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A Sense of Belongingness Among Undergraduate Students Across Race/Ethnicity, Class, and Gender

Francesca Marino
fmarino@bgsu.edu

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A Sense of Belongingness Among Undergraduate Students Across Race/Ethnicity, Class, and

Gender

Francesca A. Marino

Bowling Green State University

Honors Thesis

Author Note

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Dr. Stephen Demuth, Department of Sociology, Primary Advisor

Dr. Jessica Birch, Departments of Ethnic Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality

Studies, Secondary Advisor

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Abstract

Research has shown that feelings of belongingness within an educational setting are likely to improve outcomes in various academic-related areas. In the present study, I examine BGSU undergraduate students' sense of belongingness, feelings of value, and understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts on campus. Using an online campus climate survey, I explore differences in perceptions and experiences among students with different social identities. In particular, I focus on differences across race/ethnicity, social class, and gender identity. Findings show that there are racial/ethnic and gender differences across feelings and perceptions of the general campus climate, DEI, belongingness and value, institutional commitment, and thriving and growth, with students from historically marginalized groups feeling the lowest levels compared to students with dominant-culture identities. This study aims to spark future research on best methods for university intervention to give all students equitable access to resources and support within higher education.

Keywords: social identity, race and ethnicity, gender, class, belongingness, campus climate

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Gender

Introduction

In this study, I will explore the relationship between specific social identities, namely race/ethnicity, class, and gender, and a sense of belongingness among undergraduate students. The topic derives from a climate survey conducted by Bowling Green State University's Division of Diversity and Belonging. In 2019, the Division of Diversity and Belonging developed and distributed a university-wide survey that was completed by undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty and staff regarding their feelings of belongingness within the community. The purpose of my study is to further inquire what groups of undergraduate students feel as though they belong, and how certain aspects of a student's identity may impact their experience at a university. I will further conceptualize belongingness and explore how we can better understand the educational and social experiences of students who are threatened by negative stereotypes.

From these interests, I have developed the exploratory aims of analyzing perceptions, behaviors, and outcomes that vary across social demographic roots. Several aspects of social identity, psychological perspectives of the student experience, engagement on campus, academic performance, and more will be examined through survey data collection across the undergraduate student body at Bowling Green State University. In doing so, I hope to spark future applied research that explores how the university can intervene to give students a sense of belonging, and furthermore, the affirmation of their values, goals, and experiences, that they need to succeed.

Literature Review

The social identities of an individual play an integral part in their interactions and experiences within their environment. Social identity theory was developed to explain the role of the self in intergroup processes between individuals. The theory was designed to address issues surrounding social processes, such as prejudice, discrimination, and conflict (Hogg, 2020). Tajfel defined social identity as an “individual’s knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership” (1972, p. 292). The social groups individuals identify with shape their perceptions of themselves and those around them, their beliefs, values, and motivations. In addition, social identity influences how people evaluate themselves in relation to how they believe that they should be treated and thought of by others. When individuals discern themselves from the qualities of those in an out-group, they may process that their own group is positively distinct from the qualities that an out-group possesses (Hogg, 2020).

Furthermore, Hogg and Smith (2007) find that social identity is oftentimes expressed through social norms and behaviors. Group norms outline the contrasting elements between groups and social identities that assign identity-defining behaviors. In-group norms not only accentuate intragroup similarities, but these norms also highlight differences among out-groups. By understanding the norms that are internalized and exhibited by members of a specific social group, researchers can better comprehend the process of interactions that occurs between members of different social categories and how these experiences can shape self-concept (Hogg, 2020).

In line with social identity theory, aspects of people’s social identities likely play a prominent role in shaping their experiences and behaviors among their peers and surroundings,

and overall, in influencing their sense of belongingness in a community. Current literature expands upon social identity theory by demonstrating how people's social identities may impact their student experience, their perception of themselves and surrounding climate, their academic success, and their overall well-being and sense of belongingness. General findings indicate that students who possess marginalized social identities may hinder the sense of belonging that universities hope to perpetuate among the student body. A lower sense of belonging can lead to lower levels of imperative growth aspects of the individual, such as cognitive functioning, self-perception, physical health, and mental well-being (Layous et al., 2017).

Layous and colleagues (2017) propose that cognitive processes, such as self-affirmation, can mitigate threats to a student's marginalized identity. When people experience threats to their self, they tend to affirm "sources of self-integrity unrelated to the threatened domain, thus broadening their self-concept and making the threat seem less important" (p. 227). When people engage in self-affirming behaviors, they enhance their sense of self-integrity and reinforce their esteem in areas unrelated to the threatened domain of their identity. For example, an individual engaging in self-affirmation may recognize that they do not excel or belong in one social aspect, but there is a different social aspect that they do excel or belong in.

Furthermore, Kivlighan and colleagues (2018) explored the role of belongingness and hope in academic achievement among undergraduates. Using the psychosociocultural model to guide their study, they examined the relationship between hope and belongingness while considering the role of academic achievement for undergraduates that participated in academic enhancement groups. The psychosociocultural model, which has been used to inform a variety of studies to understand diverse students' educational experiences, emphasizes that the

“psychological, social, and cultural well-being of undergraduate students is central to their educational success and persistence” (p. 205).

