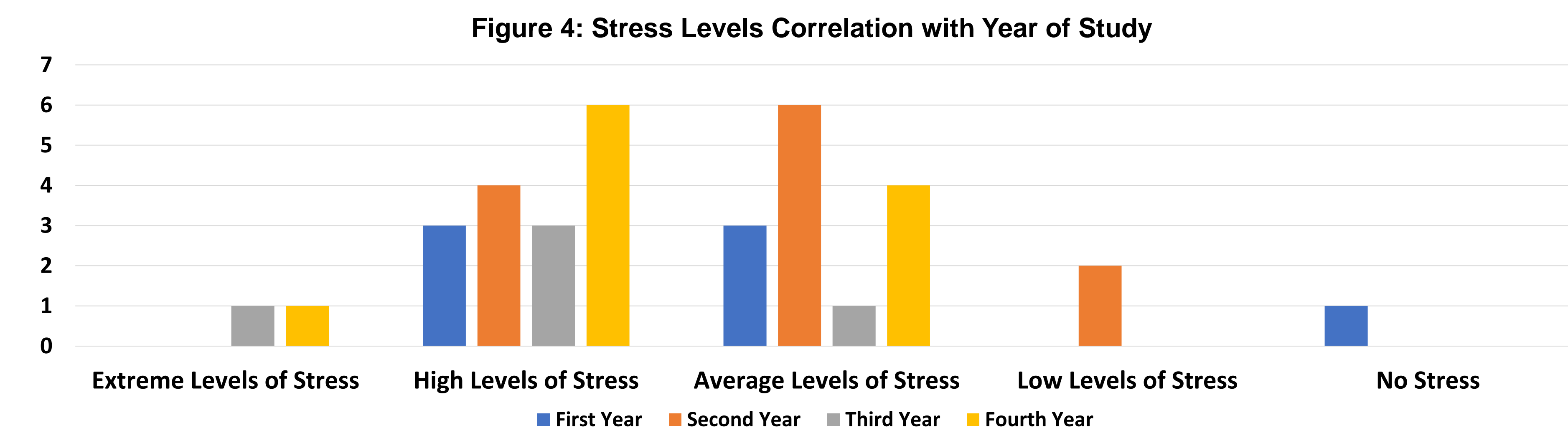
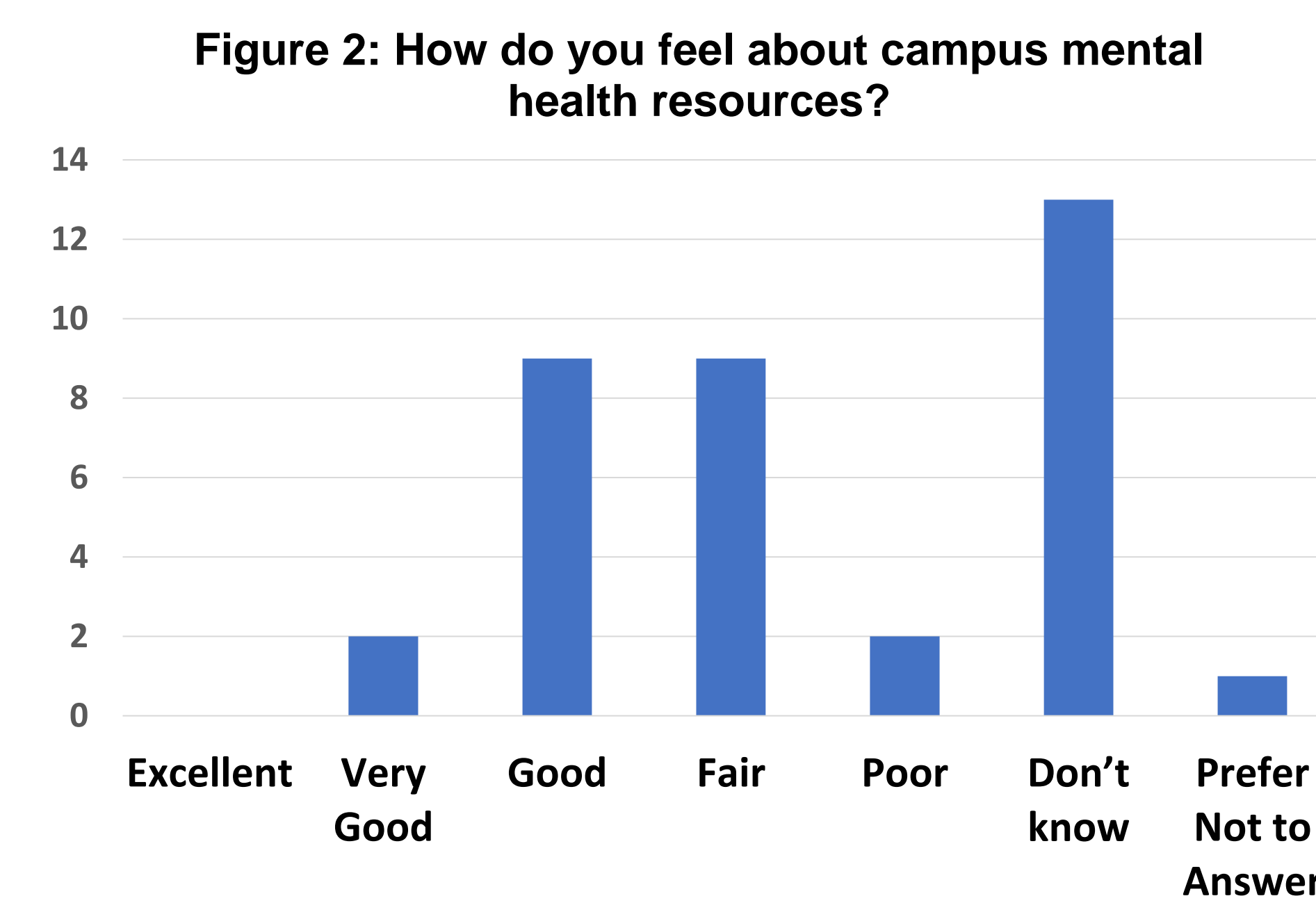
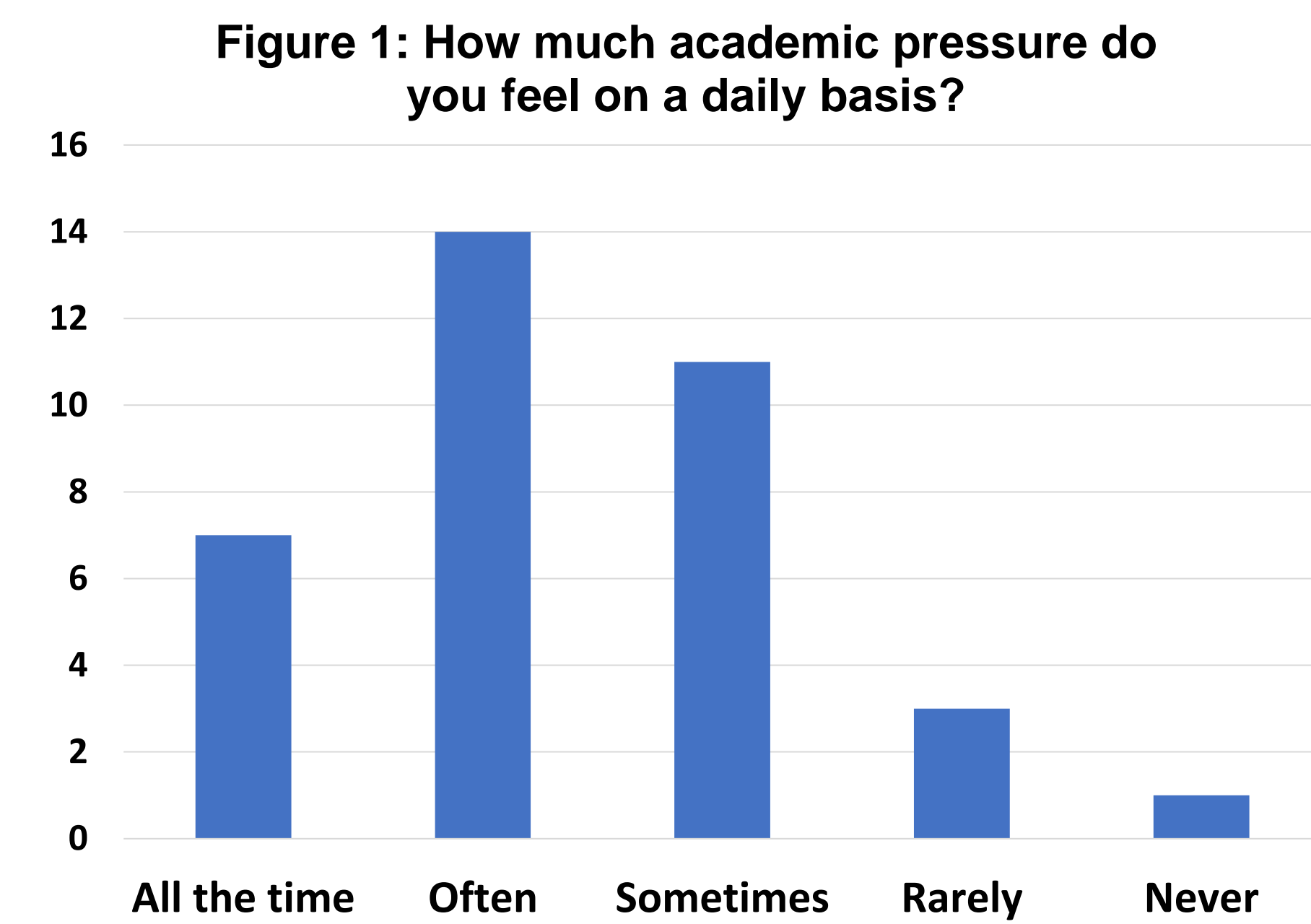
Research Question

- How do overall stress levels and the coping mechanisms utilized by students to handle stress develop as students' progress through their undergraduate academic career?

