



Student Comfort and Expression on Campus and in the Classroom

Shore N., Erickson, B., Winchip, J., Dunbar, R. Spring 2022

Background and Significance

- Reasons for reluctance to speak is crucial to know in academia
- Students relationships with each other effects school participation and attitudes [1]
- Both ethnic and gender isolation can decrease relatedness [2,3]
- Self-esteem and academic performance [4]

Project Outline

- IRB approval and CITI training
- Literature review and formed hypothesis
- Campus Expression Survey administration using Qualtrics
- Statistical analysis using Qualtrics and Excel

Hypothesis

Individuals who are in the majority ethnicity and gender will be less reluctant to express their opinions regarding controversial topics.

Survey Demographics

- Sample Demographic:
 - 73% Female
 - 70% White
- UMR Population:
 - 78% Female
 - 56% White
- Majority group is white females
- Minority group is everyone else on campus

RACE	Ma.		Mi.		POLITICS	Ma.		Mi.	
	O	E	O	E		O	E	O	E
Not Rel.	42	48	45	39	Not Rel.	29	36	35	28
Rel.	26	20	9	15	Rel.	39	32	19	26
P-Value	0.009				P-Value	0.015			

RELIGION	Ma.		Mi.	
	O	E	O	E
Not Rel.	41	47	43	37
Rel.	27	21	11	17
P-Value	0.022			

Ma. = Majority
 Mi. = Minority
 O = Observed
 E = Expected
 Rel. = Reluctant

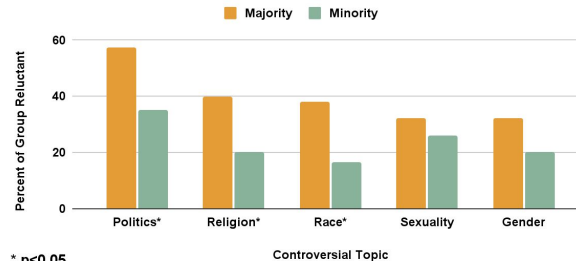
Results

- Three of the five topics resulted in a significant p-value ($p < 0.05$)
- The three topics were race, religion, and politics

Discussion and Conclusion

- The majority group (white females) were more reluctant to express their opinions than the minority group (all other groups) on race, religion, and politics
- This could indicate several things
 - There could be a differing power dynamic where the minority group controls the conversation
 - There could be an environment where the majority is stunting this conversation
- In the future we would hope to conduct interviews with students to gather qualitative data on how the students perceive the campus attitude of these topics
- Another area that we hope to look into is how the minority group feels about these topics of conversation and why they are more comfortable talking about these.

Majority and Minority Reluctance to Discuss Controversial Topics



References

Wentz, G.L. *Wentz's Handbook and Report*. Wentzville, Missouri: Quivira.
 [1] Coleman, A. J. (2010). Students' Need for Belonging in the School Community. *Review of Educational Research*, 70(3), 323-367. <https://doi.org/10.31827/0746/2010/030303>
 [2] Tapp, J., Kahn, A. C., & Siering, J. (2019). Classroom identification in ethnic minority and majority students: Effects of relationships and ethnic composition. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89(4), 577-597. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12244>
 [3] Edwards, B. A., Roberts, J. A., Brown, C., Brown, D. E., & Brown, M. E. (2022). An exploration of how gender, political affiliation, or religious identity is associated with comfort in participation in controversial topics in classrooms. *Advances in Psychological Education*. <https://doi.org/10.5964/ape.v12i1.100>
 [4] Yang, X., Liu, R.-C., Ding, Y., Hong, W., & Jiang, S. (2021). The relations between academic procrastination and self-esteem in adolescents: A longitudinal study. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02000-0>