As past research on academic success has focused predominantly on cognitive factors that impact postsecondary success, Kivlighan and colleagues (2018) consider psychosocial factors, namely belongingness and hope. Belongingness is theorized to be a basic human desire and motivation and has been found to increase the academic success and engagement of students. Using longitudinal ratings of hope and belongingness from undergraduates that were enrolled in a variety of academic enhancement groups, their findings indicate that the students’ engagement in these groups facilitated an increase in belongingness overtime, and that the change in perceptions of belongingness and hope are significantly related to an increase in their academic outcome. Their study emphasizes that academic interventions can enhance a sense of belongingness and hope, which demonstrates an increase in academic performance among undergraduate students.

In a study conducted by Brady and colleagues (2016), the role of self-affirmation was examined in improving college grade point average of Latino students. Latino students who engaged in an affirmation intervention that prompted them to write about a core personal value were found to have more self-affirming and less self-threatening thoughts. When engaging in the follow-up session two years after the intervention activity, they reported an increased sense of their adequacy, which was measured by self-integrity, self-esteem, hope, and higher academic belonging. Their findings indicate that interventions that affirm marginalized students’ values can have long-term positive effects on student outcomes, specifically motivation, performance, and academic belonging. Brady and colleagues highlight that a gap in educational outcomes exists between privileged and less privileged students, which proves to be a major concern for the

educational and economic success of individuals who hold a marginalized identity. Their research demonstrates the importance of interventions in marginalized students' educational attainment, namely interventions that affirm students' backgrounds, values, and experiences.

A campus climate survey that was conducted by the University of Michigan (U-M) in June 2016-January 2017, which has been adopted for this study, explores topics of senses of belongingness, value, diversity, equity, and inclusion among undergraduate and graduate students. The results of the survey were released in a report by U-M, which exhibit that "U-M students vary in the way they experience campus climate as a result of their social identities" (p.3). Responses from the survey indicate that female students and students from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups tend to have fewer positive experiences on campus than male and white students. In addition, students who identify as LGBTQ+, those who were not born in the United States, students with disabilities, and first-generation students are less satisfied with the campus climate. Students of color are least satisfied with the campus climate, namely Black, Hispanic/Latino/a, and Asian American/Asian students, while white students report higher levels of satisfaction with campus climate.

The U-M climate survey (2017) indicates that about one in six students report that they have been discriminated against, with female students being 14% more likely to report discrimination than male students, LGBTQ+ students being 123% more likely than heterosexual students, first-generation students being 86% more likely than non-first generation students, Black students being 519% more likely than white students, Hispanic/Latino/a students being 132% more likely than white students, and Asian American/Asian students being 86% more likely than white students. The most frequent acts of discrimination that were reported were on the basis of gender identity at 20%, racial identity at 20%, and political orientation at 21%.

Regarding feelings of value and belonging, U-M reports that there are no gender differences, however, first-generation students and Black students are less likely to report feeling that they are valued and belong at U-M. The report further explains that there are feelings of value, belonging, growth, and thriving, but these feelings are not equally distributed across all students and vary across social identities.

Method

Participants & Procedure

The sample of the study consisted of undergraduate students at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). Participants were recruited through email, Canvas messaging, and in-class brief presentations of the project. I was granted access to a list of every undergraduate students' email from the Office of Institutional Research at BGSU. I then sent a brief recruitment script and the link to the questionnaire to the entire undergraduate student body. To recruit participants, a financial incentive of the opportunity for respondents to enter a drawing for one of twenty \$25 Amazon gift cards, funded by the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship at BGSU. The survey was open for three weeks, and 1,560 observations were recorded.

Measures

Using a campus climate survey adopted from a 2016 study at the University of Michigan (See Appendix A), undergraduate students at Bowling Green State University were surveyed on a variety of sociodemographic questions and items surrounding feelings of belongingness, value, commitment of the university, feelings of growth, understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, and overall perceptions of the campus climate. The questionnaire was delivered through Qualtrics, where participants consented to participate (See Appendix B), and their responses were recorded and stored. After three weeks, responses were uploaded into Stata,

where variables were coded and analyzed. In line with the University of Michigan campus climate report, five indices were constructed in Stata (See Appendix C) and analyzed across various social identities.

Dependent Variables

General Climate

General climate was assessed using a series of items representing contrasting adjectives which participants were asked to select where along the continuum between the adjectives they would rate BGSU based on their direct experiences. An index was constructed that consisted of seven items on a 1 to 5 rating scale with contrasting adjectives that describe the general atmosphere of the campus. An example item is “1 (*unfriendly*) to 5 (*friendly*).” The Cronbach alpha measure of interitem reliability was 0.86.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Elements

A diversity, equity, and inclusion index ($\alpha=.82$) was constructed using a series of contrasting adjectives pairs in which participants were asked to select one option between the given set of adjectives that best represents how they would rate BGSU based on their direct experiences. The index consisted of five items on a 1 to 5 rating scale with varying adjectives that describe diversity, equity, and inclusion elements on campus. An example item is “1 (*racist*) to 5 (*non-racist*).”