Research Methods

- **Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=35).
- **Sampling Method:** Convenience Sampling.
- **Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through a survey poster sent to various McMaster clubs and organizations for their members to participate.
- **Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- **Data Analysis:** Analyzed data using Jamovi and Microsoft Excel.

Results and Discussion



Figures 1 and 4 show that university students experience average to high perceived stress and academic pressure levels. This finding is consistent with the research of Wyatt & Oswald (2013, p.102). However, differences between years of study were not found to be statistically significant ($p = 0.784$) in our research.

Figures 2 and 3 present students' perceptions of on-campus health resources and if they should be improved. These results are consistent with previous findings as students believe that improvement is necessary due to the average state of mental health resources on campus (Tamboly & Gauvin., 2013, pp.11-12). While the difference between years of study and their use or opinion of campus resources was not statistically significant ($p = 0.327$), a positive correlation between perceived physical health and rating of coping mechanisms was found ($r = 0.522$).

Common Themes and Quotes from the Survey:

Question	Most Common Themes:
How do you cope with academic pressure, stress, and anxiousness?	Taking breaks, relying on their social circle for support, reading, listening to music, and participating in various hobbies.
What do you suggest could be improved about the mental health resources on campus?	<p>Increased access and diversity to and of counsellors and therapists.</p> <p>Increasing accessibility to mental health resources through booking appointments online and increasing resource options.</p> <p>Many didn't access resources and suggested more emphasis on how to access them.</p>

Significant Insights

- We found that university students are generally experiencing stress in their daily lives. This complements previous research, which suggests that the transitory nature of the university may be the reason behind this phenomenon (Melaku & Bulcha., 2021).
- A significant correlation was found between the individual's perceived positive physical health and decreased stress and anxiety ratings ($r = 0.368$). This was alongside an increased perceived confidence in the effectiveness of coping strategies ($r = 0.522$). This provides an avenue for further research into the impact of university stressors on different personal health measures and perceptions.

Conclusions

- While we did not have statistically significant findings, we did find positive correlations in our research.
- This research intended to sought to explore this topic area in areas that were previously not investigated in the literature.
- Our research explored university students' stress and coping strategies and the relationship between perceived physical health and the perceived confidence in coping strategy at the individual and institutional level. The research provided a platform for students to share their experiences which we have been able to learn from because of this research project.

References

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Acknowledgements

- We want to thank Dr. Sarah Clancy for her support and guidance throughout this research process and the Social Psychology Program for covering the cost of this poster. We would also like to thank the clubs and organization for sharing our project with their members and survey participants for their time and cooperation. You are greatly appreciated!

Introduction

- The primary theory used to frame our research was attachment theory which proposes that human beings are born with an innate need for emotional bonds and social connections, which can be seen throughout their entire lifetime (Zelazo, 2013).
- We chose this research topic to delve deeper into attachment styles and personality, with a particular interest in the impact on social connections of undergraduate students.

Topic Area

- In our research, we were interested in the following:
 - Attachment Styles:** Secure, Anxious, Avoidant, & Disorganized
 - How attachment styles' impact one's mental health
 - How attachment styles' impact one's ability to form and maintain social connections (Domingue & Mollen, 2009), including relationship history (positive and negative), as well as family, friends, and romantic relationships
 - How attachment styles' impact academic achievement

Research Questions

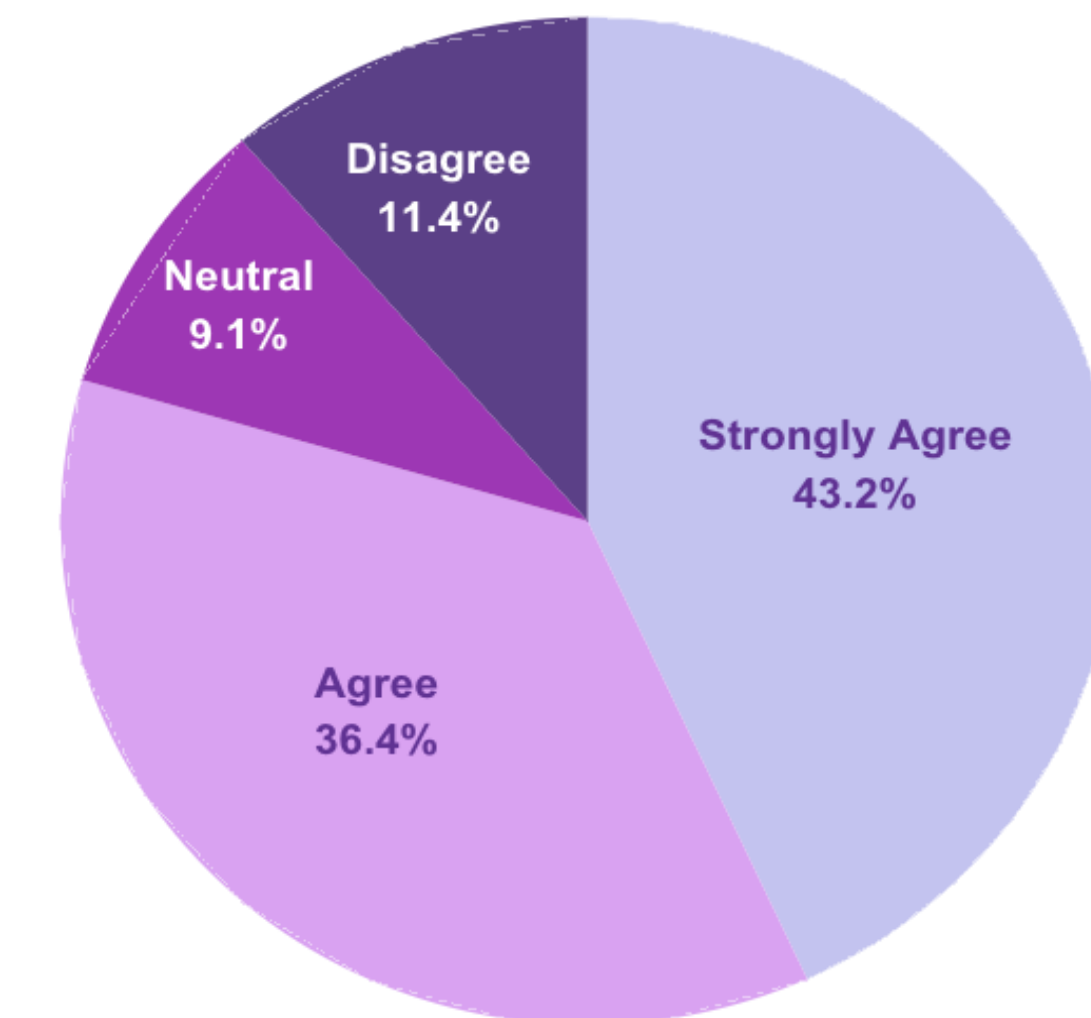
- How do differing attachment styles impact the social connections that McMaster Undergraduate students are able to make?
- How do attachment styles influence academic achievement in University?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older, between their first and final year of undergrad, and may be part of a McMaster club, team, society, or group; sample size: (n=44).
- Sampling Method:** The sampling technique that was used is a combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling.
- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited by emailing the presidents, coaches, and leaders of groups at McMaster, with our recruitment script to share with their members, as well as by physical posters that were placed on MSU-approved billboards across the McMaster campus.
- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.
- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi.

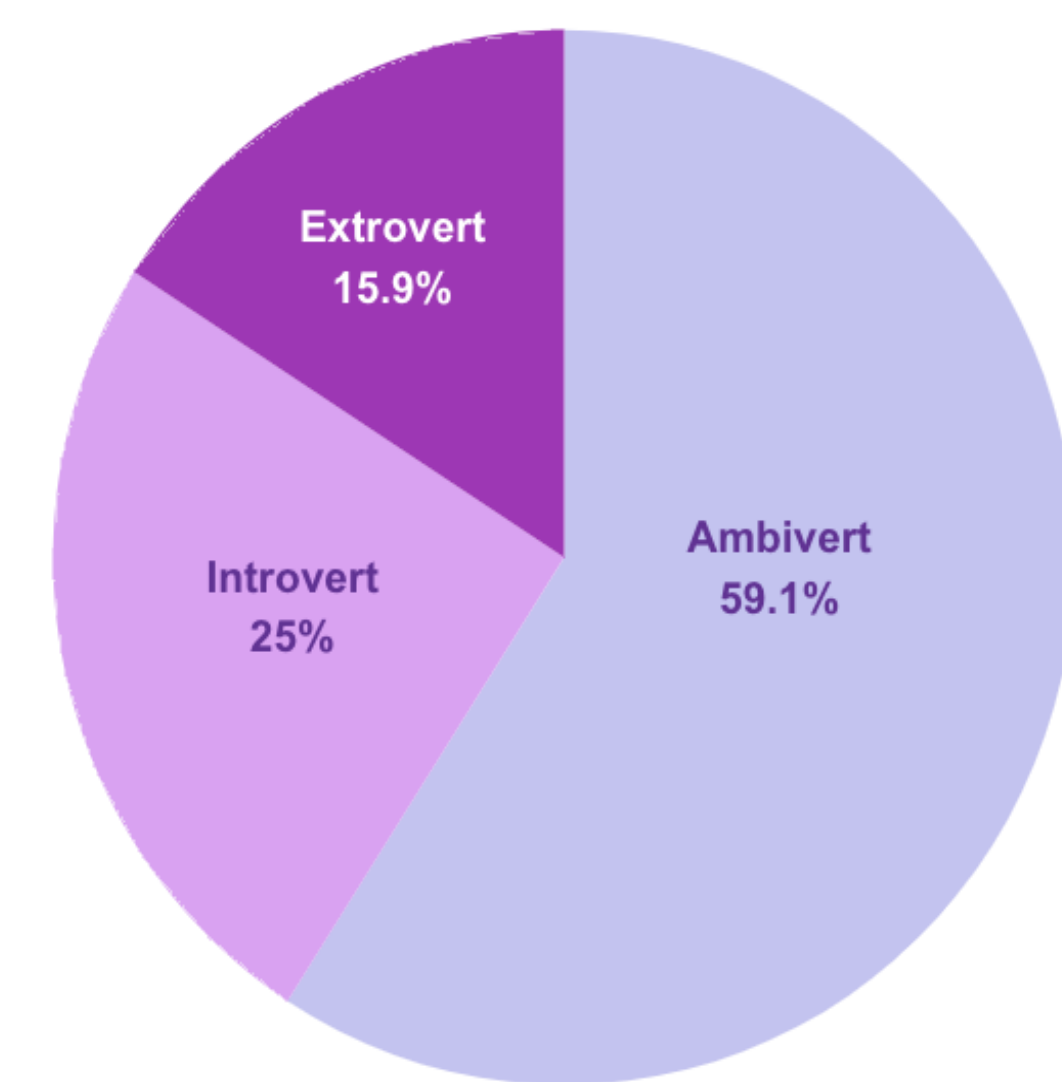
Results and Discussion

Figure 1: Secure Attachment- Grade Range & Maintaining Social Connections



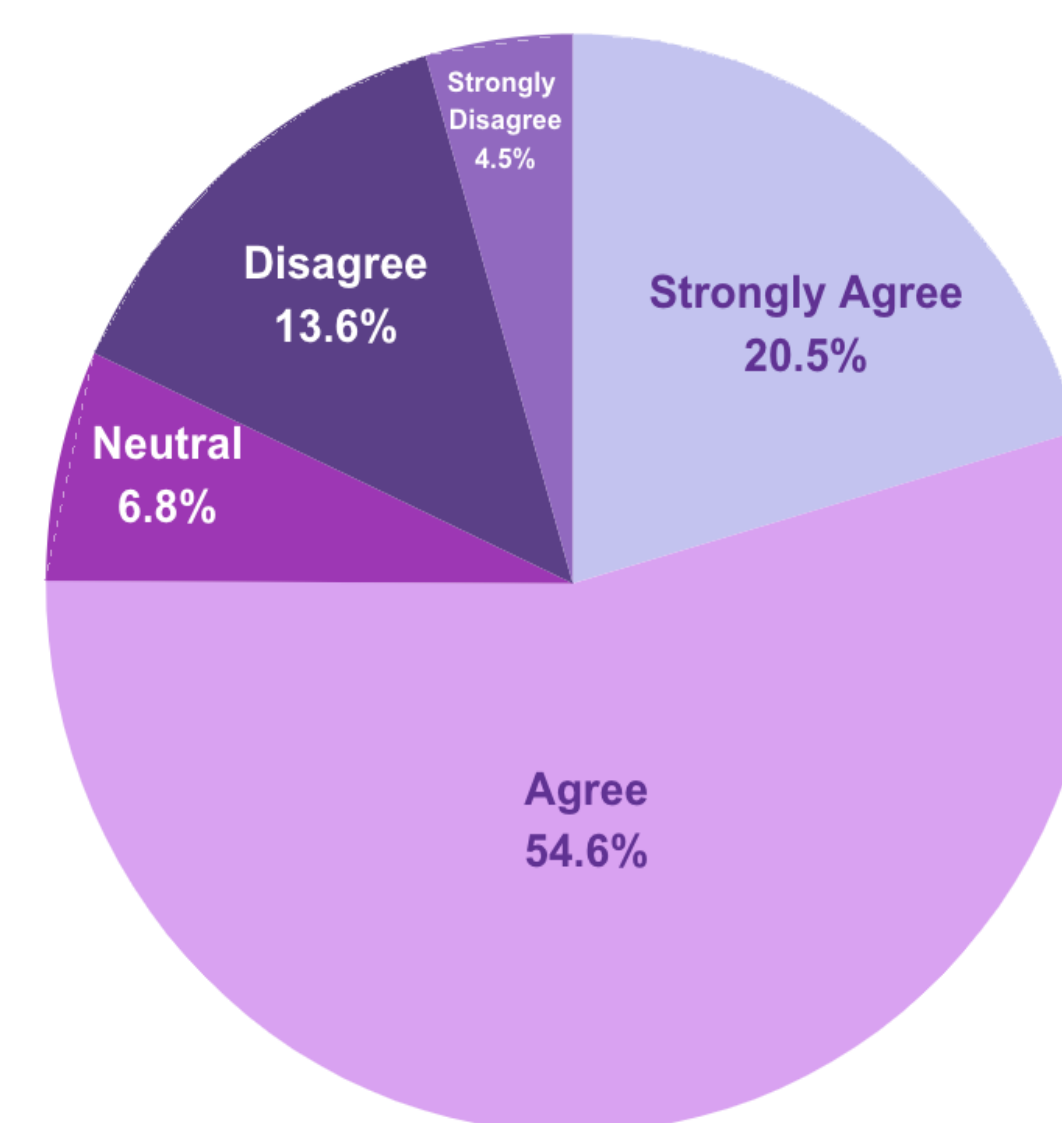
43.2% of participants (n=19) who strongly agreed to being able to maintain long term friendships reported having high (A) grades. 36.4% of the participants (n=16) who agreed to being able to maintain their friendships reported having good (B) grades. When comparing these findings to those who reported trouble with maintaining relationships (11.4%) or feelings of neutrality (9.1%), it is statistically significant ($p = 0.011$). The majority indicate secure attachment styles with their ability to successfully maintain relationships and have high grades.

Figure 2: Anxious Attachment- Personality Types & Overthinking Relationships



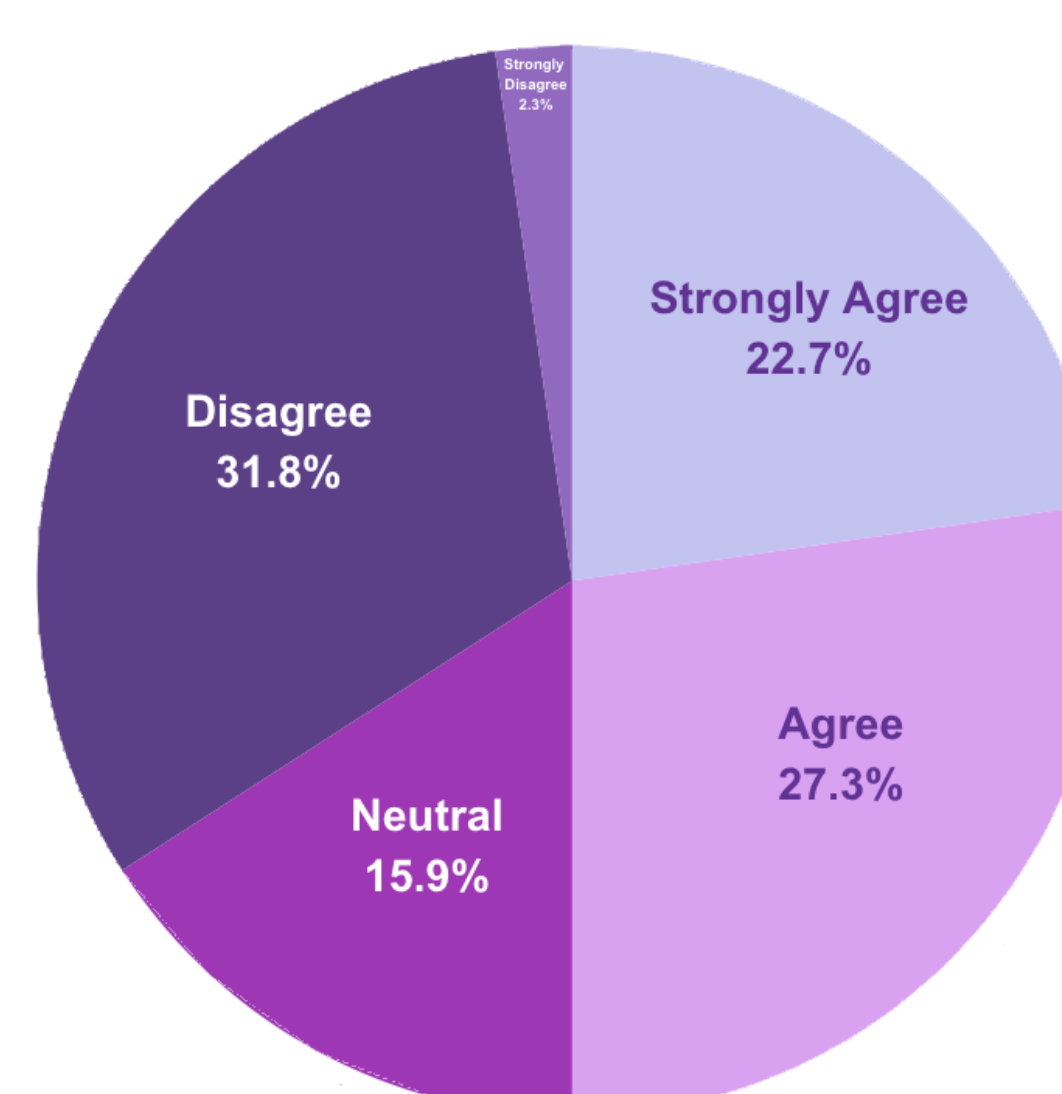
In response to questions about personality types and anxiety around relationships, 59.1% of participants (n=26) who reported being ambiverts indicated an anxious attachment style. Of the 25% who reported being introverted (n= 11), they detailed experiencing some anxiousness but less compared to ambiverts. The 15.9% who disclosed being extroverted (n=7) outlined feeling little to no anxiety when it came to their relationships. These results are statistically significant ($p = 0.015$). These findings shed light on individuals' preferences for solitude versus social interaction. Extroverted individuals tend to have more secure relationships, while introverts, who prefer solitude, may overthink aspects of their relationships. Ambiverts, with a blend of reserve and outgoing traits, may exhibit anxious attachment behaviors, possibly stemming from initial shyness and reluctance to trust new people (Chang, 2022).