Belongingness and Value

Belongingness ($\alpha=.82$) was assessed using a five-item index that was measured from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). An example item is “*I feel I belong at BGSU.*”

Institutional Commitment

Institutional Commitment ($\alpha=.53$) was examined using a three-item index that was measured from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). An example item is “*BGSU provides sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a diverse student body.*”

Thriving and Growth

Thriving and Growth ($\alpha=.73$) was constructed on a four-item index that was measured from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). An example item is “*BGSU is a place where I am able to perform to my full potential.*”

Independent Variables

Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity were measured by four racial/ethnic categories: “White,” “Black/Mixed African American,” “Hispanic,” and “Other.” Participants were given the option to select one or more race/ethnicities that they identified with. Those who chose multiple items were asked an additional question of which racial or ethnic identity they most closely identified with. Race and ethnicity were coded and grouped into the four categories in Stata. The “Other” category that is included in the results exhibits heterogeneity across race/ethnicity. Some of these categories include mixed races, Asian/Asian American, Middle eastern/North African, Native American/Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. These differences cannot be displayed because of the small statistically representative sample of these identities.

Class

Class was measured by parent or guardian’s education level: “Neither parent/guardian attended college,” “Neither parent/guardian has a four-year degree but one or both attended

college,” “One or both parents/guardians have a four-year degree,” and “One or both parents/guardians have education beyond a four-year degree.”

Gender

Gender was measured by four categories: “Female,” “Male,” “Non-Binary,” and “Other.” Those who identified as other were given the option to type their gender. The “Other” category that is included in the results exhibits heterogeneity across gender. Due to the small statistically representative sample of these identities, the differences cannot be displayed in the results.

Results

Before conducting analyses, the sample demographics were compared to the population demographics of Bowling Green State University’s undergraduate population. The sample was found to be generally representative of the BGSU population with some minor differences in race/ethnicity and gender (See *Figures 1* and *2*). BGSU has reported that about 30% of the undergraduate students are first-generation college students (Bratton, 2021), with the sample including 31% of undergraduate students whose parents/guardians did not attend college or have less than a four-year degree (See *Figure 3*). To examine differences by race/ethnicity, class, and gender across the dependent variables, one-way ANOVAs were conducted in Stata after variables were coded and indices were created. The following results are organized by the dependent variables that were assessed in the study.

General Climate Elements

The average student in the sample reported positive feelings about the general campus climate, 3.99 on a 5-point scale. Three one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine differences in general campus climate elements across race/ethnicity, class, and gender. The overall model was statistically significant for racial and ethnic differences ($F(3, 1351)=10.11, p<.05$). White

students ($M=4.02$, $SD=.67$) had a more positive mean impression of general campus climate than Black students ($M=3.61$, $SD=.75$), $p<.05$ and other students ($M=3.74$, $SD=.72$), $p<.05$. Hispanic students ($M=3.97$, $SD=.77$) had a higher mean impression of general campus climate than Black students, $p<.05$.

The overall model for class differences, measured by parent's education level, was not statistically significant ($F(3, 1351)=.24$, $p>.05$). However, the overall model for gender differences was significant ($F(3,1349)=15.80$, $p<.05$). Female-identifying students ($M=4.05$, $SD=.65$) were more positive about the general campus climate than non-binary students ($M=3.52$, $SD=.66$), $p<.05$. Male-identifying students ($M=3.96$, $SD=.75$) had a higher mean of general campus climate than non-binary students, $p<.05$.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Elements

The average student at BGSU was more positive than negative about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at BGSU ($M=3.88$ on a 5-point scale). Three one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine differences in perceptions of DEI across race/ethnicity, class, and gender. The overall model for racial and ethnic differences was statistically significant ($F(3, 1531)=13.54$, $p<.05$). White students ($M=3.92$, $SD=.79$) had higher average feelings about DEI than Black students ($M=3.37$, $SD=.86$), $p<.05$, and other students ($M=3.56$, $SD=.86$), $p<.05$. Hispanic students ($M=3.95$, $SD=.82$) also had more positive perceptions of DEI than Black students, $p<.05$, and other students, $p<.05$.

The overall model for class differences was not statistically significant ($F(3, 1351)=.42$, $p>.05$). However, the overall model for gender differences was statistically significant ($F(3, 1349)=19.40$, $p<.05$). Male-identifying students ($M=4.00$, $SD=.80$) had more positive perceptions of DEI than non-binary students ($M=3.25$, $SD=.76$), $p<.05$. Female-identifying

students ($M=3.88$, $SD=.79$) also had more positive perceptions of DEI than non-binary students, $p<.05$.

Belongingness and Value

The average student has a mean feeling of belonging and value of 3.75 on a 5-point scale, suggesting that they feel like they belong and are valued as individuals. Three one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine differences across race/ethnicity, class, and gender. The overall model for racial and ethnic differences was statistically significant ($F(3, 1351)=9.47$, $p<.05$). White students ($M=3.79$, $SD=.77$) had a higher mean of belonging and value than Black students ($M=3.39$, $SD=.71$), $p<.05$, and other students ($M=3.44$, $SD=.73$), $p<.05$. Hispanic students ($M=3.74$, $SD=.85$) also had a higher mean of belonging and value than Black students, $p<.05$.