Figure 3: Avoidant Attachment- Isolating & Not Expressing Feelings



The study conducted revealed statistically significant findings, with a P value of 0.020, indicating that 75.1% (54.6% agreeing (n=24) and 20.5% strongly agreeing (n=9)) of participants admit to isolating themselves and preferring to keep their feelings to themselves. This suggests that most individuals with this attachment style prefer to keep their distance emotionally and socially as opposed to using their support systems. On the contrary, a minority of 18.1% (13.6% disagreeing and 4.5% strongly disagreeing) seem to be more comfortable with expressing their feelings and engaging with others. Indicating a different approach to handling emotions and social connections. These insights highlight the variety in how people with avoidant attachment perceive and manage their relationships and their emotional well-being.

Figure 4: Disorganized Attachment- Comparing Loneliness and Happiness levels



When analyzing how people's happiness compares to that of their friends and colleagues, about half of the respondents felt that feeling less happy than others often leads to feelings of loneliness. Specifically, 27.3% agreed (n=12) and 22.7% strongly agreed (n=10) with this idea. However, 31.8% (n=14) did not think so and a very small group of people, 2.3%, strongly disagreed with that notion. 15.9% of people were neutral, unsure whether there is a link between comparing happiness and feeling lonely. Importantly, this study demonstrated statistical significance ($p = 0.001$), highlighting the strength of these findings. These results revealed how personal happiness and loneliness can be influenced by comparing ourselves to others. This suggests that how we view our happiness in relation to others can impact our feelings of loneliness, pointing to the complex ways our emotions and relationships interact and correlate with one another.

Significant Insights

- Secure attachment styles have shown success in maintaining and forming new relationships as well as success in school.
- Personality types play a role in one's ability to form and maintain relationships due to being reserved, outgoing or a combination of both impacts the way they view relationships.
- Individuals who chose to isolate or not to share with others when experiencing hardships is highly associated with an avoidant attachment style.

Conclusions

- Overall, our research found that attachment styles have a strong impact on social connections, maintaining good grades, personality types, levels of loneliness and the way that people interact with themselves and others.
- Social connections are the key to feeling supported and succeeding in school, relationships and all other parts of one's life.
- Attachment styles heavily impact one's ability to form and maintain them. If one's attachment style is affecting the ability to keep and maintain social connections, their mental health will be impacted due to a weaker support system or decreased ability to seek out help if needed.

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- We are also deeply thankful to the Social Psychology Program for their crucial role in providing us with the necessary resources, skills and educational foundation essential for this research.
- Lastly, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of all individuals who have assisted and supported us throughout this journey.

Introduction

- Research regarding the relationship between social media and perceptions of parenthood is greatly lacking in academic research. Our research examined how social media, which has a significant impact on this age cohort, played a role in influencing these perceptions.

- Our research was influenced and framed by social psychological theories including social comparison theory, and social learning theory.

Topic Area

- Understand how social media influences the perceptions that undergraduate students have surrounding the topic of parenthood.

- Observe social media habits and type of media that is consumed.

- Explore students' attitudes towards certain ideals and conceptualizations of parenthood.

Research Question

- How does social media influence McMaster University undergraduate students' perception of parenthood?

Research Methods

- Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who are 18 years of age and older; sample size (n=39).

- Sampling Method:** Convenience and snowball sampling.

- Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through McMaster clubs via advertisements on their social media pages. Additionally, posters advertising our survey were placed in high traffic areas on campus.

- Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform LimeSurvey.

- Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using Jamovi and analyzed qualitative data through descriptive coding.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1 – How much do you agree with the following statement: Social media has made me think more about my stance on having kids

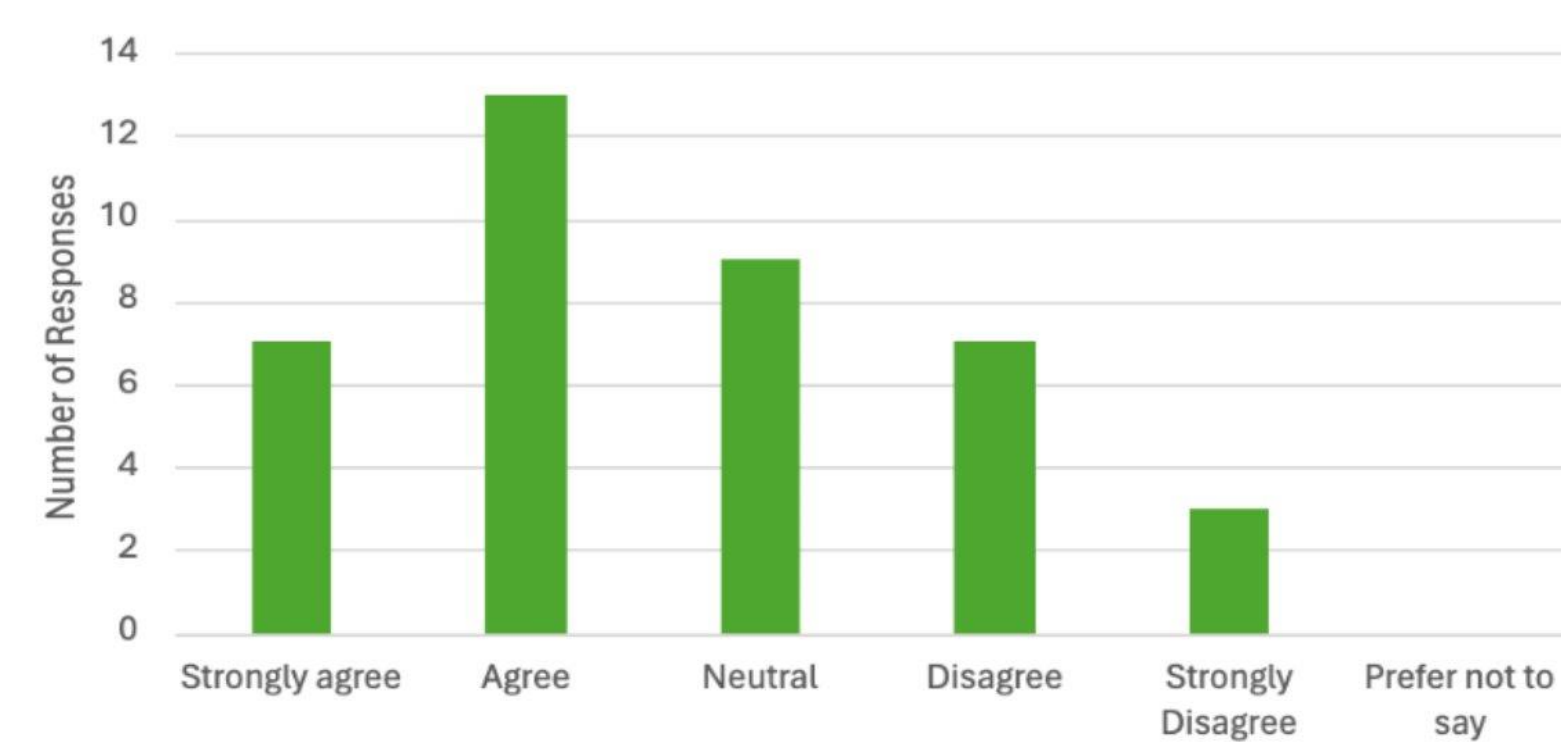


Figure 3 – How much do you agree with the following statement: I have feelings of fear and/or anxiety surrounding being a parent

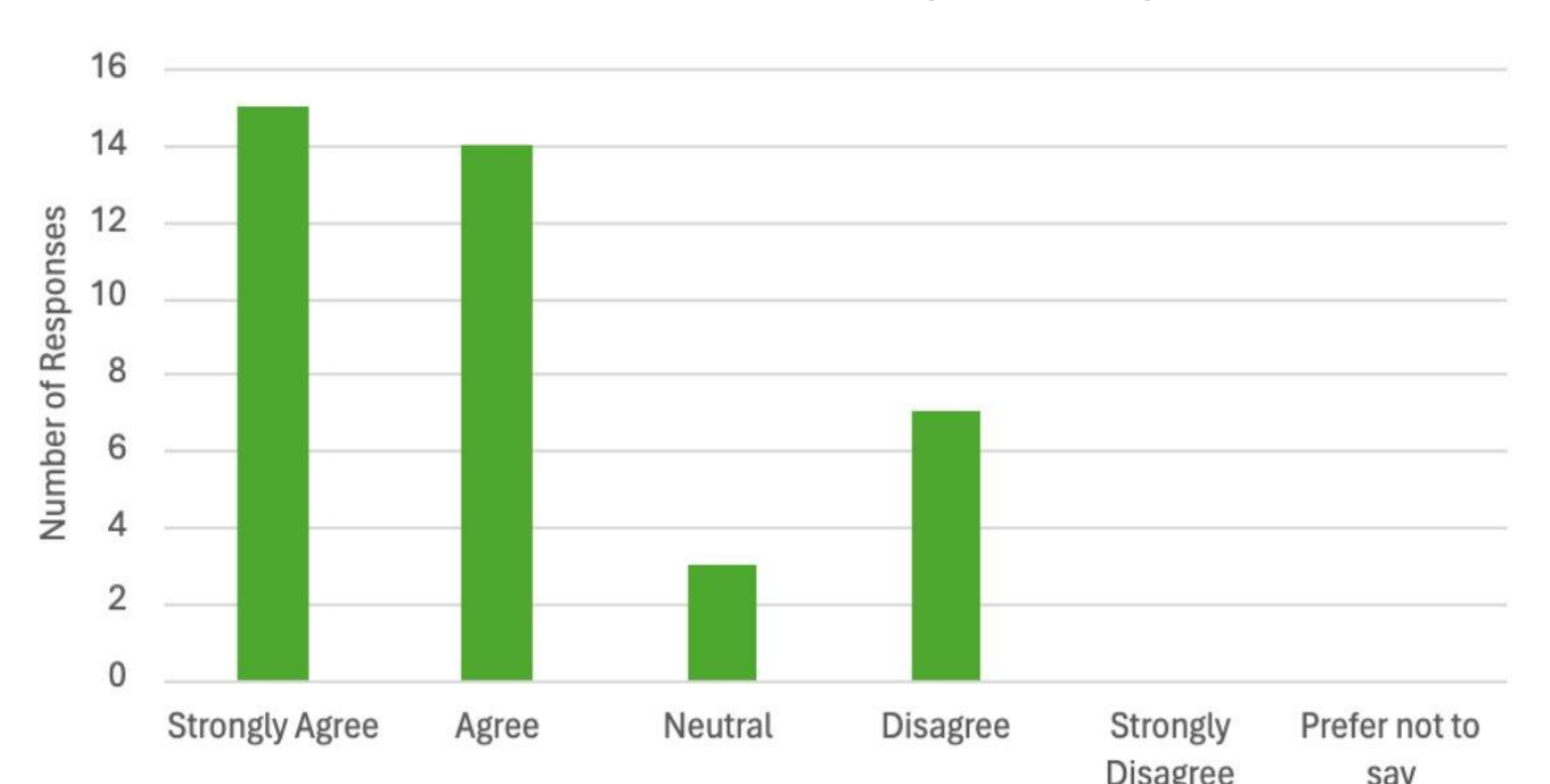


Figure 1 illustrates that social media has an influence over our respondents' opinions about having children.