The overall model for class differences was not statistically significant ($F(3, 1353)=1.63$, $p>.05$). However, the overall model for gender differences was statistically significant ($F(3, 1351)=11.56$, $p<.05$). Female-identifying students ($M=3.83$, $SD=.74$) had a higher mean of belonging and value than male-identifying students ($M=3.66$, $SD=.83$), $p<.05$, and non-binary students ($M=3.39$, $SD=.70$), $p<.05$. Male-identifying students also had a higher mean than non-binary students, $p<.05$.

Institutional Commitment

The average student had a mean feeling of institutional commitment of 3.73 on a 5-point scale. Three one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine differences across race/ethnicity, class, and gender. The overall model for racial and ethnic differences was statistically significant ($F(3, 1349)=12.35$, $p<.05$). White students ($M=3.77$, $SD=.60$) had a higher mean of institutional commitment than Black students ($M=3.39$, $SD=.61$), $p<.05$, and other students ($M=3.48$, $SD=.65$), $p<.05$.

The overall model for class differences was not statistically significant ($F(3, 1349)=.32, p>.05$). However, the overall model for gender differences was statistically significant ($F(3, 1347)=14.12, p<.05$). Female-identifying students ($M=3.81, SD=.59$) had a higher mean of institutional commitment than male-identifying students ($M=3.58, SD=.64, p<.05$), and non-binary students ($M=3.59, SD=.55, p<.05$).

Thriving and Growth

The average student has a mean feeling of thriving and growth of 3.81 on a 5-point scale. Students overall “agree” that they are thriving and growing at BGSU. Three one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine differences across race/ethnicity, class, and gender. The overall model for racial and ethnic differences was statistically significant ($F(3, 1345)=24.13, p<.05$). White students ($M=3.86, SD=.71$) reported higher levels of thriving and growth than Black students ($M=3.20, SD=.72, p<.05$), and other students ($M=3.43, SD=.64, p<.05$). In addition, Hispanic students ($M=3.78, SD=.81$) also had a higher mean of thriving and growth than Black students, $p<.05$.

The overall model for class differences was not statistically significant ($F(3, 1345)=1.13, p>.05$). However, the overall model for gender differences was statistically significant ($F(3, 1343)=13.13, p<.05$). Female-identifying students ($M=3.88, SD=.71$) had a higher mean of thriving and growth than male-identifying students ($M=3.75, SD=.74, p<.05$), and non-binary students ($M=3.37, SD=.74, p<.05$). Male-identifying students also had a higher mean of thriving and growth than non-binary students, $p<.05$.

Discussion

Within this study, a variety of sociodemographic information and perceptions of the campus climate were assessed among a sample of Bowling Green State University undergraduate

students. The results demonstrate a pattern of discrepancies among race/ethnicity and gender within the five assessed components of campus climate—General Climate; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Belongingness and Value; Institutional Commitment; and Thriving and Growth. There is a general pattern of Black students and non-binary students feeling the lowest levels across each of the dependent variables, and white students and female-identifying students generally feeling the highest levels. There were no statistically significant class differences among these variables.

There are a variety of implications of this study that can provide direction for future research in areas of social identity and educational settings. By understanding the effects of marginalized social identities on the individual experience, including interactions with their surrounding environment, access to resources, overall psychological well-being, and social and academic success, institutions can find manners to better address these discrepancies. In a broader and more systemic context, this study can encourage the implementation of educational interventions; the changing of policies that may disadvantage students who hold marginalized identities; and the adaptation of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to go beyond educational components to tangible steps to achieve true equity.

On a microlevel, the current study can provide other students with a sense of awareness of what experiences their community members may face due to social identities, and further prompt them to have a sense of urgency to act upon instances of discrimination or inequality when they witness them. The student experience is one that varies across sociodemographic roots, and I hope to spark future applied research that explores how the university can intervene to give students a sense of belonging, and furthermore, the affirmation of their values, goals, and experiences, that they need to succeed.

Limitations & Future Directions

When conducting survey data, there is a lack of ability to control for confounding variables that may influence the way that the participant responds to the items, such as mood. In addition to an inability to control for outside influences, differences in individual interpretation of the items may provide for a differences or inaccuracies across responses. Some reasons why respondents may answer inaccurately are social desirability bias, which is the tendency to answer questions in a dishonest manner because of a desire to appear more favorable in social contexts, or mis-recalling information.

An additional limitation with survey methodology is that providing respondents a set of options that they must choose from could constrain a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of a respondent's experiences. To counter this limitation, there were a variety of questions that allowed the respondent to expand upon their response, which gives the respondent an opportunity to provide an answer choice that they may not see on the questionnaire. There was also option to provide comments or feedback at the end of the questionnaire regarding topics covered.

Due to the small statistically representative sample of some racial/ethnic and gender identities, I was unable to display these differences in the analyses despite the heterogeneity among the "Other" categories that were constructed. Furthermore, there were no class differences found across the dependent variables, which prompts the question of whether I measured class in a way that accurately represents financial status among students. For future studies exploring campus climate across sociodemographic backgrounds, in addition to parents' education status, items about financial responsibilities and aid of the student may provide a better understanding of how financial status can impact the student experience. Additional items

inquiring about organizational involvement, groups' knowledge of resources on campus to find where access to resources is lacking, and gauging understandings of academic interventions could provide for a more informative future campus climate survey. Utilizing a longitudinal study and following specific students in future climate surveys could contribute to the university's knowledge of how certain academic interventions and resources may or may not enhance student's perceptions about the campus climate as well.