Figure 2 depicts how parental content on social media reaches users who acknowledge that they are mainly uninterested and do not actively seek them out. This finding indicates a strong relevance and dominance of parenthood-related topics within online spaces.

Figure 3 reveals a consistent expression of fear and anxiety about becoming a parent among our respondents, with over two-thirds selecting *Strongly Agree* (n=15) and *Agree* (n=14). These findings fill a gap within existing literature by uncovering the personal beliefs and attitudes of a demographic that remains largely unexplored: undergraduate students.

Figure 4 demonstrates a strong positive correlation between respondents' degree of skepticism about the veracity of information shared on social media and their position on having children ($p = 0.003$). The more credulous respondents were, the greater social media's influence had on their position.

Figure 2 – How much do you agree with the following statement: I come across content on social media regarding parenthood even though I am not interested in that type of content

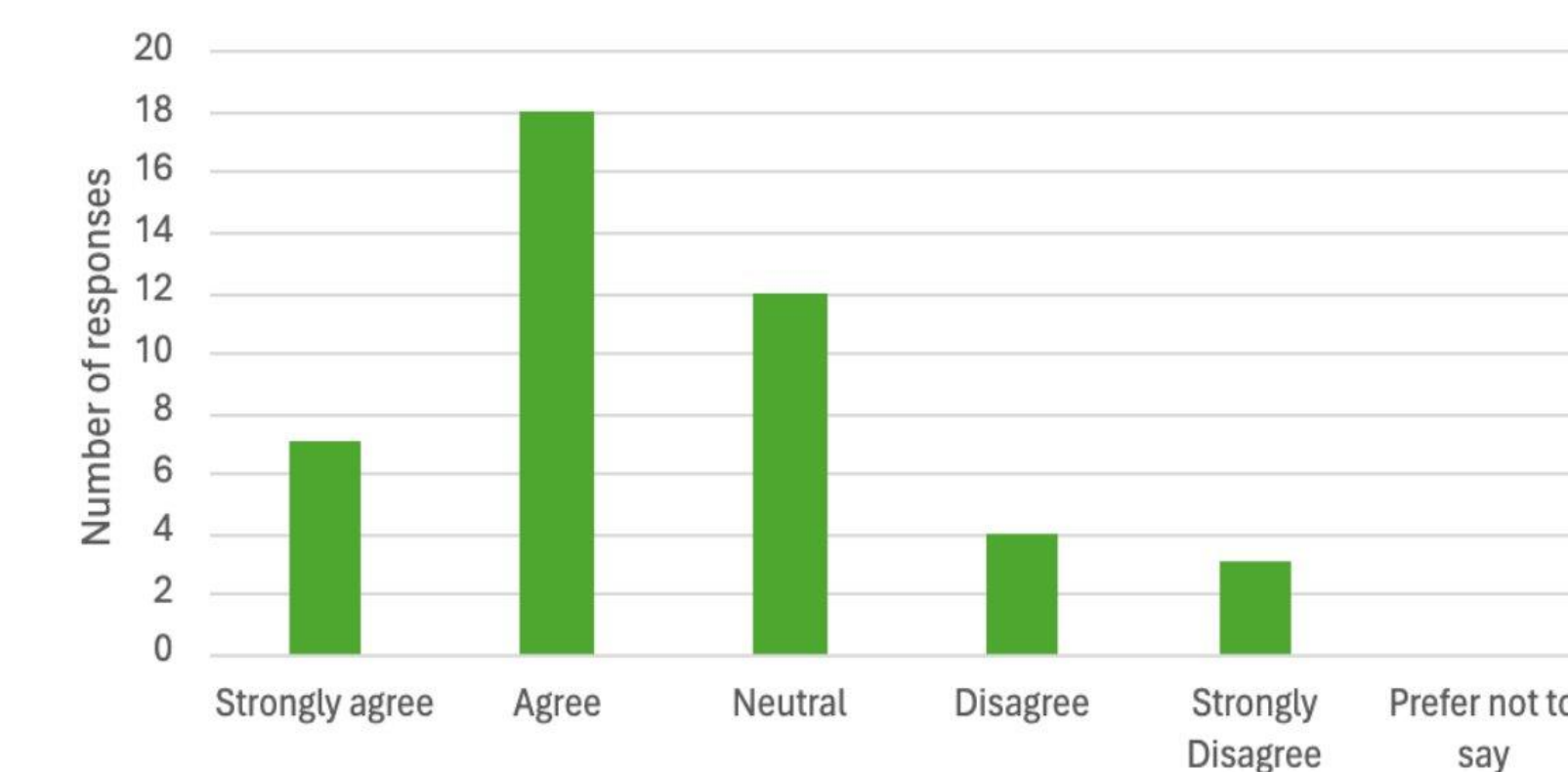
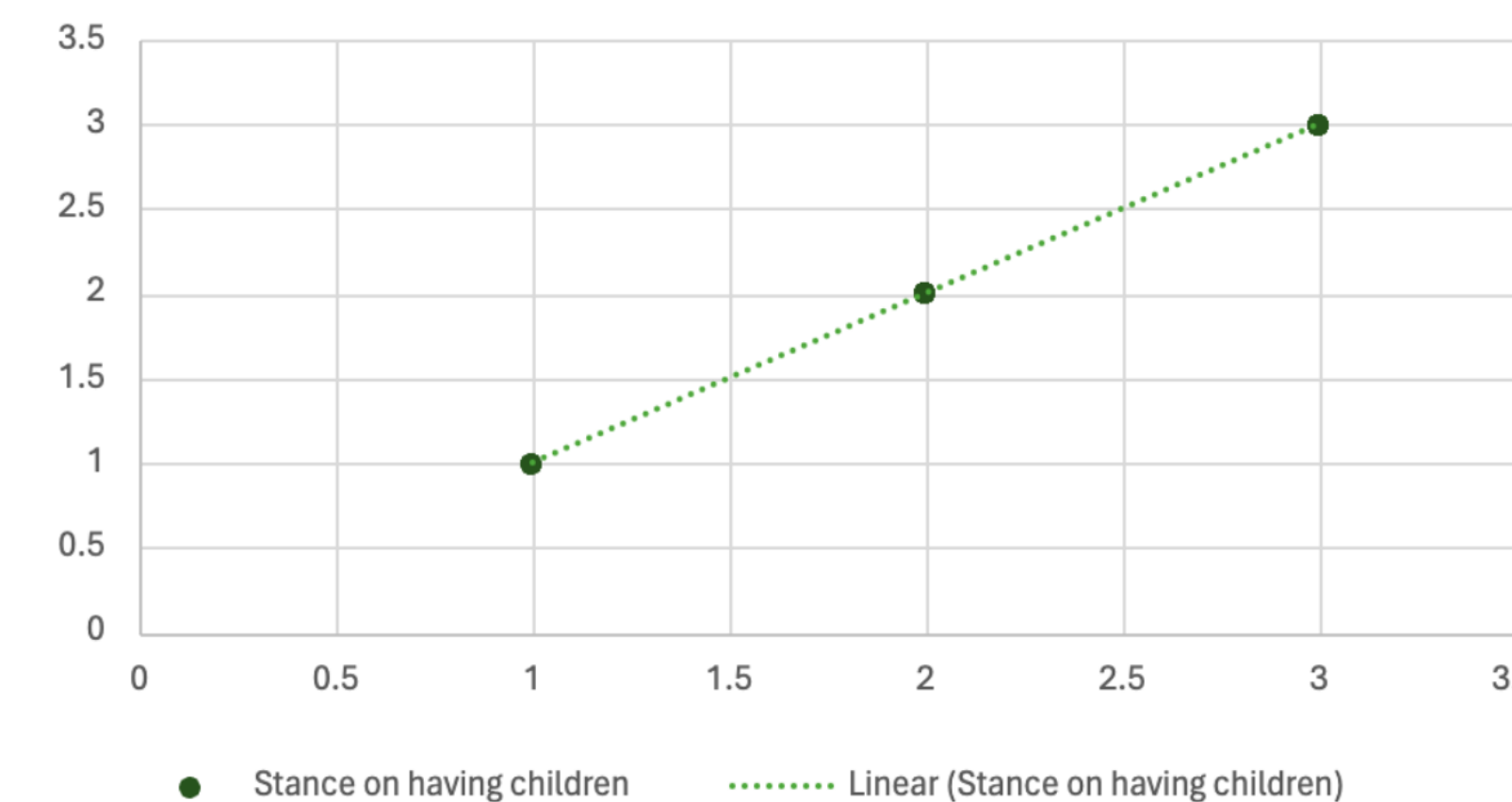


Figure 4 – Correlational Graph: Believing Social Media and Stance on Having Children



Themes and Quotes from the Survey

Question	Responses
On which social media sites do you see more media surrounding parenthood?	Tiktok Instagram
Please describe the types of messages and themes you see surrounding parenthood.	Negative depictions of pregnancy - "Tiktok viral list of reasons not to have kids for women is a prominent message... negative depictions of pregnancy include women's self-esteem going down due to physical changes to their body" Positive depictions of parenthood Parenting tips and advice

Significant Insights

- Our participants noted their personal stance on having children was shaped by social media content, which is consistent with previous literature (Germic, 2021; Ouvrein, 2022).

- Our research shows that undergraduate students have feelings of fear and/or anxiety towards pregnancy, birth, and parenthood. These 3 feelings have a statistically significant association with wanting kids ($p < 0.001$).

- Being skeptical of content viewed on social media was associated with feelings of fear and/or anxiety towards pregnancy, which was statistically significant ($p = 0.026$).

Conclusions

- Our research establishes a relationship between social media and undergraduate students' perceptions of parenthood. Our findings are consistent with social comparison theory and social learning theory.

- Overall, exposure to parenting content on social media, regardless of personal interest or skepticism, influences perceptions of parenthood.

- Future research should analyze how the different types of parenting content influence specific attitudes towards parenthood.

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Introduction

- Our research explored the lived experiences and perceptions of McMaster University undergraduate students regarding the impact of MBTI test on both personal and interpersonal levels.
- The MBTI is a tool that sorts people into 16 personality types — Introversion/Extroversion, Sensing/Intuition, Thinking/Feeling, Judging/Perceiving — to help them understand themselves and others better and quickly (Myers and Myers, 1980).
- We examined perceptions of undergraduate students who already obtained MBTI results and the personal and social impacts of the test on the individual.

Topic Area

- Understand how the MBTI test and its results affect undergraduate students' social interactions.
- Assess the validity and reliability of MBTI results and examining the extent to which test results accurately reflect individuals' personalities.
- Observe the correlations between various aspects of individuals' personalities, behaviours and their respective test results.

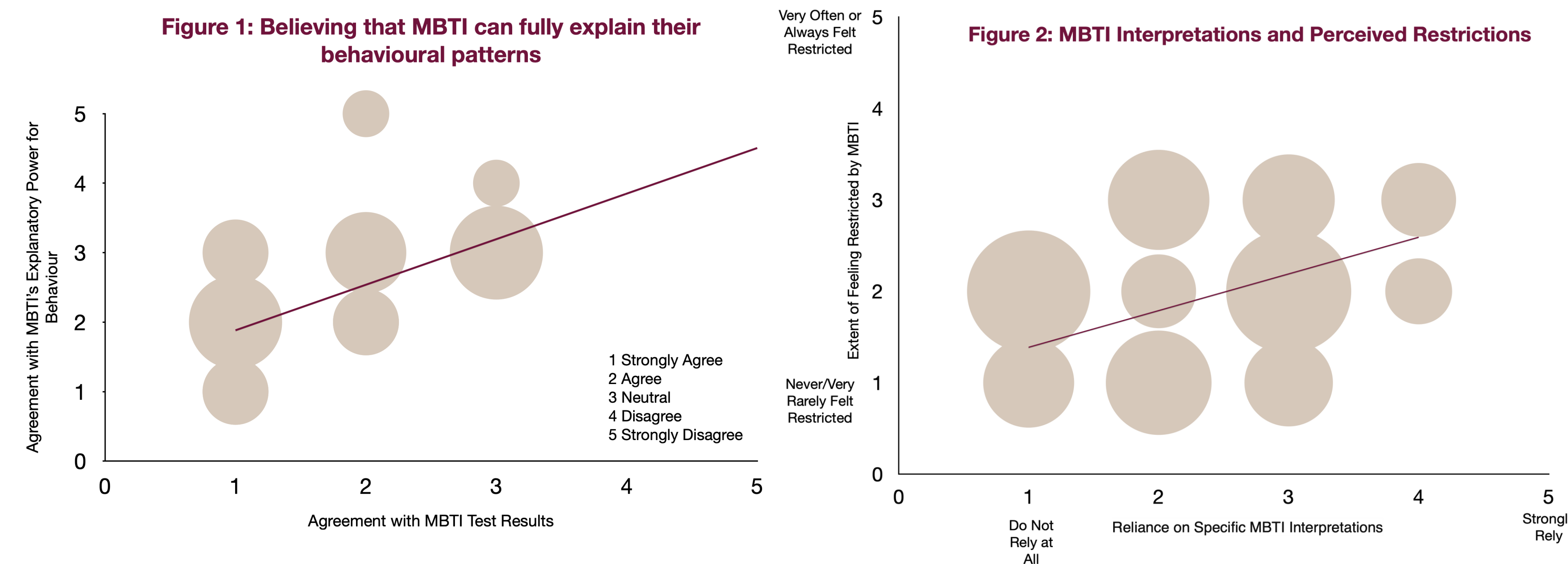
Research Question

- Exploring the association between MBTI and interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics of individuals.

Research Methods

- **Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=57).
- **Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling.
- **Recruitment Method:** We recruited via email and social media through student-run clubs, societies, and groups at McMaster University, as well as recruitment through paper posters displayed on campus.
- **Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB-approved platform LimeSurvey.
- **Data Analysis:** Statistical analysis for quantitative data was done using Jamovi. Five open-ended questions were analyzed through descriptive and manual coding.

Results and Discussion



Finding 1 – Self-Fulfilling Prophecy (Merton, 1948)

Figure 1 - Individuals who agreed with their latest MBTI test results tend to agree that one's MBTI type can fully explain a person's behaviours ($p < 0.001$, $r = 0.540$).

In our study, those who agreed with their MBTI results were more likely to believe it fully explained their behaviour, potentially restricted their actions accordingly.

Finding 2 - Social Identity

- The correlation between "Preference for MBTI over Other Personality Tests" and "Preference for Same-MBTI-Type Connections or Resonance" is positive and significant
 - **The Correlation Coefficient** = 0.262
 - **The p-value** = 0.049
- When people strongly identify with the MBTI test, prioritizing it over other personality assessments, they tend to seek out connections with others who share similar MBTI types, aligning with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This process typically involves associating with individuals perceived to share similar traits, fostering social identification.

Figure 2 - As individuals tend to rely on MBTI to understand behaviours, they are more likely to perceive restrictions on their behaviours from MBTI types ($p < 0.001$, $r = 0.472$).

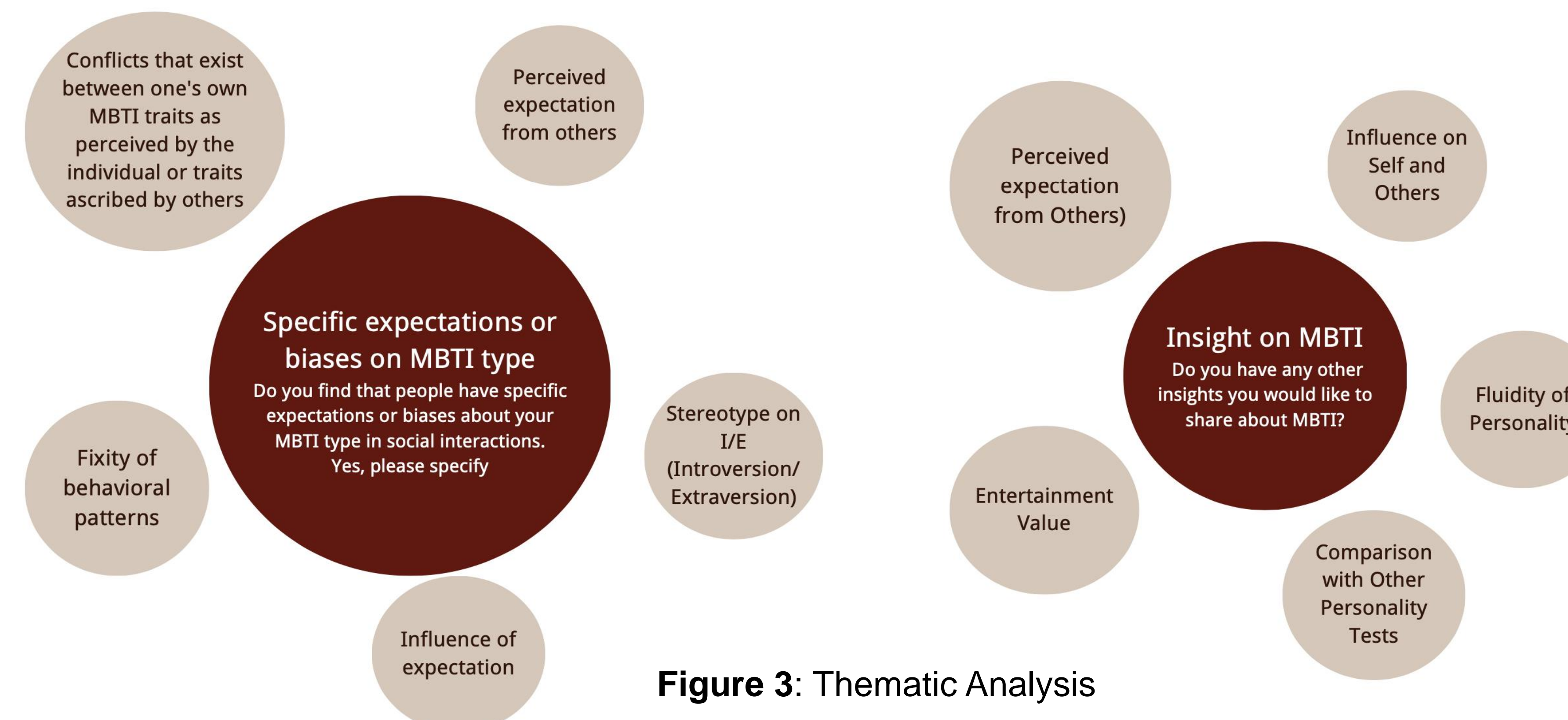


Figure 3: Thematic Analysis

Significant Insights

- Individuals who strongly identify with their MBTI test results are notably inclined to internalize their perception of their MBTI type, consequently shaping their behaviour. Furthermore, they demonstrate an increased propensity to forge social connections with others who share similar MBTI types.
- Despite potential skepticism regarding the comprehensive explanatory nature of the MBTI test, individuals tend to unconsciously embrace the MBTI framework for assessment and interpretation in both personal cognition and social interactions.