Due to the wide range of information collected within this study and the large sample size, the university and researchers could use this dataset to explore a variety of different aspects of social identity and the student experience. Future research using this dataset could explore other social identities across belonging, thriving, and institutional commitment factors (i.e., ability, sexual orientation, religion, age, transfer students, non-traditional students). Researchers could also compare groups of students that have experienced discriminatory events on campus and determine which groups of students experience discrimination. Further research could examine the impact of BGSU learning communities and academic colleges on levels of belongingness, thriving, and institutional commitment.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates differences in feelings of belongingness and overall perceptions of the campus across social identities. Students from historically marginalized groups, namely Black students and non-binary students, generally have more negative feelings about their student experience than students with normative identities, such as white students, and female-identifying and male-identifying students. The findings suggest the need to address less common marginalized identities among students and better identify how to enhance their academic experience; to implement educational interventions to increase inclusivity; to change policies

that may disadvantage students who hold marginalized identities; and to adapt diversity, equity and inclusion efforts towards positive action for such students. By going beyond educational components to tangible steps, universities can come closer to achieving true equity in belongingness across all identity categories.

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Figures

Figure 1: BGSU Undergraduate Population and Sample Demographics for Race/Ethnicity

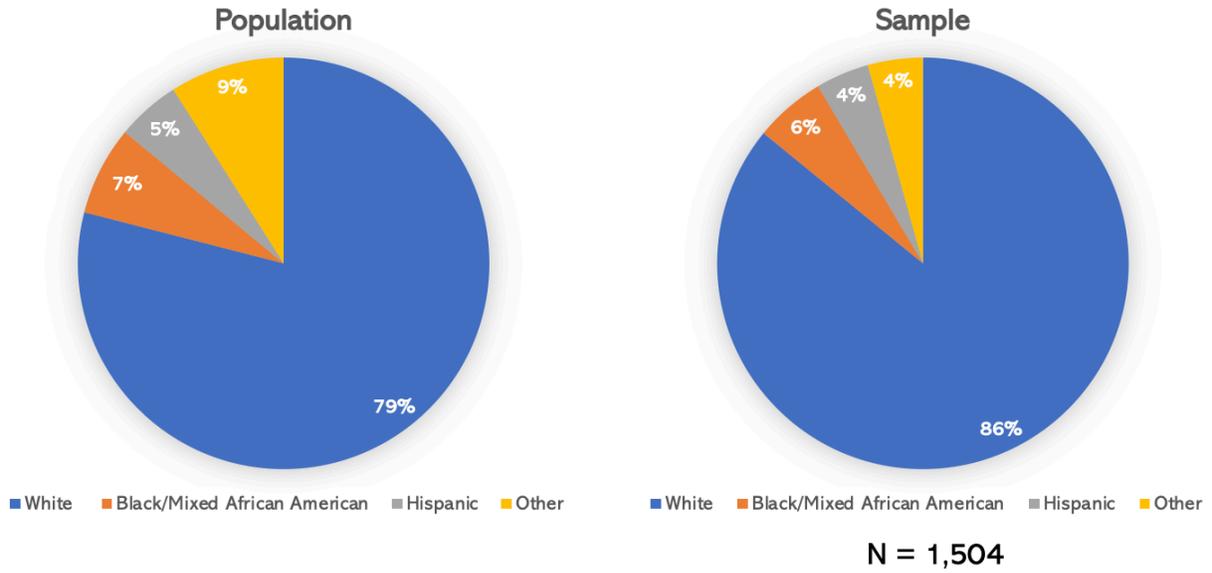


Figure 2: BGSU Population and Sample Demographics for Gender

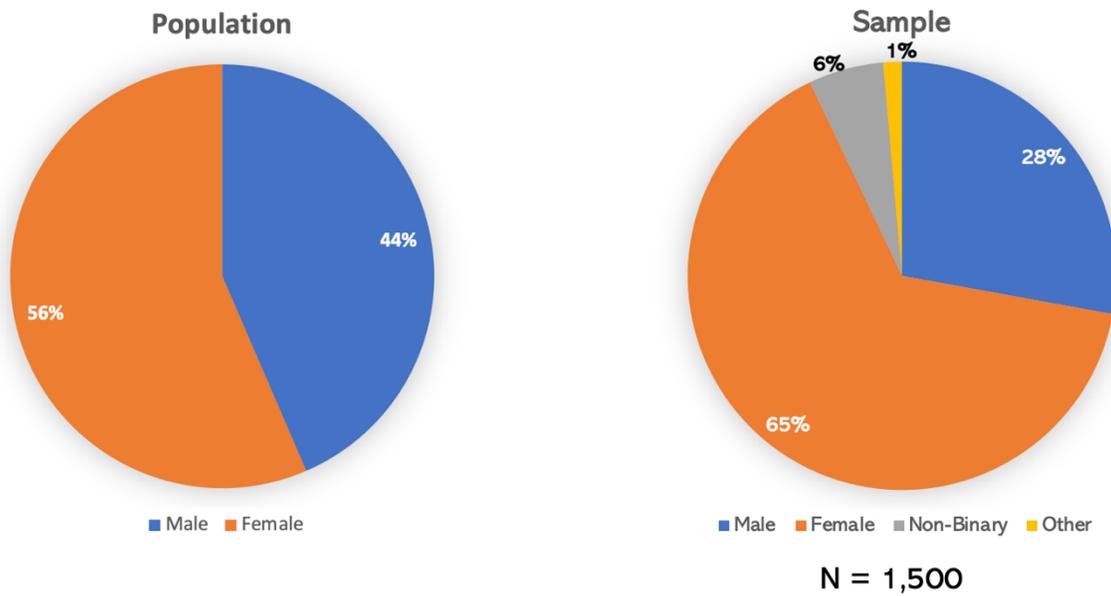
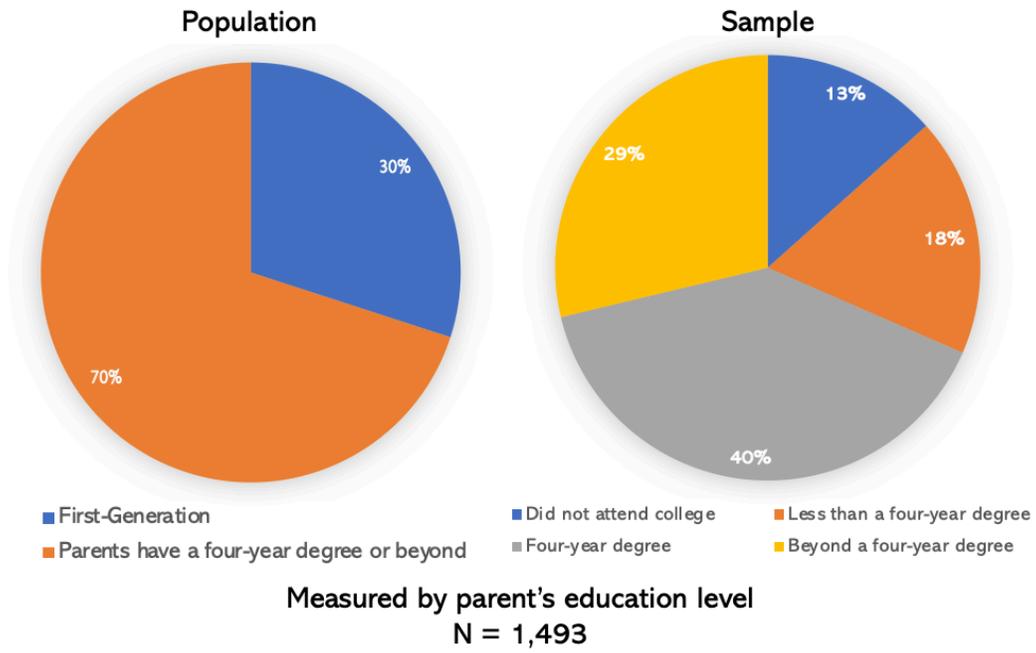


Figure 3: BGSU Population and Sample Demographics for Class



Appendix A**Belongingness Survey: Part 1**

Are you an undergraduate student at BGSU?

- Yes
- No

In which college are you currently enrolled in? If you are enrolled in a multiple-major or are in a joint program, check all that apply.