Conclusions

- Our research highlights the impact of an MBTI test on individuals' self-perception and social relationships, suggesting that while the MBTI test can offer valuable personal insights, it may also shape individuals' behaviours and social connections in profound ways.
- The study found that people who strongly identify with their MBTI type seek to form social bonds with people of a similar type. However, this can lead to a narrow understanding of social interactions, focusing only on the type of MBTI rather than a broader perspective.

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- We would like to thank Dr. Sarah Clancy for her support and guidance throughout this research and the Social Psychology Program for covering the cost of this poster. We would also like to thank the peer support services and survey participants for their cooperation.

Introduction

- Our research investigated how social media shapes our perception of ourselves and others, as well as how it influences our interactions with others.
- We focused on the issue of online personas and how they are deeply impacting the self-perception and interpersonal relationships of undergraduate students.

Topic Area

- Exploration of potential correlations between social media engagement and self-image among McMaster students.
- Applying Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective to analyze the backstage and frontstage dynamics of social media usage among McMaster students, including the roles, scripts, and performances enacted on various platforms, to understand the interplay between curated identities and authentic self-perception.

Research Questions

- What impact, if any, does social media have on how individuals present themselves?
- What impact, if any, does social media have on our perceptions of others?

Research Methods

- **Sample Population:** McMaster University undergraduate students who were 18 years of age and older; sample size: (n=90).
- **Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling.
- **Recruitment Method:** Participants were recruited through social media stories by student-run clubs, groups and societies, as well as posters posted on campus (with MSU approval) and a SOCPSY 4Z26 course discussion board.
- **Data Collection:** Anonymous online survey hosted on the MREB approved platform [LimeSurvey](#)
- **Data Analysis:** Analyzed quantitative data using [Jamovi](#) and qualitative data was analyzed using a thematic coding approach.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1: Pressure to Maintain Certain Images on Social Media and Perception of Own Behaviour on Social Media

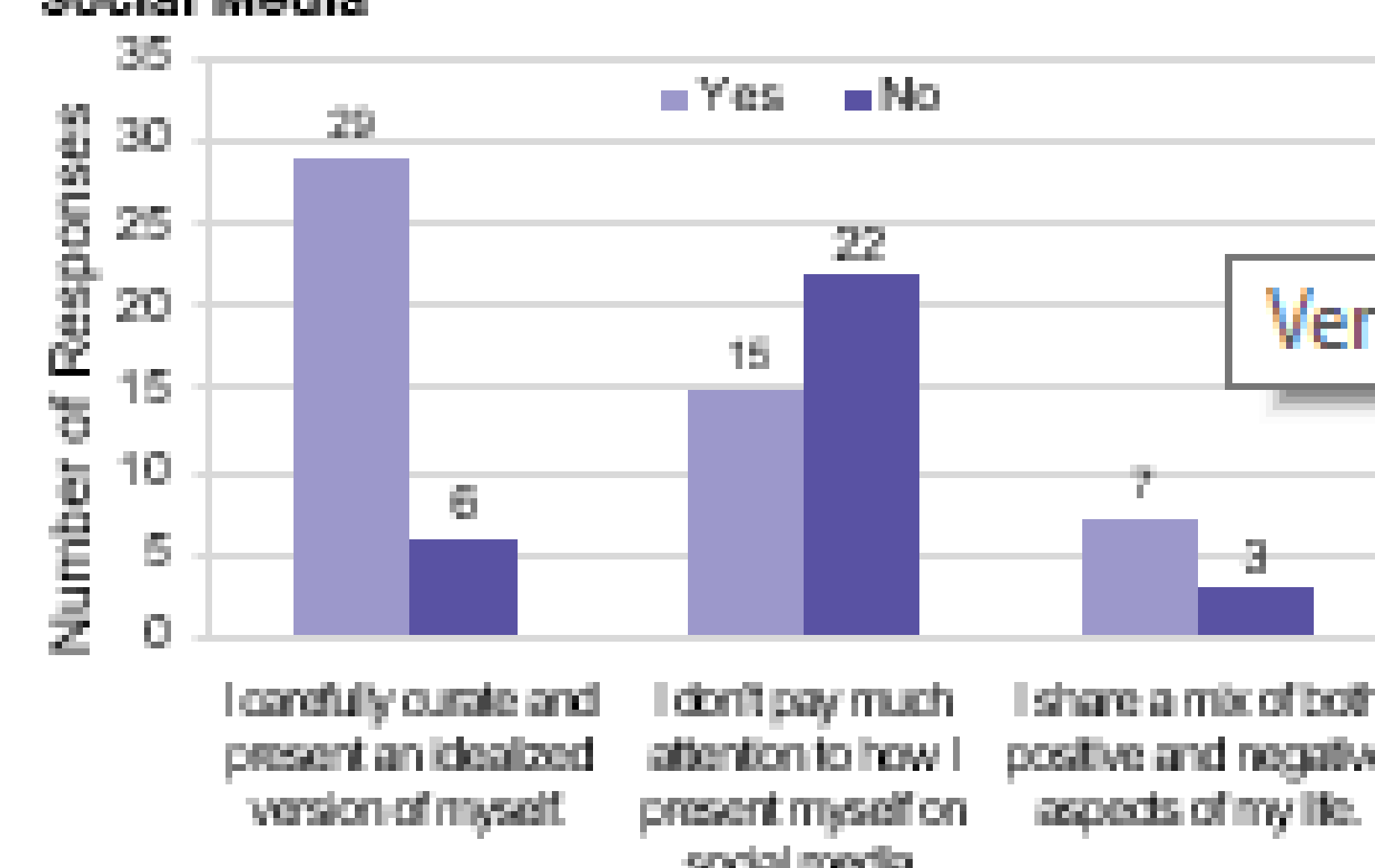
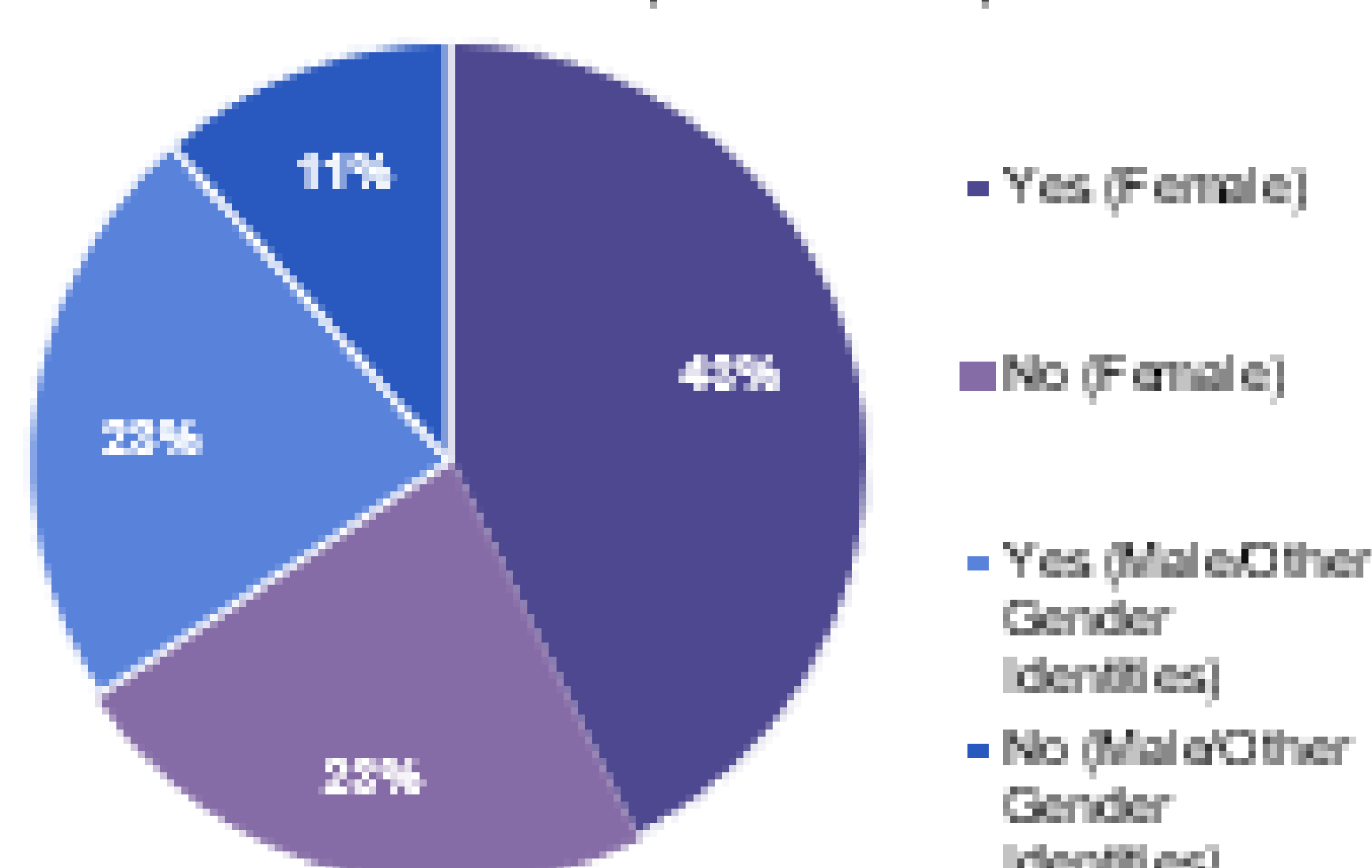
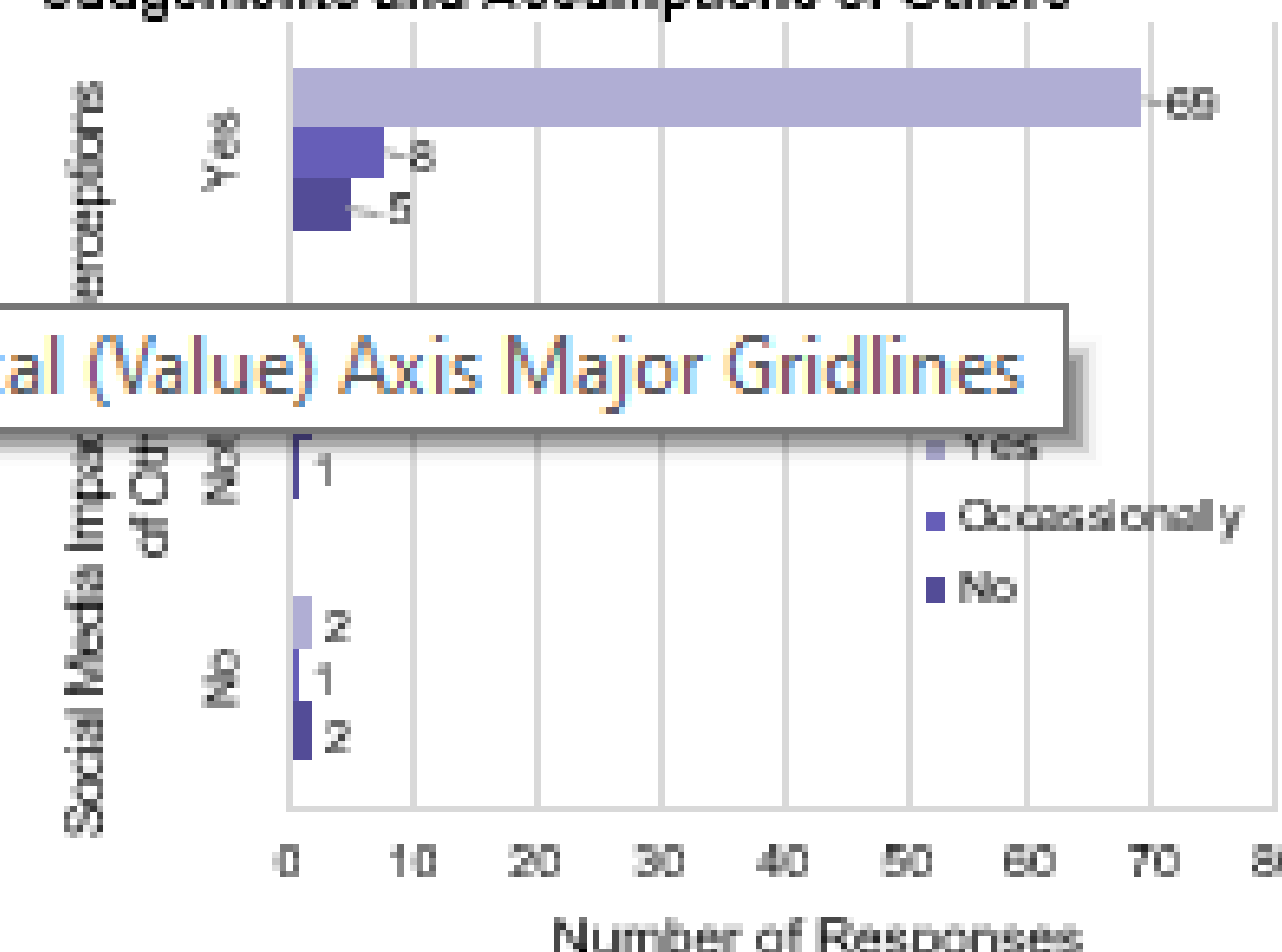