- College of Arts and Sciences
- Allen W. and Carol M. Schmidthorst College of Business
- College of Education and Human Development
- BGSU Firelands
- College of Health and Human Services
- College of Musical Arts
- College of Technology, Architecture and Applied Engineering
- Honors College

If you are involved in a learning community on BGSU campus, please indicate below which learning community/communities you are a member of:

- Arts Village Community
- Batchelder Music Community
- Chapman Community
- Global Village Community
- Honors Learning Community
- La Comunidad
- Finding Your Voice in Social Justice Community
- History Village
- Other (Please specify): _____

What is your current age (in years)?

What year did you begin BGSU?

Are you a transfer student?

- Yes
- No

What is your sex assigned at birth?

- Male
- Female

- Intersex
- Preferred response not listed (Please specify): _____

What is your gender? ***Keep Open

What is your sexual orientation? *choose more than one

- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Queer
- Questioning
- Asexual
- Pansexual
- Preferred response not listed (Please specify): _____

Please indicate the race/ethnic which you identify. *(Check all that apply):*

- African American/Black
- Asian American/Asian
- Hispanic/Latino/a
- Middle eastern/North African
- Native American/Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- White/Caucasian
- Other (Please specify): _____

(Asked of any person indicating that they identify with more than one racial or ethnic group.)

Of the following, please mark the one racial or ethnic group with which you **most** identify.

- African American/Black
- Asian American/Asian
- Hispanic/Latino/a
- Middle eastern/North African
- Native American/Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- White/Caucasian
- Other (Please specify): _____

Were you born in the United States?

- Yes
- No

Please indicate your generation status:

- All of my grandparents and both of my parents were born in the United States
- Both of my parents were born in the United States
- One of my parents was born in the United States
- Neither of my parents were born in the United States

(Asked of any person indicating that they were born outside of the United States.)

In which country were you born in?

With what religious background, if any, do you most identify?