Figure 3: Pressure to Maintain Certain Images on Social Media Based on Self-Identified Gender Identity
Do you feel pressured to maintain a certain image on social media due to societal expectations or peer influences?



- **Figure 1** shows how feeling pressured to maintain certain images on social media was associated with presenting an idealized version of themselves on social media (n =29) and is statistically significant (p = 0.002).
- **Figure 2** examines how social media impacts our perceptions of others (y-axis) and how it affects our judgements and assumptions of others (yes, occasionally, no). Of the participants who answered "yes" to both questions (n=69) we see how social media both influences perceptions of others but also can lead to assumptions and judgements of others. The findings are statistically significant (p = <0.001).
- **Figure 3** shows how self-identified females (n=41) feel pressure more often to maintain certain images on social media than individuals of other self-identified gender identities (n=22). While the p-value (p = 0.212) is not significant for this finding, it does support a previous finding by Chua & Chang (2016) where they observed females conform to social and peer norms when presenting themselves online.

Figure 2: Social Media Impact on Perceptions, Judgements and Assumptions of Others



Common Themes and Responses from the Survey

Theme	Participant Response
Learning and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Social media has allowed me to gain more knowledge that I can use in my life making me more confident!" • "Social media has connected me with supportive transgender communities, providing validation and understanding."
Comparison & Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Social media can make you feel insecure in various ways such as what you wear, how you look, where you go, who you go with, almost everything could become an insecurity due to the pressure of social media to be a certain way" • "Instagram's emphasis on perfection and comparison has sometimes left me feeling inadequate. Seeing influencers with seemingly flawless lives can trigger feelings of jealousy or self-doubt."
Distorted Reality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "People can post filtered pictures and videos, heavily staged/edited/posed pictures, and can choose to share only positive experiences." • "Social media tends to start trends [...] which everyone eventually wants to adapt to fit the trending look."
Unrealistic Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Social media presents the best of the best, whether it be relationships, fashion, beauty, or healthy lifestyles." • "Social media often distorts beauty standards, pressuring individuals [...] to conform to unrealistic ideals."

Significant Insights

- Instagram was ~~the most~~ commonly used app in our study, (n=85), followed by TikTok and Snapchat (n=64).
- A considerable number of respondents (n= 29) expressed a consensus regarding their commitment to meticulously crafting an idealized portrayal of themselves on social media.
- A positive correlation was observed among participants who reported taking breaks from social media and those who blocked or unfollowed others due to content and self-presentation concerns (n = 37, p = 0.192). This finding is supported by the findings of Rashidi et al., (2020).

Conclusions

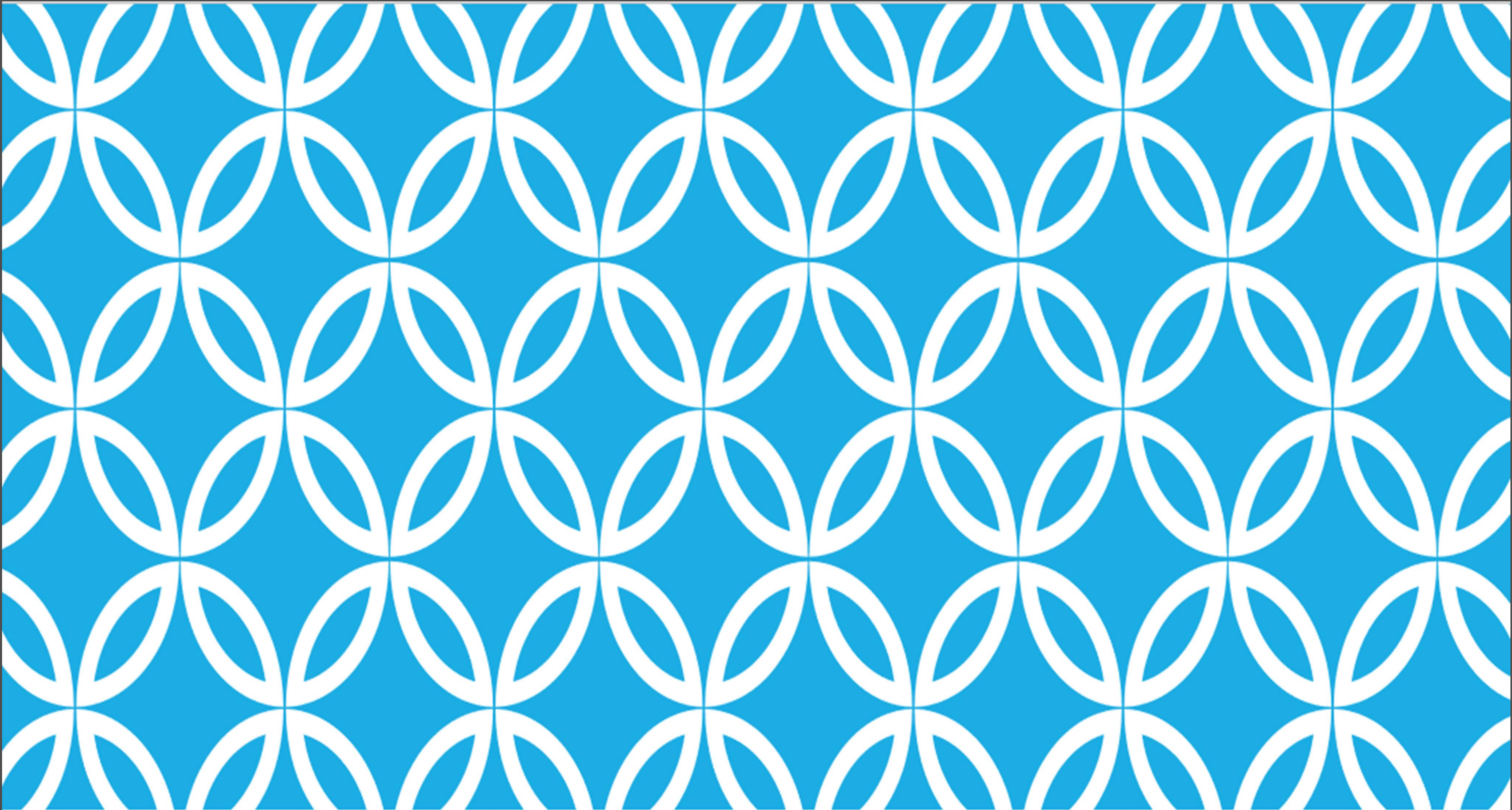
- Our research provides insight into how McMaster students understand the impacts of social media on their self-esteem and in which ways they engage in curated content.
- Many relate to feelings of inadequacy, insecurity and lower self-esteem as social media is a platform of unrealistic beauty standards, relationships and lifestyles.
- This results in individuals feeling pressure to conform to these ideals, which encourages them to post curated content.

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**CONGRATULATIONS
TO EVERYONE!**



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