- Agnostic
- Atheist
- Baha'i
- Baptist
- Buddhist
- Catholic
- Church of Christ
- Christian: Non-Denominational
- Confucian
- Eastern Orthodox
- Episcopalian
- Hindu
- Muslim
- Jehovah's Witness
- Jewish: Orthodox
- Jewish: Conservative
- Jewish: Reform
- LDS (Mormon)
- Lutheran
- Methodist
- Pentecostal
- Presbyterian
- Protestant: Non-Denominational
- Quaker
- Seventh Day Adventist
- Taoist
- Unitarian/Universalist
- UCC/Congregational
- None
- Other (Please specify): _____

Do you have a disability?

- Yes, I have a disability
- No, I do not have a disability

(Asked of any person indicating that they have a disability.)

What type(s) of disabilities do you have? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Acquired/Traumatic Brain Injury
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- Asperger's/Autism Spectrum
- Blind/Low Vision
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Cognitive or Learning Disability
- Chronic Illness/Medical Condition
- Mental Health/Psychological Condition
- Physical/Mobility condition that affects walking
- Physical/Mobility condition that does *not* affect walking
- Speech/Communication Condition
- Other (please specify): _____

Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces, Military Reserves, or National Guard?

- I am currently serving
- I am no longer serving
- I have never served

Which of the following best describes the educational experience of your parents/guardians?

- Neither parent/guardian attended college
- Neither parent/guardian has a four-year degree but one or both attended college
- One or both parents/guardians have a four-year degree
- One or both parents/guardians have education beyond a four-year degree

Belongingness Survey: Part 2

Blurb indicating: When answering these questions, please answer without consideration of the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic to the best of your ability.

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall campus climate/environment that you have experienced at Bowling Green State University within the past 12 months?

- Very Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied

- Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

For the next few questions, select one option between each set of adjectives that best represents how you would rate BGSU based on **your direct experiences**:

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Hostile | <input type="radio"/> | Friendly |
| Racist | <input type="radio"/> | Non-racist |
| Homogenous | <input type="radio"/> | Diverse |
| Disrespectful | <input type="radio"/> | Respectful |
| Contentious | <input type="radio"/> | Collegial |
| Sexist | <input type="radio"/> | Non-sexist |
| Individualistic | <input type="radio"/> | Collaborative |
| Competitive | <input type="radio"/> | Cooperative |
| Homophobic | <input type="radio"/> | Non-homophobic |
| Unsupportive | <input type="radio"/> | Supportive |
| Ageist | <input type="radio"/> | Non-ageist |
| Unwelcoming | <input type="radio"/> | Welcoming |
| Elitist | <input type="radio"/> | Non-elitist |

In the past 12 months, how often have you been concerned about your physical safety on campus? ****Clarify and additional question about how they feel about it in relation to covid**

- Never
- Seldom
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

In the past 12 months, which of the following have you avoided at BGSU due to fear for your physical safety? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Sporting events
- Parties or other social gatherings
- Secluded areas on campus
- Residence halls
- Campus buildings
- Busses or bus stops
- Parking lots or garages
- Neighborhoods or other areas surrounding campus
- Off-campus housing
- Walking around campus at night
- Other (Please specify): _____
- None

Considering your experiences over the past 12 months, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel valued as an individual at BGSU.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I belong at BGSU.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BGSU has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am treated with respect at BGSU.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel others don't value my opinions at BGSU.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BGSU is a place where I am able to perform up to my full potential.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have opportunities at BGSU for academic success that are similar to those of my peers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have found one or more communities or groups where I feel I belong at BGSU.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is too much emphasis put on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion here at BGSU.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BGSU provides sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a diverse student body.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have to work harder than others to be valued equally at BGSU.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My experience at BGSU has had a positive influence on my academic growth.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

During the past 12 months at BGSU, how often have you interacted in a **meaningful** way with people...

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
...whose religious beliefs are different than your own	<input type="radio"/>				
...whose political opinions are different from your own	<input type="radio"/>				
...who are immigrants or from an immigrant family	<input type="radio"/>				

...who are of a different nationality than your own	<input type="radio"/>				
...whose gender is different than your own	<input type="radio"/>				
...whose sexual orientation is different than your own	<input type="radio"/>				
...who are from a different social class	<input type="radio"/>				
...who have physical or other observable disabilities	<input type="radio"/>				
...who have learning, psychological, or other disabilities that are not readily apparent	<input type="radio"/>				

How would you describe the racial/ethnic composition of the community where you grew up?

- All or nearly all people of my race/ethnicity
- Mostly people of my race/ethnicity
- Half my race/ethnicity and half people of other races/ethnicities
- Mostly other types of races/ethnicities
- All or nearly all other types of races/ethnicities

How would you describe the racial/ethnic composition of the school that you graduated from prior to attending BGSU?

- All or nearly all people of my race/ethnicity
- Mostly people of my race/ethnicity
- Half my race/ethnicity and half people of other races/ethnicities
- Mostly other types of races/ethnicities
- All or nearly all other types of races/ethnicities

In general over the past 12 months, have you felt discriminated against at BGSU?

- Yes
- No

Over the past 12 months, how often have **YOU experienced discriminatory events** at BGSU because of your:

	Never	1-2 Times	3 or more times
Ability or disability status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Racial/Ethnic identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sex	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender identity or gender expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Veteran status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marital status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Age	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Height or weight	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Political orientation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Have you experienced any discriminatory events regarding personal aspects that were not asked about in the previous questions?

- Yes
- No

(Asked of those who say that they experienced a discriminatory event regarding a personal aspect not previously asked about.)

Please describe any other discriminatory events you have experienced.

In my classrooms and classroom settings (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.), I feel listened to by:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Faculty instructors (faculty/post docs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student instructors (e.g., Graduate Students, TAs, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In spaces outside of the classroom, I feel valued by:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Faculty instructors (faculty/post docs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other faculty members					

Student instructors (e.g., Graduate Students, TAs, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>				
Other students	<input type="radio"/>				
Staff members	<input type="radio"/>				
University administrators	<input type="radio"/>				
Other University mentors/advisors	<input type="radio"/>				

I am treated fairly and equitably on campus in general.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

I am treated fairly and equitably in classrooms and classroom settings (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.).

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

I am treated fairly and equitably in out-of-classroom University spaces (e.g., workshops, co-curricular offerings, etc.).

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Please share any other thoughts, comments, or suggestions that you may have about the topics covered in this survey. **Please do not include personally identifying information in your response.**

Appendix B

INFORMED CONSENT FOR A SENSE OF BELONGINGNESS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

RESEARCHERS:

Francesca Marino, undergraduate student within the Department of Psychology at Bowling Green State University

Dr. Stephen Demuth, faculty within the Department of Sociology at Bowling Green State University

PURPOSE: You are invited to participate in a research study about undergraduate students' perspectives and experiences at Bowling Green State University. The goal of this research study is to gauge undergraduate students' sense of belongingness, feelings of value, and understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts on campus.

PROCEDURE: Within this study, a campus climate survey will be conducted at Bowling Green State University. This survey will ask you questions about your social demographic characteristics, your satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the campus climate, your feelings of belongingness, value, and respect, your understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, and your personal experiences on campus. This survey should take about 20 minutes.

VOLUNTARY NATURE: The study adheres to current BGSU COVID-19 guidelines. Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time. You may decide to skip questions (or not do a particular task) or discontinue participation at any time without explanation or penalty. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your relationship with Bowling Green State University.

CONFIDENTIALITY PROTECTION: Data will be stored and protected in Qualtrics. Your responses will not be shared with anyone and will only be viewed by researchers to maintain confidentiality. Some employers may use tracking software, so you may want to complete the survey on a personal computer. You should not leave the survey open if using a public computer or a computer that others may have access to. You should clear the browser cache and page history after completing the survey.

RISK: The risk of participation is no greater than that experienced in daily life. Some questions may be personal. This survey will ask you to recall personal experiences on Bowling Green State University campus, i.e., aspects of your social identity, feelings of safety, experiences of discriminatory events. If at any time you feel like you cannot continue, you can quit the survey. Below is a list of additional resources provided by BGSU if you find you need to consult these resources at any point:

BGSU Counseling Center

Phone: 419-372-2081
104 College Park,
Bowling Green, OH 43402
www.bgsu.edu/counseling-center

See It. Hear it. Report it.

Formal Incident Reporting or Concern at
BGSU
<https://www.bgsu.edu/report-incident.html>

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Francesca Marino at fmarino@bgsu.edu or Dr. Steve Demuth at demuth@bgsu.edu. You may also contact the Chair of the Bowling Green State University Institutional Review Board at 419-372-7716 or irb@bgsu.edu, if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research. Thank you for your time!

“I have been informed of the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits of this study. I have had the opportunity to have all my questions answered and I have been informed that my participation is completely voluntary. I agree to participate in this research.”

Type your full name here for digital signature

Appendix C

All scales were taken from the University of Michigan's 2016 Campus Climate Survey. Each dependent variable was measured on a 1-5 rating scale, with 1 being the most negative and 5 being the most positive.

General Climate

1. Hostile vs. Friendly
2. Disrespectful vs. Respectful
3. Contentious vs. Collegial
4. Individualistic vs. Collaborative
5. Competitive vs. Cooperative
6. Unsupportive vs. Supportive
7. Unwelcoming vs. Welcoming

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

1. Racist vs. Non-Racist
2. Homogeneous vs. Diverse
3. Sexist vs. Non-Sexist
4. Homophobic vs. Non-Homophobic
5. Ageist vs. Non-Ageist

Belongingness and Value

1. I feel valued as an individual at BGSU.
2. I feel I belong at BGSU.
3. I am treated with respect at BGSU
4. I feel others don't value my opinions at BGSU. (reverse-coded)
5. I have found one or more communities or groups where I feel I belong at BGSU.

Institutional Commitment

1. BGSU has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
2. There is too much emphasis put on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion here at BGSU. (reverse-coded).
3. BGSU provides sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a diverse student body.

Thriving and Growth

1. BGSU is a place where I am able to perform up to my full potential.
2. I have opportunities at BGSU for professional success that are similar to those of my colleagues.
3. I have to work harder than others to be valued equally at BGSU. (reverse-coded).
4. My experience at BGSU has had a positive influence on my professional growth.